

Belgacom ICT 2007 - "Future Telecom"

[youtube:<http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=Mz02lhU-AuE> auto]

Press release at launch of BT Openworld 14 October 2000 in London

"Broadband access to the net down old copper wires is the biggest telecom techno-jump since the creation of the personal computer and will totally change people's lives," said Dr Patrick Dixon, Europe's leading futurist, Director of Global Change Ltd and author of Futurewise and keynote speaker at the BT Openworld event.

"Broadband means I am connected to every computer in the world at speeds approaching that on my own area network. That means for the first time since the creation of the PC we are seeing the power of the desktop, portable or handheld device approach that of the largest supercomputers globally. Until now the net power advantage was largely theoretical because too slow for anything other than web pages and a few downloads.

"Broadband is a real threat to cable companies. Forget cable. Who needs cable when a pair of old copper wires can be turned in minutes into a big fat internet connection, as powerful as that used by many medium to large businesses today? Cable companies have been terribly slow to offer broadband and will now suffer.

"Computer speed doubles every 18 months which we think is fast - but broadband means up to a 40-fold jump in phone capacity after an engineer visit of less than two hours. All net calls are free.

"For an astonishingly low monthly flat rate I am permanently connected at ten times normal speed. NO more "world wide wait" - the net is now blisteringly fast. Downloads that took over an hour, with many broken connections, now take just a few seconds. Two years ago a leased line would have cost me thousands a year - but BT Openworld costs little more than a couple of CDs a month.

"Most people will struggle to use even a fraction of the mega-power that BT Openworld offers, but could get back all their money and more on phone call savings, and time savings if they use the net a lot.

"Broadband means a one hour voice call to Australia or America or India for free - and surfing the net at the same time, and being able to receive another conventional phone call from someone else. For £50 each you can add cameras both ends. Think about it - celebrating Christmas together across the world. It costs you nothing to be linked for a minute, a day or for ten whole days.

"Broadband means teleworking at home with ultra-fast access to your own office network, permanent video-links between different teleworkers, virtual teams, virtual offices and virtual organisations - at almost zero cost, using existing phone lines and computers.

"Broadband means more than just web pages, with instant access to over 200,000 Web TV stations, all offering video on demand. Hundreds of free feature films can already be watched at the touch of a button.

"Of course this is early days and we've quite a way to go until the quality of broadband video on broadband reaches broadcast standard. But the next generation is coming soon.

"Expect thousands of new creative ideas about how to use all this huge capacity in the home and at work. For example, at any time of the day or night anyone who calls me on an ordinary phone can also log onto my website and see me - on one of five cameras in my home. Why not? It costs me nothing to run it all the time whether I am in or out. And if I'm out, it becomes part of the security system

"One company is already offering free unlimited calls to any US telephone from any PC online. No catch. No money.

"That's one reason why the rapid takeoff of BT Openworld is a real threat to all traditional telecom companies. The days of charging voice or data calls by time are numbered. The days of charging calls by distance are also rapidly coming to an end.

"The same is happening in other industries - for example banks are also cannibalising their own businesses every time they introduce new technology. Only the fastest movers will survive. Phone companies will be forced to completely reinvent their business models - and broadband will speed the revolution even further

"In the meantime, expect demand for broadband to be huge and potentially overwhelming. Broadband will be a must-have for every medium-sized business and every home-worker who is computer-based.

"Take hold of the future, or the future will take hold of you - and the future is.. broadband."