

Predicting Future Bandwidth Requirements paper published

12 May 2006

BSG today publishes Green Paper on

'Predicting UK Future Residential Bandwidth Requirements'

The Broadband Stakeholder Group (BSG) has published a green paper looking at possible demand for broadband in 2008 and 2012. This paper has been prepared as a contribution to the emerging public debate about the potential requirement for further investment in next generation access infrastructures in the UK.

Most observers agree that as the take-up of broadband services increases and new rich media content, services and applications emerge, demand for bandwidth by households will grow. However, it is not clear by how much or how quickly this will happen.

Making predictions about the uptake and demand for any new technology is fraught with difficulties and predicting demand for bandwidth is particularly challenging. Future bandwidth requirements will be dependent upon a wide variety of variables, some of which we know and can predict, others which we know but can't predict, and some which we simply don't know. The methodology developed in the green paper attempts to create a framework to address this uncertainty.

The BSG paper provides a scenario-based analysis of possible bandwidth requirements for 2008 and 2012 based on a set of key assumptions about technology development and changes in behaviour. In particular, assumptions have been made about the demand for high definition (HD) video; the development of compression technologies; the tolerable transfer times for large files; and the use of local storage and intelligent personal video recorders (PVRs). The importance of time criticality of certain applications and the impact of technological developments such as local storage devices and compression techniques were also considered.

Changing the assumptions made about these critical variables could significantly affect the results and we do not expect that there will be complete consensus about the findings. Some will argue that the bandwidth estimates are too conservative, others that they are excessively high. However, we hope that this Green Paper will help to frame the debate and stimulate further discussion on future demand for residential bandwidth in the UK.

The BSG would welcome further comment, thoughts and ideas from all interested parties about the study and any additional factors that could have an impact upon the findings.

[Predicting UK Future Residential Bandwidth Requirements \(pdf 1,140KB\)](#)

Antony Walker

CEO, Broadband Stakeholder Group