On The Edge

What is WiBro?

WiBro is a variant of WiMAX. It is the Korean Wireless Broadband service based on the mobile WiMAX technology (IEEE 802.16e TDD OFDMA standard), is a wireless high-speed broadband service able to deliver voice, data and video at speeds of up to 120 km per hour. the Korean government allocated 100 MHz of electromagnetic spectrum in the 2.3 GHz band, and in late 2004 WiBro Phase 1 was standardized by the TTA (Telecommunications Technology Association) of Korea.

WiBro basestations will offer an aggregate data throughput of 30 to 50 Mb/s and cover a radius of 1 to 5 km, allowing for the use of portable Internet usage within the range of a base station. The technology will also offer Quality of Service. The inclusion of QoS allows for WiBro to stream video content and other loss-sensitive data in a reliable manner. These all appear to be (and may be) the stronger advantages over the WiMAX standard, but the proprietary nature of WiBro and its use of licensed spectrum that may not be available across the globe may keep it from becoming an international standard.

While WiBro is quite exacting in its requirements from spectrum use to equipment design, WiMAX leaves much of this up to the equipment provider while providing enough detail to ensure interoperability between designs. WiBro is expected to be widely deployed in South Korea by the middle of 2006. As it may become the 4G (4th Generation) wireless standard, the global market will be watching. WiBro will operate in the 2.3 GHz band and is interoperable with WiMAX.

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