

'O2' AND 'IDNET' TAKE TOP POSITION IN LARGEST EVER CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEY

Submitted by: Ascent PR
Wednesday, 18 March 2009

thinkbroadband.com (<http://www.thinkbroadband.com>) today announces the results of the largest ever UK Broadband Survey on Customer Service. It seeks to recognise excellence in customer service and reliability from broadband service providers across both the large and niche markets. Its findings based on half a million visitor ratings show that providers such as O2 (<http://broadband.o2.co.uk>) are worlds apart from others such as Pipex, Tiscali and Orange.

The research also shows that niche operators can provide high levels of customer service with the top two niche providers IDNet (www.idnet.net) and Zen Internet (www.zen.co.uk) being top of the class.

Thinkbroadband (<http://www.thinkbroadband.com>) Customer Service Awards Winners (based on 500,000 visitor ratings from 01/01/08 to 31/12/08)

Category: Large ISP

- Gold – O2 (<http://broadband.o2.co.uk>)
- Silver – Be Unlimited (<http://www.bethere.co.uk>)
- Bronze – PlusNet (<http://www.plus.net>)

Category: Niche

- Gold - IDNet (www.idnet.net)
- Silver – Zen Internet (www.zen.co.uk)
- Bronze – NewNet (<http://www.newnet.co.uk>)

O2 scoop the thinkbroadband gold award for customer service in a Large ISP whilst IDNet hits the top spot in the Niche ISP category.

"The satisfaction levels achieved by O2 and Be Unlimited are exceptional for a company of their size" explains Sebastien Lahtinen, co-founder of thinkbroadband.com (<http://www.thinkbroadband.com>), "often consumers only consider price and the infamous 'up to' speeds in selecting which broadband service to subscribe to. It is refreshing to see a supplier of some of the fastest services in the country maintaining customer service and reliability levels so high" he added.

Be Unlimited (<http://www.bethere.co.uk>) is part of the O2 Group and it is clear the service quality within the network is key to customer satisfaction. One possible reason for O2 beating Be for the top spot may be the level of customer care from its UK-based call centre.

"This is a fantastic endorsement of the focus we've had at O2 on the customer experience," said Peter Rampling, Marketing Director at Telefónica O2 UK. "In the relatively short space of time since we launched, we have firmly established O2 Home Broadband as the quality player in the UK market."

The 'niche provider' categories include the small and mid-sized ISPs with between 2,000 and 10,000 ratings. The results show that small provider IDNet (www.idnet.net) leads the way with an exceptional 87% customer service rating. Close behind is Zen Internet (www.zen.co.uk), one of the early adopters of ADSL and known quite widely for their good quality service. Zen has crept ahead of IDNet in the reliability statistics. Also noteworthy is NewNet and Entanet which are both well ahead of the rest of the field.

Being relatively small providers allows them to really focus and deliver on customer service across the board, and it's certainly setting new challenges for other larger operators. The Niche ISP winner IDNet (www.idnet.net) and runner-up Zen (www.zen.co.uk) achieved the highest customer service scores in the entire survey and with Zen Internet being one of the larger niche operators, it is expected that O2 (<http://broadband.o2.co.uk>) will have a tough time maintaining their position in the future.

"We are humbled that our customers have rated us so highly" said Simon Davies, Director of IDNet (www.idnet.net), "We fully appreciate that there are plenty of cheaper ISPs to choose from. We put all our energy into striving to provide a high quality service and, by delivering that, we can offer our customers better value-for-money than our price-driven competitors" he added.

Undoubtedly broadband is a brilliant technology but when it fails to work it can cause major frustrations, and poor support from the ISP's can lead to customers pulling their hair out.

Thinkbroadband.com (<http://www.thinkbroadband.com>) reports that the most common complaint from its forum is that many support centres seem unable to digress from their 'script'. This can be very frustrating, especially for technically savvy users who sometimes understand the technology better than the support agent on the end of the line.

The Tiscali and Carphone Warehouse groups as well as Orange appear towards the bottom of the list—This is perhaps not unexpected as their business models focus on low cost services. Nevertheless, if consumers continue to subscribe to their services after the end of their minimum contracts, they must be providing an acceptable customer service to price balance.

"In a highly competitive market it's vital that broadband providers step up to the mark on customer service if they are going to retain long term customers. Fixing low prices is not enough on its own and quality of customer service can be a big pull for many," concludes Lahtinen.

A full breakdown of broadband customer service (<http://www.thinkbroadband.com/news/3890-broadband-customer-ratings-2008.html>) ratings for 24 service providers is available on thinkbroadband's website:

<http://www.thinkbroadband.com/news/3890-broadband-customer-ratings-2008.html>

-Ends -

Notes to editor:

(Full result details available upon request)

About thinkbroadband.com:

Thinkbroadband.com is the UK's largest independent broadband news and information site which has been operating since 2000. It started in the days when broadband services were being trialled and its staff thus have some of the most comprehensive experience in this area.

Consumers can refer to this impartial website for independent advice and details on the services offered by Broadband Service Providers, enabling them to make an informed decision as to who to use as a supplier as well as troubleshoot problems they may be having.

- Comprehensive range of 'plain english' consumer guides and advice
- Access to bespoke interactive tools including a broadband speed tester
- Broadband hardware reviews
- Member forum with a community of like-minded people where you can share your thoughts and broadband queries
- Variety of ways to rank products according to individual priorities
- Detailed product information, availability checker and ISP search
- Up-to-date news on broadband industry developments
- Independent experts available to assist media with queries or interviews
- Focus on providing information and resolving issues rather than encouraging 'switching providers'

Links:

thinkbroadband - <http://www.thinkbroadband.com>

O2 - <http://broadband.o2.co.uk>

Be Unlimited - <http://www.bethere.co.uk>

PlusNet - <http://www.plus.net>

IDNet - <http://www.idnet.net>

Zen Internet - <http://www.zen.co.uk>

NewNet - <http://www.newnet.co.uk>

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