



Irish Broadband exceeds forecast

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High-speed wireless internet provider Irish Broadband said yesterday it signed up more people than expected last year as demand for home internet use increased.

Irish Broadband, which is a unit of NTR, said it had signed up more than 20,000 customers in

Managing director Paul Doody said that, while the rate of customer attraction was good throughout 2005, it was particularly strong in the final three months of the year as the company benefited from an aggressive advertising and marketing campaign.

Unlike other broadband services providers such as BT and Smart Telecom, Irish Broadband doesn't rely on Eircom's telephone lines for its service.

It uses its own technology to deliver broadband services over the air, meaning its customers are

not required to have a phone line in their homes to connect to the internet.

Irish Broadband, which won its first licence in 2002, last year spent about €45 million developing its network and expects to announce a further round of funding later this month. The group now has 13 licences to provide fixed wireless access in most heavily populated cities, including Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway.

The group said wireless broadband was proving extremely popular with many households because of its easy installation and independence from the telephone network.

A report by ComReg, the telecoms regulator, showed that while overall broadband subscriptions increased by almost 19 per cent in the third quarter of 2005, fixed wireless broadband services were the fastest growing with 37 per cent quarter on quarter growth.