



The Significance of the Consumer Broadband Label

Are you able to understand your monthly broadband bill? According to a November 2022 Consumer Reports publication: <https://www.benton.org/headlines/fight-fair-internet-consumer-reports-white-paper-broadband-pricing>, 2,827 of 22,088 internet bills analyzed were bundled, making it impossible for the consumer to determine the cost of the service and compare prices with other internet service providers. Hidden fees are another feature of bundling. Trying to “Interpret” your broadband bill is something consumers should not have to do. Finally, good news is on the way.

First created back in 2009 by a Washington D.C. “think and action tank” - the Open Technology Institute (OTI), they called it a “broadband nutrition label.” The label was thus named because it was modelled after the Food and Drug Administration’s nutrition label for food products. The purpose of the label is to have clear, easy-to-understand information about broadband services and pricing in a consistent format for consumers to understand and compare pricing.

“Every consumer needs transparent information when making decisions about what internet service offering makes the most sense for their family or household,” said Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chair Jessica Rosenworcel. “No one wants to be hit with charges they didn’t ask for or they did not expect. That’s why Broadband Consumer Labels are so important.” <https://www.telecompetitor.com/broadband-nutrition-labels-back-on-track-with-few-changes/>

The OTI submitted nine total initial comments and recommendations regarding the labels to the FCC. For brevity, I’ve included four of those recommendations here:

1. Broadband disclosures are opaque, confusing, and intimidating.
2. The labels must promote transparency, simplicity, and competition.
3. The labels can promote digital equity and other pro-consumer goals.
4. Small providers are market leaders on transparency.

ISPs with more than 100,000 customers will have to start using the new labels within six months. All other ISPs have a year to implement. Below is an example of the new broadband label.

Coming SOON! – Consumer Broadband Label

Broadband Facts

Provider Name
Service Plan Name and/or Speed Tier
Fixed or Mobile Broadband Consumer Disclosure

Monthly Price **[\$]**

This Monthly Price [is/is not] an introductory rate. [if introductory rate is applicable, identify length of introductory period and the rate that will apply after introductory period concludes]
This Monthly Price [does not] require[s] a [x year/x month] contract. [only required if applicable; if so, provide link to terms of contract]

Additional Charges & Terms

Provider Monthly Fees **[\$]**
[Itemize each fee or enter "None."]

One-time Fees at the Time of Purchase **[\$]**
[Itemize each fee or enter "None."]

Early Termination Fee **[\$]**

Government Taxes **[Varies by Location/Taxes Included]**

Discounts & Bundles
Click Here for available billing discounts and pricing options for broadband service bundled with other services like video, phone, and wireless service, and use of your own equipment like modems and routers. [Any links to such discounts and pricing options on the provider's website must be provided in this section.]

Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)
The ACP is a government program to help lower the monthly cost of internet service. To learn more about the ACP, including to find out whether you qualify, visit GetInternet.gov.

Participates in the ACP **[Yes/No]**

Speeds Provided with Plan

Typical Download Speed **[] Mbps**
Typical Upload Speed **[] Mbps**
Typical Latency **[] ms**

Data Included with Monthly Price **[] GB**
Charges for Additional Data Usage **[\$/GB]**

Network Management **Read our Policy**
Privacy **Read our Policy**

Customer Support
Contact Us: example.com/support / (555) 555-5555

Learn more about the terms used on this label by visiting the Federal Communications Commission's Consumer Resource Center.
fcc.gov/consumer

[Unique Plan Identifier Ex. F0005937974123ABC456EMC789]

An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requirements.