



Broadband: The small business solution

FSB one page briefing

Background

A fast, reliable and guaranteed broadband service is crucial for small businesses as we look towards economic recovery.

Web applications, services and platforms improve productivity and make it easier for small businesses to collaborate and access new markets both locally and further afield via digital distribution and online retail. Internet access increases consumer choice and competition and is essential as public services move towards greater online access.

Despite the potential that online access promises, the reality is very different for small businesses as they struggle to access the broadband speeds they require, reducing their productivity.

Broadband is not an added luxury to small businesses but is just as important as gas and electricity.

Recommendations

The FSB calls on Government to go further than ensuring a universal service commitment for broadband at a basic speed.

- Undertake an infrastructure inventory and consider the sharing of infrastructure.
- Make the telecommunications ombudsman stronger and Ofcom, more independent.

Government should intervene to provide fast and reliable broadband where the market does not deliver. It is not about providing super-fast broadband everywhere it is about achieving a fast enough speed for the purpose, and delivering the speeds that are advertised by the ISPs and that small business customers pay for.

The FSB calls on the Government to accept our recommendations to help small businesses thrive in the digital age and seek a strategic, future-proof solution.

Key Statistics

- 90 per cent of FSB members use the internet in running their business
- A lack of broadband speed and acceptable IP throughput reduces productivity for 33 per cent of small businesses
- 63 per cent of FSB members are unhappy with the speed and reliability of their internet connection
- 13 per cent of FSB members would consider moving business premises to an area with faster broadband
- 94 per cent of FSB members feel their service providers' offerings are failing to match their advertising claims
- Government can save £900m a year just by bringing those who do not have access to the internet online

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