

Briefs: Telecom N.Z. chops rural broadband prices

February 8 2006

Telecom New Zealand is cutting wireless broadband prices for rural customers in what is seen as a response to growing competition from satellite providers.

Telecom says the changes announced this week will cut average rural Internet bills as much as 45 percent.

The company offers its wireless service through its Xtra Internet service provider and delivered over BCL's Extend network.

Telecom said in a release that the price cuts were aimed at encouraging the use of broadband by rural residents as well as schools and farmers.

Analysts, however, said that rural Kiwis were already jumping on the broadband bandwagon, but were turning to satellite providers such as Shin and Natcom rather than paying Telecom's relatively expensive DSL prices. The National Business Review noted Wednesday that prices for Telecom's business DSL plans had not changed.

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