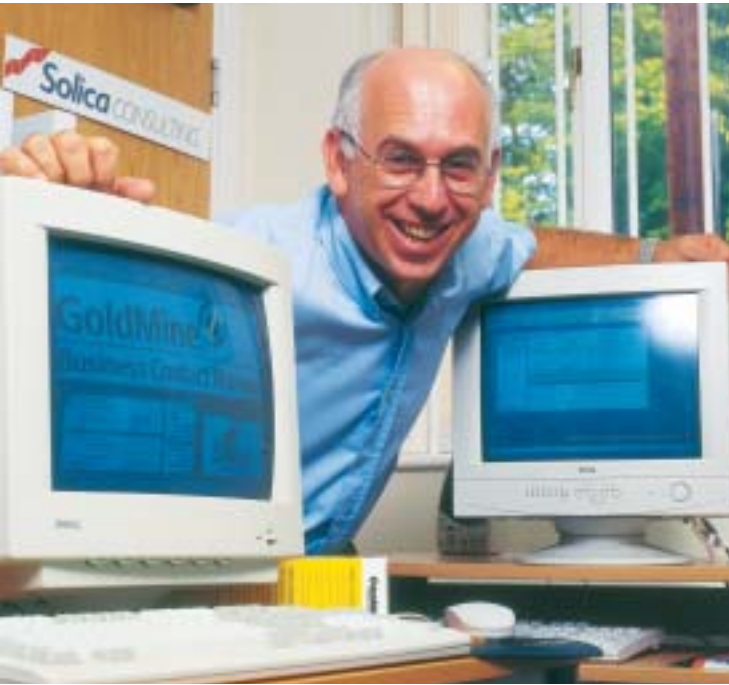


# SEEDA's Achievements for - The Wired Region 1999 – 2002

SEEDA has begun the roll-out of its 'Broadband programme for remote areas' in Hastings with funding to explore the benefits of Broadband access via satellite. This will provide 50 satellite linkages to key businesses and community locations across Hastings and Rother by September 2002 in those areas which cannot be accessed by ADSL or fibre connections.



## Introduction

During the year 2001-02, the Wired Region Team progressed the regional strategy for improved Broadband connectivity with a major pilot scheme which set the scene for a full roll-out.

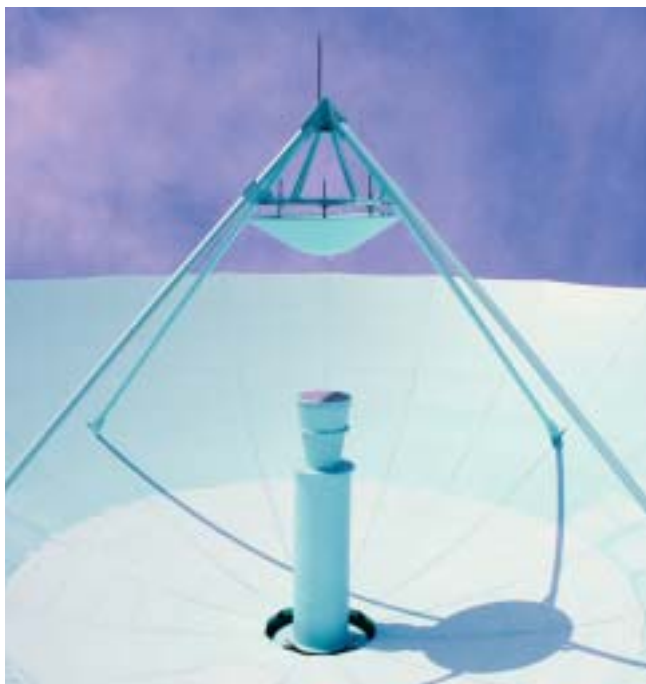
In addition, work on finalising SEEDA's regional portal prepared the way for its launch in autumn 2002. An Intranet for SEEDA's Enterprise Hubs was developed and the achievement of a 'Coastal Super Highway' study will support this major strand of the regional connectivity strategy.

## Outputs

- Broadband access via satellite roadshow and pilot scheme run in Hastings and Rother;
- Grants scheme to offset cost differential for satellite service prepared;
- Region wide satellite programme developed for 500 businesses and organisations in remote areas with no ADSL availability;
- Aggregation study completed in Winchester;
- SEE-Online, the Regional Portal, finalised aimed at supporting businesses and partner organisations;
- Investigative analysis of Broadband potential in the Isle of Wight carried out;
- Enterprise Hub Intranet network completed;
- Hastings declared BT e-location.

## Key Facts

- Broadband enables 'always on' Internet access at speeds at least 10 times faster than standard telephone lines;
- The two areas of greatest deficiency for Broadband are:
  - Rural areas where there is a deficiency in mass market services - a national problem;
  - East of the region - lack of telecom providers of high speed services;
- ADSL coverage in the region stands at 74% of home users (*Source: BT*);
- Broadband availability nationally stands at an average of 66% (*Source: Office of the e-Envoy*);
- The South East as a region has an Internet uptake of 48% of households;
- The UK average for Internet uptake is 40% of households.



### **Some of SEEDA's specific initiatives for a Wired Region are:**

#### **◆ Broadband by Satellite for Remote Areas**

SEEDA began the roll-out of its Satellite Broadband Programme with a successful pilot in Hastings and Rother. The scheme aims to provide affordable Broadband services to business and organisations in primarily rural areas where no ADSL is available.

