

# Meeting customers' needs



Some of our customers' communications needs are simple and some of our customers' communications needs are complicated.

Our job is to find the most effective way to meet those needs, however simple, however complicated.

We recognise that there's more than one way to deliver integrated, end-to-end services, and that you don't have to own everything in between.

Reach and facilitation are not the same thing as ownership and, from our customers' perspective, what we enable them to do and the prices we charge are more important than how we enable them to do it.

For example, although we have unwound the Concert joint venture with AT&T and disposed of stakes in a number of ventures outside the UK, we are still very active internationally and continue to offer full global connectivity, if that's what our customers want.

The main goal of our European solutions business, for example, is to meet the communications needs of multi-site corporate customers with European operations.

We aim to take the complexity out of communications for them, whether their objective is straightforward cost reduction, or the strategic development of e-business capability.

Similarly, although we demerged the majority of our mobile operations into mmO2, we still offer a full range of mobile services in the UK.

We have a trading arrangement with mmO2, which means, for example, that individual consumers or small businesses can buy mobile phones via [www.bt.com](http://www.bt.com).

And by June 2003, we will have launched the UK's first-ever public access wireless local area network (LAN). A range of national access points in airports, stations, hotels and so on, will enable customers to connect to the internet from their laptop or hand-held device, at faster speeds than are currently possible via wireless connections.

And our account managers can work with our business customers who want more complex mobile services, wireless application protocol (WAP), m-commerce or integrated fixed/mobile solutions, just as we'll work with our wholesale customers who want to offer these services to their customers.

In April 2002, for example, we unveiled a range of mobility initiatives designed to help make the concept of "business agility" a reality for our corporate customers. The new services will buy airtime from mmO2 and will be BT-branded from top to bottom.

Other mobile operators are also recognising the value of working with us. Our expertise in the solutions business and one-stop shop capability is helping them develop their third-generation (3G) networks.

One of the reasons we're able to offer as much or as little as our customers want is that we have vast experience in creating great networks.

We have the largest capacity telecommunications network in the UK, with the most extensive geographical reach and comprehensive customer coverage.<sup>2</sup>

The growth of internet protocol (IP), e-business, multimedia applications and mobile communications has given rise to a dramatic increase in demand for bandwidth.

The plan over the next five years is to move from a circuit-switched to a predominantly packet-switched network, which will bring with it a range of major customer benefits, including enhanced service, speed, flexibility and capacity.

And we have major network depth and reach in continental Europe, from the Nordic countries to Spain. Our pan-European network is an advanced and extensive IP-enabled network, with 20 hosting centres in 16 countries, covering 56,000 kilometres and linking 300 large towns and cities.

And we are continuing to invest, approaching £3 billion a year, to create a twenty-first century network that will continue to offer our customers the best possible communications services and solutions.

The message to our customers is: even if our networks don't go there, we'll create the necessary relationships and put in place the necessary agreements to ensure that they can.

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**footnote**

<sup>2</sup>Around 300 million UK local and national calls are made every day from BT lines. Our network, which includes 900 local and trunk exchanges, 120 million kilometres of copper and six million kilometres of optical fibre, reaches practically every home and business in the UK.

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