

Intel to invest in S.Korea wireless broadband venture

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Sriram Viswanathan (L), vice president of Intel's Architecture Group, and South Korea's KT chairman Lee Suk-Chae (R) pose with an Intel-made wireless multi-band network adapter (C) during a press conference in Seoul. The investment unit of US technology giant Intel said Thursday it would pump 20 million dollars into a South Korean wireless broadband joint venture.

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The move is expected to accelerate wireless services in South Korea, amid growing demand for smartphones and other multifunctional devices.

The WiBro joint venture involves South Korean telecoms giant KT Corp, [Samsung Electronics](#) and Kookmin Bank Investment.

WiBro, which allows faster data transfer and a higher degree of mobility, is a version of the [WiMAX technology](#) offered by South Korean telecoms operators from 2006.

Intel Capital said its money would be used to speed up deployment of leading-edge wireless broadband networks in South Korea.

The investment strengthens "our WiMAX efforts in the Asia-Pacific region, arguably the fastest-growing wireless broadband area," and specifically helps KT expand its offering, [Intel](#) Capital president Arvind Sodhani said in a statement.

From Friday South Korean customers can buy laptops and netbooks with Intel's chipsets supporting WiMAX services, allowing high-speed Internet access without plug-in USB modems or wireless pocket routers.

The devices will enable users to enjoy [wireless connectivity](#) in countries and cities that also have compatible WiMAX networks.

KT plans to begin its WiBro service in five major cities and expressways and expand its coverage to 85 percent of the population by next year.

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