The pilot programme was finalised for launch in the early part of 2002 and, following its launch, attracted over 300 expressions of interest resulting in over 50 grants being awarded within three months of the scheme going live. The purpose of providing grants was to overcome the higher cost of satellite installation and usage to encourage businesses to try Broadband and provide case study evidence of its benefits.

SEEDA's aim is to provide and facilitate access to Broadband infrastructure, and to promote the uses and benefits of Broadband by educating business, individuals and organisations. SEEDA also aims to turn around the negative supply/demand cycle, where Broadband providers believe they cannot supply Broadband because there is not enough demand. By creating

awareness we can increase demand and in turn encourage greater provision and supply.

SEEDA is:

- Promoting the uses and benefits of Broadband, by raising awareness of the advantages to businesses and individuals;
- Assisting and facilitating local initiatives aimed at identifying and aggregating demand in a particular geographical location;
- Initiating and leading initiatives at regional or sub-regional level to identify and aggregate demand;
- Liaising and working with the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and with other government agencies particularly the DTI and the Office of the e-Envoy;
- Developing and maintaining effective relationships with major telecommunications companies and Internet Service Providers (ISPs).

#### **◆ Broadband Achievements in Partnership**

SEEDA has launched a scheme to assist businesses in rural areas which cannot get Broadband through terrestrial cable services. The Rural Area Broadband Inclusion Trial (RABBIT), a joint project with South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWERDA) and the East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA), will utilise funding from the UK Broadband fund for further development of satellite and other innovative technologies across the region.

#### **◆ DTI - UK Broadband Fund**

Agreement from DTI to utilise the majority of SEEDA's allocation from the UK Broadband Fund to help facilitate development of high-speed network services and infrastructure in Kent and East Sussex, with an emphasis on coastal areas.

#### **◆ Aggregation Studies**

The Winchester Study was completed successfully and a report is now available. The report demonstrates a significant demand for high-speed Broadband services.



#### ◆ National Liaison

SEEDA has representation on the Steering Group of the national Broadband Stakeholders Group and on four of the five working groups.

A successful meeting with telecommunications companies was held in February 2002.

Numerous meetings have taken place with providers of high-speed and mass market telecommunications services to discuss both technical and commercial issues relating to infrastructure and service roll-out. Companies include BT, NTL, Scottish & Southern Telecom, Fibrenet, Easynet, Tele2, neo networks, Bulldog Communications and cover a variety of technologies including cable/fibre-based services, wireless, and power line data transmission.

#### ◆ SEE-Online, The South East Regional Portal

A full web development team has now been recruited and significant progress has been made in developing the content strategy and technical infrastructure. SEEDA has installed resilient web and database servers at its Guildford Headquarters, connected to the Web via a link

to the University of Surrey and SuperJANET (the Higher Education broadband network).

A number of content partners have been identified and work is progressing in developing the three core content zones:

- Business
- Learning
- Community

Within each of these zones, partners will be recruited to develop and manage the content. The SEE-Online team are seeking to encourage content contributions from as wide range of organisations and individuals as possible. Individual content areas will be launched in collaboration with our partners upon completion.

A demonstration site is online and can be accessed by typing the address **<http://www.seeonline.org.uk>** into a web browser on any computer connected to the Internet.

The fully operational site will be delivered in November 2002.

A Broadband zone is being developed as part of the regional web portal. It will provide:

- Basic information about Broadband;
- A facility to help determine where Broadband is available (by postcode);
- A facility for consumers and businesses to register an interest in, or requirement for, Broadband;
- Maps showing the demand for Broadband registered with the site;
- Information providing assistance to local individuals or groups involved in demand identification and/or aggregation. This will include:
  - Specialist technology reports
  - Information exchange mechanisms;
- Aggregation case studies such as the report from the Winchester Broadband aggregation study;

- Case studies on the use of Broadband in business (particularly focusing on SMEs);
- Explanations of what can be done with Broadband for the home and SME user;
- Links to, and hosting of, Broadband content and services, both for those already with Broadband connections and for demonstration purposes in public Broadband centres, for example libraries and UK-Online centres, across the region.

#### ◆ Other Web Activities

The Wired Region team has been assisting with a number of other web based developments including:

- ‘Our Future’ - Hastings and Bexhill Regeneration Project - [www.ourfuture.org.uk](http://www.ourfuture.org.uk)
- The SEE-IN regional statistics web site;
- Development of a strategy for future advances for the SEEDA corporate website;
- The SEEDA Intranet.

#### ◆ The Year Ahead

The following have been identified as key target initiatives for the coming year:

- Tender for the provision of high-speed network services in the main population centres in Kent and East Sussex, bringing together funds from the DTI UK Broadband Fund, the Coalfields Fund and leveraging the planned activities of the spatial development company in north Kent;



- Continue to seek initiatives aimed at identifying and stimulating Broadband demand, including:
  - The connection of a total of 500 businesses/organisations via Broadband satellite;
  - Providing funding for additional local aggregation studies or other initiatives;
  - Further develop the Regional Web Portal with a minimum of six specialist zones including the Broadband zone by June 2003 and expanded content in the Business, Learning and Community Regeneration areas;
  - Redevelopment of the SEEDA corporate web site;
  - Implement the Broadband aspects of the Hastings Regeneration programme as the first stage in a Coastal Super Highway network from Southampton along the South Coast through Thanet and Thames Gateway.

**‘The Wired Region Initiative is about getting as many people and businesses online as possible and making the use of Internet and e-technology as common as using the phone.’**



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