



Media Monitoring

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Broadband households set to hit 10m

BY ELIZABETH JUDGE

The number of households with a broadband internet connection is set to pass the 10 million level by the end of the year, helped by a stream of "free" broadband offers.

It brings to 40 per cent, the consumer broadband penetration in the UK.

The Office for National Statistics' Omnibus Survey found there were 9.87 million broadband connections at the end of June, representing 69 per cent of all internet connections.

Growth in demand for the fast internet connections has been fuelled in recent months with the launch of bundled services which offer users telephone calls and broadband internet connection for a fixed price, effectively wiping out the extra cost of paying for broadband.

The survey found there are now 14.3 million UK households with an internet connection.

However in a separate survey by the ONS, when combined with businesses the growth in broadband connections hit its lowest level for four years.

Research from the government agency showed that, between March and June the increase in the number of fast-speed connections stood at just 5.5 per cent.

The rise was significantly lower than at any point since 2002 and compares with an increase of 10.3 per cent in the previous quarter.

Analysts said the slow-down - which comes as more and more providers start to offer the service - could be in part attributed to people's traditional reluctance to sign-up for internet access during the summer.

Chris Williams, analyst at U-Switch, said the recent landgrab by Carphone Warehouse, the high-street mobile retailer, for broadband customers could also have played a part.

Though the service launched in April has signed-up more than 400,000 customers many of those registered would not have gone online during the survey period meaning that they would not show up in the figures, he said.

The ONS stressed that the second quarter was traditionally slow for broadband uptake - this is the fourth consecutive year where growth has slowed.

The survey was conducted with figures from internet service providers. It includes business users.

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