



Liverpool Direct Limited



Organisation

Liverpool Direct Limited (LDL) Computers for Pupils Scheme.

Challenge

To improve access to online learning resources for secondary school pupils in Liverpool without access to the internet.

The Solution

3G/HSDPA USB Modems using two O2 data links to carry secure, content-filtered Internet traffic for 2,000 Liverpool children.

Introduction

In 2005 the Government announced a £60 million funding scheme – Computers for Pupils – to help disadvantaged families with secondary aged children get better access to online learning resources.

Liverpool was one of first regions to pioneer the Computers for Pupils Scheme: Liverpool Direct Limited (LDL) – a joint ICT services company between Liverpool City Council and British Telecom – is responsible for providing ICT services to schools in the Liverpool area and has pioneered computers for pupils in Liverpool.

Results

- Improved learning opportunities for 2,000 children accessing the internet
- Increased cost effectiveness
- Greater online protection for children.

Products and Services

- O2 USB Modems
- O2's HSDPA Network
- O2 Data Link
- O2 Professional Services.

The challenge

Paul Bradshaw, Senior School Improvement Officer at Liverpool City Council, believes there was a growing digital divide between pupils who have access to the Internet, especially at home, and those who do not. The Council wanted to give the most disadvantaged pupils the same opportunities as their peers. There is evidence that some children from disadvantaged families are most likely to move homes frequently which makes it virtually impossible to set up home-based Internet access. In addition, service providers want customers to sign up to at least one-year contracts yet this group are least likely to be able to afford or have the financial stability to meet service provider requirements.

The Solution

LDL partnered with O2 to develop a solution that would give pupils the access they needed, but that could overcome barriers such as content & filtering control.

Schools provide eligible pupils with a laptop fitted with an O2 3G wireless modem. There are 47 O2 mobile phone base stations within a 5km radius of the city centre and others across Merseyside which provide the good coverage needed. When a pupil accesses the Internet via the 3G wireless modem, they are routed to LDL existing schools network. This means that children in the Computers for Pupils Scheme have the same level of Internet filtering and security protection as every school and pupil in the area.

Paul Bradshaw says, "Through our Computers for Pupils Scheme in Liverpool, almost 2,000 children and

young people have been provided with a laptop and 3G connection, enabling anytime, anywhere access to the Internet. These children and young people now have the opportunity to access quality digital learning resources and can use the Internet to research information for course work and other projects in the comfort of their own homes or indeed anywhere they need to at a time that is convenient for them and their families."

O2 has provided LDL with a cost effective tariff that gives unlimited access without large unpredictable charges. As well as routing access through LDL's firewall and content filtering systems, the O2 SIM cards in the laptop modems can be configured so that they are safe from misuse – the laptops cannot be used for Internet telephony, voice traffic, or SMS.

"O2 offered us and the Council the best value for money and, importantly, O2 was able to provide the high speed 3G service which delivers fast connectivity and 3GB download, and allows LDL to provide and manage secure content filtering for every user."

Joanne Barton, ICT Project Manager from the LDL's Education Sector Team