Dear Reader,
This 18th issue of spotlight talks about the consumers right to an informed choice through Broadband labels in the wake of TRAI recommendations to enhance Broadband Speed and Connectivity.
Stay safe and Healthy!

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Consumer Broadband Labels (CBLs): Empowering Consumers

Ensuring quality access of broadband internet to consumers has become a global priority in a post-pandemic world. Recognising the shift towards work-from-home and learn from home, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) recently released a 'Roadmap to Promote Broadband Connectivity and Enhanced Broadband Speed'. Two notable recommendations are:

- The revision of minimum download speed for broadband to 2Mbps from the present 512 Kbps to promote transparency,
- Piloting a Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) of INR 200 per month for prospective rural consumers.

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In line with the TRAI notifications, it is necessary to focus on consumers' needs **Quality of Service (QoS)** and **Quality of Experience (QoE).**

- **QoE** is a measure of the delight or annoyance of a customer's experiences with a service. QoE focuses on the entire service experience; it is a holistic concept, similar to field of user experience, but with its roots in telecommunication.

- **QoS** is the description or measurement of the overall performance of a service particularly the performance seen by the users of the network. To quantitatively measure the quality of service, several related aspects of the network service are often considered, such as packet loss, bit rate, throughput, transmission delay, availability, jitter, etc.

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## What Are Consumer Broad Band Labels (CBLS)?
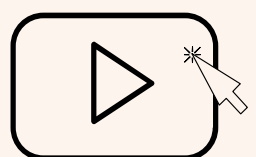
CBL (akin to nutrition labels on food packages) for consumers entails the actual monthly performance of their services on the parameters discussed above. There are many readable and understandable forms of CBL, which provide relevant information to consumers in a concise infographic format.

CONSUMER BROADBAND LABEL

QoS Parameters	Download	Upload
Max Speed	1.8 Mbps	1.2 Mbps
Average Speed	1.2 Mbps	1.0 Mbps
Latency	32ms	
Availability	89%	75%
DNS delay	289ms	
Stability: Mean Time Between Switch	2.1s	3.5s

Service quality	Assessment
Activation time	10 hours max, 3.5 hours avg
Coverage	Bihar - Overall: 75% - Rural: 56% - Urban: 89% National: 18/22 circles
Performance improvement over last year	Speed: ++ (25%) Latency: No change Stability: - (10%) Coverage: +++ (50%)

Network improvement practices	
Content Delivery Networks	Enhanced performance for Facebook, Youtube
Data compression proxies	Ad blocker, image compression
Available capacity for new users	65% utilization
Goals for 2017	Coverage inc. to 95% Avg. speed to 1.5Mbps

CONSUMER BROADBAND LABEL

QoE Parameter	Download (in Mbps)	Upload (in Mbps)
Max Speed	1.8	1.2
Average Speed	1.2	1.0
Social networking	★★★★☆	
Video streaming	★★★★★	
HD video	★☆☆☆☆	
Mapping apps	★★★☆☆	
Web browsing	★★★★☆	
Messaging apps	★★★☆☆	
Voice calling	★★★★★	

Data pricing	Limit	Upgrade
Rs 100/pm	1 GB	5p / MB
Rs 200/pm	2 GB	5p / MB

Guidance notes:
- Choose a plan based on your needs
- 5min of Youtube streaming @ 240p will consume 15MB of data
- 5min of Facebook browsing will consume XXX of data
- Example: With a 1GB plan, you can watch 30 Youtube videos of 5min each, and spend XXX minutes on Facebook

Examples of quantitative (QoS) and qualitative (QoE) labels, designed by Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) and the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (IIT-D), in 2017 have been given above.

Such CBLs are in use in Singapore, the United States of America (U.S.A) and many of the European countries have also accepted the need for CBLs.

Why CBLs are the future?
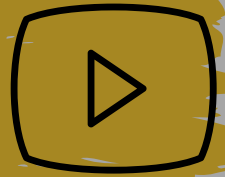
PLACES THE POWER WITH THE CONSUMER:
The CBLs empower the consumer with knowledge and allow them to choose as per their needs and requirements.

INCREASE TRANSPARENCY:
Such information disclosure will help in creating awareness amongst consumers on different QoS parameters, and also help in bridging the information gap on the actual performance of service providers.

Immediate Action Points

TO CREATE AN AWARE CONSUMER BASE: Undertake initiatives for improving transparency by ISPs by declaring actual network performance to consumers in form of CBLs containing monthly summary of their performance parameters like speed, latency, usage as per mobile phone apps etc.

TO PROMOTE TRANSPARENCY: For consumers to make informed choices, regulators can identify an agency to regularly test bandwidth and also then provide the consumers with data to make informed choice.
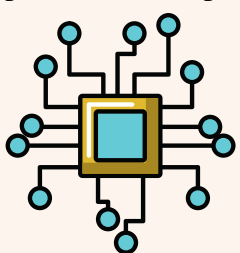
For more information on the same please visit: **https://cuts-ccier.org**.

You can watch a short Animation Film on Consumer Broadband Labels by clicking on this link: **www.youtube.com**

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