

Carphone said planning free U.K. broadband

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Britain's Carphone Warehouse reportedly will offer free broadband access to its landline customers beginning later this week.

London's Sunday Times said the launch is likely to spark a price war among British broadband providers and possibly pad Carphone Warehouse's broadband subscriber base that currently hovers around 75,000.

By comparison, BT and NTL each have more than 2 million subscribers.

Carphone has been limited by its reliance on BT wholesale broadband for its retail customers; however, The Times said Carphone has been installing its own equipment for loop unbundling that will extend its reach.

The move comes amid reports that BSkyB will offer broadband service later this year at likely a rock-bottom price.

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