



Disadvantaged to get cheap dial-up Internet

By Renai LeMay, ZDNet Australia

23 May 2005

A new partnership seeking to bring cheap Internet access to the aged, veterans and people with disabilities has opted for dial-up rather than broadband.

Internet provider ISPOne and not-for-profit organisation Technical Aid to the Disabled (TAD) have partnered on the deal, dubbed TADAust Connect. It will see participants access the Internet for AU\$5.50 a month, with no associated setup or download fees.

Although TAD claimed in a statement comparable Internet services “usually cost AU\$30 to AU\$40 a month”, several ISPs such as Curl Communications and TPG offer unlimited dial-up plans at approximately half that price.

A TAD spokesperson confirmed the partnership considered providing broadband instead of dial-up access, but ultimately rejected it because of accessibility issues.

“This is a national program and broadband still isn’t available in some areas,” he said.

“At this stage it was decided to go for the simplest option, which turned out to be dial-up, and the one that was most accessible.”

TAD said the service will be available to holders of a disability, aged or veterans’ pension, as well as existing TAD clients. The organisation claimed around 250,000 people who met these criteria would be able to access the deal.

Executive director of TAD’s Australian Capital Territory branch, John O’Neill, said the deal would raise the quality of life for disadvantaged groups.

“Normally the cost of access is beyond the reach of many people with disabilities, veterans, the aged and their carers,” he said. “This agreement will provide a wonderful new range of opportunities for people to improve their quality of life and independence.”