



MARKET RELEASE

12 December 2017

Spark trials portable wireless broadband as it hits 100,000 customers

Spark today announced that 100,000 customers are now on its wireless broadband product and the company will trial a 'portable' option over summer to allow 100 customers to use their home broadband on holiday.

Reaching this milestone shows the momentum behind Spark's Upgrade New Zealand programme and further demonstrates Spark's progress towards its aspiration to be mostly ex-copper by 2020. Spark now has ~43% of its customers on new generation broadband technologies (either fibre or wireless broadband), up from 37% at the end of June 2017.

Clive Ormerod, GM of Customer and Marketing for Spark Home, Mobile and Business said 15% of Spark and Skinny broadband customers had now moved to the wireless broadband product in just over a year. "Our significant investment in the Spark mobile network is allowing us to fundamentally change the services we offer over it. In the last year alone, we've added many thousands of wireless broadband customers to the network and launched our Unlimited mobile plan with some amazing take up from customers."

"Today, we're in a position where we can trial portable wireless broadband as one of the future evolutions of this service. This is possible today because of our continuing investment in increasing 4G network capacity, and in expanding 4.5G service across the country as part of our pathway to 5G. This trial of portable wireless broadband is the next step and we're excited to see where it will take us."

Customers on the trial will simply unplug their modem at home and plug it in at their New Zealand holiday destination – allowing them to use their home broadband on holiday.

Spark is the first major New Zealand telecommunications provider to trial portable wireless broadband. Ormerod said the trial, with 100 existing wireless broadband



customers nationwide, would help assess demand for a portable product that could be used in more than one location in the future.

Although wireless broadband runs off the mobile network, a wireless broadband modem is currently 'geo-locked' so that it only provides service at one location. However, Ormerod says that, right from launch, customers and commentators asked if Spark would unlock modems to make wireless broadband portable.

"What we've already seen is that there is a significant appetite for this service. We had many more applications from customers wanting to be on the trial than we expected."

Over the peak summer period, thousands of Kiwis leave the major cities and towns to enjoy time off at a rental, a bach or a campground. For instance, last summer, Spark network data showed that nearly a quarter (23%) of Aucklanders left the city in the days following Christmas.

Ormerod says wireless broadband customers say they love the ease and simplicity of fast and reliable wireless broadband. As demonstrated by Spark's consumer customer satisfaction research, customers prefer wireless connectivity to their old copper line and the continued rate of data growth shows that customers also want to be always connected. Even in the home broadband space, it's becoming a wireless world.

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For media queries, please contact:

Lucy Fullarton

Senior Communications Partner

+64 (0) 21 070 6197

For investor relations queries, please contact:

Dean Werder

General Manager Finance and Business Performance

+64 (0) 27 259 7176