

WANT QUALITY INTERNET & PHONE?

One thing the British have in common is that we move here to a beautiful, but sometimes remote location, meaning communication to the outside world can be a little difficult. Changing technology means this is much less of a problem than it was, even a short time ago. As some of you will know, in addition to the Satellite TV business, I am now the official distributor for Astra2connect & TOOWAY through a large well established ISP, who offer excellent service for Internet & telephone systems via Satellite, and thought it would be useful to update those who are interested on the options that are now available.

It is now possible to achieve download speeds in excess of 3mbps, using just a satellite dish and a modem. To this you can add a router, network and telephones, giving you small office communications capacity without the need for a telephone line. You can then take it further by choosing a local telephone number, or one that appears to be in the country of your choice. Then to go further still, it is quite easy to add an extension and have it based elsewhere, England for example. This means you can then make calls both ways as you would with a normal, internal extension and you are not charged for the calls as they are on the same line. Ideal if you need to keep regular contact with family or business contacts.

You can now see that location is no longer an acceptable excuse for the poor service levels we have become accustomed to. Any location can now be - a nice place to live and to work.

Not everyone would want to find the cash for a full install as described above, but even this no longer presents a problem. In conjunction with this article we are now able to offer all or part of the above on a rental basis. You pay only for the installation, the connection fee and 2 months in advance. Whatever setup you require, from a basic internet connection, to the full "bells & whistles" system above, you can buy it outright, or rent it and pay a little more each month to cover equipment costs. There are many choices.

After a recent install of purchased equipment, it became obvious that the savings, when compared to the monthly cost of mobile internet plus radio phone, will pay for the equipment outright within 20 months, while giving a far superior service on both internet and telephone. Remember too, that the internet also comes with the option to use services such as Skype.

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This gives you free computer to computer calls with video if you want it, once you've installed the appropriate hardware, although calls are nowhere near the quality that you can expect from a dedicated VOIP setup as both are treated as data. The VOIP telephones that are currently available look the same as a standard cordless model that you would expect to see in use with a landline. As they separate voice from data and give it priority, the call quality is very good, despite traveling to space and back.

Unlike Iberbanda type services, location and "distance from the mast" will not affect call quality or download speeds - the service will be the same everywhere as the signal travels to and from a satellite not a mast.

The future looks even brighter! After the launch, later this year, of a new dedicated communications satellite, we will be offering download speeds up to 10mbps. Now that's fast!! I should mention here that the rental option mentioned earlier includes an update to the 10mbps equipment when it becomes available early next year.

Something else to think about then is what download speeds you expect to want next year and will the equipment cope, or need changing. Whichever option you choose, you will find a lot of claims on price, speed, and service levels etcetera. Make sure you check that you are comparing like with like and ask for referrals before signing. You will find variations in volume allowed (GB) per month, speed (kbps or mbps), the way installation and monthly charges are advertised and what to expect if you exceed your data allowance. I can help you with all of this. Most of all make sure they are a local company, as explained earlier; you can appear to be anywhere you choose. When something goes wrong you will need it put right - fast.

After checking, you may discover that even compared to a fixed line rental with its high international call charges (and poor download speeds), the overall costs and service of these systems are more competitive than you expected. Also, you can take a satellite dish and modem with you, even if you move to another part of Europe and it will work.

If you can see the sky in the southeast and have electricity, you can now have fast internet! Simple!!

If you have any questions concerning Satellite Internet or TV, please contact me for free advice or more information.

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