



DSL Traffic Management - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

QUESTION: Why did Bell implement Traffic Management?

Like other Internet providers, Bell's network is strained by applications that use up a lot of bandwidth, like online video and peer-to-peer file-sharing programs. Bell decided to ease network congestion by limiting the bandwidth of one application, peer-to-peer file sharing, during peak periods of Internet usage (4:30 p.m. – 2:00 a.m.) to ensure we deliver bandwidth fairly to all customers.

QUESTION: When did Bell deploy DSL Traffic Management and was it deployed across all Bell customer segments?

In 2007, Bell Canada launched internet traffic management for our Sympatico residential customers. In March 2008, we initiated similar traffic management for our wholesale DSL customers as well as retail Business Internet High Speed Customers.

QUESTION: What networks are affected by DSL Traffic Management?

Bell's traffic management solutions apply to our entire DSL PPPoE (Point to Point Protocol over Ethernet) network, including both retail and wholesale services. Traffic shaping has only been implemented on the GAS network – the HSA network is not part of Bell's current deployment of traffic shaping.

QUESTION: What technology was used and how does it differentiate between applications?

Bell has implemented Deep Packet Inspection (DPI) which identifies the packet mapping, but does not monitor, track, or access the content of your customers' P2P traffic.

QUESTION: What end customer applications will be affected by DSL Traffic Management?

Bell has implemented Traffic management exclusively on P2P file sharing including applications such as BitTorrent. DSL customers can continue to use P2P services but they will not work as fast during peak periods. No other application functionality is affected. There have been reports on various websites and in regulatory filings suggesting that our internet traffic management activities have been affecting more than P2P applications, such as VoIP, VPN, and streaming radio or video content services such as YouTube. We have investigated all reported incidents and have shown these problems to be unrelated to traffic management.



QUESTION: What should customers do if they believe applications other than P2P are being affected?

We urge any customer with evidence of such incidents to bring it to our attention immediately so that we may work together to verify whether Bell's traffic management activities are indeed causing the problem. If such unintended impacts are identified, we will work with our customers to address the problem.

Q. What impacts will DSL Traffic Management have on total throughput in an average ISP network?

A. Overall traffic is not expected to be significantly affected since DPI only redistributes traffic from peak periods to off-peak. Results will vary by ISP depending upon the amount of congestion in their networks. In many cases, we would expect HTTP to take up some of the available bandwidth at peak. We urge any customers with evidence of more material reductions to bring it to our attention and we will work with you to address the problem.