

Fans Give Slow Broadband The Boot As England Qualifier Approaches

By Top 10 Broadband

Dated: Oct 09, 2009

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October 10th will see an England international shown exclusively online for the first time-ever – a landmark event in sports broadcasting history. The qualifying match will be hosted on a range of sites including Sun Online, Mail Online, Virgin Media, Orange and in selected cinemas.

Viewers will be charged up to £11.99 by rights holders Perform if they sign up on the day of the game. Alternatively, a charge of £4.99 is applicable if they pay in advance. However, widespread slow broadband connection speeds across the UK could render the game unwatchable for millions of paying customers.

This is because watching continuous video online requires a connection of at least 2Mb – a speed that is likely to be well beyond those of millions of fans who live in rural areas. Fans without connections of this speed may suffer interruptions due to the coverage and poor picture quality.

International football matches typically drive huge increases in sales of takeaway food and drinks and England shirts. However, in a sign of changing priorities for sports fans, big games are now driving take up of faster broadband, too.

The trend is born out by figures from Top 10 Broadband showing that in the last three weeks, sales of super-fast broadband packages (broadband speeds above 8Mb) increased by over 30% – a turn of pace that even fleet-footed midfielder Theo Walcott might struggle to match.

Demand for super-fast products spiked when it was revealed just a week before kick-off that terrestrial and satellite TV networks would not be showing the game.

Alex Buttle, marketing director at Top 10 Broadband, said: "Clearly England fans don't care if they watch online or on TV, so long as they are sure to see the game.

"The surge in fast broadband sales shows that football fans are waking up to the fact that the days of guaranteed coverage of centerpiece sports events are no more. A good broadband connection has become as essential to fans as a replica shirt or a fridge of cold beer."

Links

Top 10 Broadband homepage: <http://www.top10-broadband.co.uk/>

Super fast broadband page: http://www.top10-broadband.co.uk/compare/super_fast_broadband/

Broadband & digital TV page: http://www.top10-broadband.co.uk/compare/broadband_and_digital_tv/

Top 10 Fast Broadband Packages

- 1 Virgin Media XXL Up to 50Mb (£18.00)
- 2 Eclipse Home Lite Up to 24Mb (£11.95)
- 3 Be Unlimited Up to 24Mb (£17.50)
- 4 O2 Premium Up to 20Mb (£9.79)
- 5 BT Option 1 Up to 20Mb (£7.78)
- 6 AOL Wireless Flexi Up to 8Mb (£4.99)
- 7 Plusnet Value Up to 8Mb (£5.99)
- 8 TalkTalk Essentials Up to 8Mb (£6.49)
- 9 Tiscali Superfast Up to 8Mb (£6.49)
- 10 Orange Home Max Up to 8Mb (£13.97)

Notes to Editors:

Top 10 Broadband is the UK's most popular dedicated broadband comparison site with over 12 million visitors per year.

The award-winning website offers a range of comparison tools and customer reviews, allowing users to make quick and easy broadband buying decisions.

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Operated by Formula, a Central London-based web company, Top 10 Broadband has over 350,000 visitors a month. The team also publishes broadband news stories on a daily basis.

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