

Gordon Brown's plans for investment in super-fast broadband

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CMA welcomes Gordon Brown's plans for investing in a massive programme of public works and which includes super-fast broadband. Not only is this announcement good news for the UK's job market during this difficult economic downturn, but it will also help towards improving the UK's competitiveness in a global market by ensuring continued investment in Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

We have guaranteed that every UK citizen has access to telephone and utility services, regardless of economic status. This must also be done for broadband Internet access. Universal service, efficient national spectrum use, next generation facilities, technologies and applications, and new tax and loan incentives are fundamental to this overall strategy and economic success. Technology must also provide solutions to many of our environmental challenges, including climate change.

Besides deploying next generation broadband, we must also guarantee an open Internet, creating a transparent and connected democracy, employing ICT to help solve some of the nation's most pressing problems, and preparing all children for work in a 21st century economy. Such economic-based policies will ensure that the UK leads the world in super-fast broadband penetration.

The imminent deployment of Next Generation Networks and BT's 21CN provides an excellent opportunity to agree and regulate improved interfaces to enable operators to interconnect and co-operate in the delivery of services. To meet political, economic, cultural and social demands, the UK needs converged services that are delivered faster, more efficiently, cost-effectively, and with nationwide coverage.

Like Barack Obama in the USA, we also now require a dynamic, high-profile political champion in the UK, one who will put the UK's communications strategy at the heart of economic recovery.

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CMA (The Communications Management Association) is the UK's premier independent membership body for professionals and organisations focused on exploiting communications, networking and ICT for business advantage. We have been supporting telecoms and ICT professionals and organisations within private and public sectors for 50 years. Through our research & analysis, specialist forums, publications and events we provide the assistance, information, training and representation so essential in an ever changing business environment.

Our goal is to ensure that CMA's members, who spend £13.4 billion in the communications market annually are the best informed professionals in the industry. CMA is the definitive voice of the ICT user on key issues to government and regulatory authorities. We work directly with Ofcom in the UK and are represented internationally through our membership of the international telecoms user group INTUG.

In 2007 CMA joined the BCS Group to strengthen both organisations. This will enable the BCS to have a stronger offering in the field of communications and for CMA to have access to new resources and a wider community of IT professionals. The British Computer Society (BCS) is the Chartered industry body for IT professionals, the Chartered Engineering Institution for Information Technology and a Chartered Science Institution. With our rapidly growing membership, BCS is playing an increasingly pivotal role in leading the development and implementation of world class standards for the IT profession through innovative products, services and support.

Through our specific "Professionalism in IT" programme, BCS is leading and building IT professionalism to levels which are currently only seen in more traditional long standing professions such as law, medicine, and accountancy but which will increasingly become the de facto standards for IT professionals.