



Azotel Offers DIY WiFi Broadband ISP

Broadband uptake made good progress in the first quarter, with the number of internet users with broadband reaching 35%, up from 19% at the same point last year. Despite the massive jump, Ireland remains behind other nations. The penetration rate is 7.8%, still well behind the OECD average of 11.7%.

While major urban centres are doing well, rural areas aren't. Grants for group broadband schemes are designed to tackle this deficit but while €25m of funding had been awarded, only €4m of that had been drawn down. It appears that many new operators are having difficulties moving from planning to implementation.

With that in mind, a new partnership involving Azotel, Hosting 365 and Motorola is to begin offering a package that will enable customers to set up their own wireless broadband ISP. The new service will be marketed under the Azotel brand name and will operate under a franchise model. Its promoters say that the solution will mean that entrepreneurs with even limited technical expertise will be able to set up a wireless broadband service.

The service will be delivered via Motorola's Canopy hardware, which can connect customers to a central access point, which in turn can deliver a high-

speed link to a backhaul fibre loop. E-net, the company which manages the government's metropolitan area fibre networks, has agreed to provide backhaul to Azotel customers.

Azotel itself will provide the core network and back office functions for the broadband operator. Hosting 365 will provide managed services, including technical support.



Paul Lynch of Hosting 365 (left), John O'Hare of Azotel and Ian Bayly of Motorola (right)