

What is it ?

Mobile Broadband services are offered by most of the UK mobile phone providers as a means of accessing the Internet from any location where you can receive a mobile phone signal.

Services are typically aimed at laptop users who need to access the Internet whilst travelling away from office or home locations.

How does it work ?

You are provided with a mobile broadband adapter to connect to your laptop or desktop. Older format adaptors were provided in the format of a PCMCIA card whereas the current trend is to provide smaller devices that connect via the almost ubiquitous USB port on your computer – these are variously called mobile broadband dongles, broadband sticks or wireless USB modems.



Typical PCMCIA 3G card
(with acknowledgements to Vodafone)



Typical USB 3G adapter
(with acknowledgements to O2)

At the initial installation, software is installed on your computer which manages the connection to the Internet. Thereafter, the 3G service is available on demand.

The service operates asynchronously across the mobile phone network – asynchronously meaning that you get more download bandwidth (from the Internet to your PC) than upload bandwidth (from your PC to the Internet).

Actual download speeds will vary tremendously, based upon the signal coverage in the location where you chose to use the service and on the type of carrier network that's operating in that area (GPRS or HSDPA). Typical download speeds will range from 1.8Mbps to 7.2Mbps and upload speeds of up to 2Mbps – in practice, these speeds are rarely achieved.

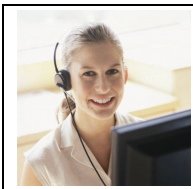
Why would I use it ?

The service is usable day-to-day but should not be considered as a complete replacement for fixed-line broadband services which in the UK can currently deliver download speeds of up to 24Mbps.

The service should be viewed primarily as a useful aid when travelling away from a fixed-line Internet connection in an office or home location. Alternative uses are for temporary backup in a disaster situation or for use where regular broadband is simply not available (increasingly rare in the UK).

What does it cost ?

Mobile broadband services are generally offered in two ways which mirrors the way that mobile phones are marketed in the UK – regular monthly contract or pay-as-you-go. Most companies supply a free 3G adapter for contract customers with some offers for pay-as-you-go users – although these change rapidly.



Cost also depends on download limits imposed (see below) and also on the length of the contract – generally the longer the contract, the cheaper the monthly charge. Typical charges at the time of writing are £10-15 per month.

Things to Consider :

In the same way that the mobile phone market is complex, choosing a mobile broadband service is not straightforward. There are various issues to consider :

- **Network Coverage.** Look at the network coverage in the area(s) where you intend to use the service. If there's a weak mobile phone signal from a particular provider, then mobile broadband coverage from that supplier will be equally poor.
- **Supplier.** Look carefully at the reputation of the supplier – whether you deal direct with the mobile provider or through a high street retailer or via a specialist such as ourselves.
- **Cost.** Look carefully at the full costs of operation, including the cost (if any) of acquiring the 3G adaptor and particularly at the charges involved if you exceed the monthly download limit.
- **Download limits.** Most providers impose a strict monthly download limits (typically 1GB – 5GB) with financial penalties (and even suspension of service in extreme cases) for exceeding those limits. Look very carefully at how you plan to use the mobile broadband service and choose accordingly.

For example, a 3GB limit would typically equate to around 100 hours of web browsing, downloading 200 music tracks or downloading 65 three minute videos.

- **Overseas usage.** As with mobile phones, there is a premium for using UK 3G services abroad. Check with your provider before purchase and use abroad to determine the costs to avoid a nasty surprise.

If all of this is too much to handle, why not contact Effective Systems who, in conjunction with our mobile services business partners, would be happy to discuss your needs and to determine an appropriate solution for you.

We've provided mobile broadband services for a number of our customers to improve their productivity.

Effective Systems Ltd

8 The Coles Shop, Merton Abbey Mills, Watermill Way, London SW19 2RD

Web : effects.co.uk **E.Mail :** info@effects.co.uk **Tel :** 0845-838-5331
