



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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FCC BUREAU SEEKS COMMENT ON “NEED FOR SPEED” INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS OF BROADBAND SERVICES

Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau Wants to Hear What Information Would Be Most Helpful to Consumers

Washington, DC -- The FCC’s Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau (CGB) has issued a Public Notice asking for comments on the kinds of “need for speed” information that will be most useful to consumers in choosing their Internet service.

“The marketplace for broadband service is a confusing one for consumers,” says CGB Bureau Chief Joel Gurin. “Most people don’t understand megabits-per-second in the way they understand miles-per-gallon.” Gurin notes that an FCC Survey last year found that 80 percent of people with broadband don’t even know what speed they’re getting from their service. “Broadband service providers recognize the problem, and have taken some good steps to educate consumers,” says Gurin. “This Public Notice will provide a way for internet service providers, the tech community, and the public to help develop clear guidelines that will help everyone understand how to get the service they need.”

In the Public Notice, CGB notes that consumers may have very different needs for broadband service depending on what they use it for. Someone who uses the Web primarily for email, for example, may be well served by a smaller and less expensive service than an avid video viewer would need. Others, such as online gamers, may be especially concerned about factors like signal latency.

The Public Notice http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-11-661A1.pdf recognizes the importance of collecting input from a broad range of stakeholders on broadband speed and performance. The Bureau also says that this Notice builds on the work of a voluntary group of service providers and consumer groups that have met with the Commission to help guide the FCC’s national testing of broadband speed and performance.

Comments are due May 26, 2011 and replies June 16, 2011.

- FCC -

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