

The Impact of the Internet on I D Access Cards

With the advent of incredibly cheap card manufacture, mostly driven by the credit card industry, there are a wide number of Internet companies who are now offering low cost access to the Internet. Using access cards which are purchased at the area where the Internet access is offered or alternatively for use in a chain of shops or restaurants, these access cards provide a unique access code for a particular internet service provider and generally have a long series of letters and numbers which are uncovered when the user buys the card.

Pay as you go is not a new concept – the mobile phone companies have been using this payment structure for years. With a mobile phone, the customer buys a pre-paid card which contains a certain number of mobile phone “talk” minutes, and when those minutes are used up another card must be purchased. The same system is used for pay as you go internet access cards. Typically a user can either pay for unlimited access for a period of time, for example a day, a week or a month. The other method, which is actually less common in these days of high bandwidth internet access, is to pay as you go for the data amount. This second method is still used by the internet over mobile phone industry because the bandwidth of the connection is still limited by the technology.

Mobile internet is often used by business people who are on the move regularly, such as sales people and executives. These business men and women often use the internet while they are waiting at motorway service stations, and therefore a busy industry has grown up to sell access cards to the travelling business man – there are a number of well known companies who offer internet hot spots in public areas. Generally you must purchase the specific access card for the hot spot where you are located at that time. It is only because of the cheap availability of access cards, the high availability of high bandwidth internet, and more recently the widespread acceptance of WiFi internet, a wireless way to connect laptop computers to a hot spot, that the use of the internet on the go has grown.

Another growth area has been Internet in hotel rooms. In the past, this was provided by a wired internet system installed into the hotel when the building was built. The use of this network could be carefully monitored and could be charged, often at a premium, as part of the room charge. Because of the now widespread use of laptops, many hotels have now switched to a smart card wireless approach to their networks, even older hotel buildings can now offer the Internet to their residents.

Typically, one wireless router is used for ten to fifteen rooms, dependant on the layout and construction of the building. Wireless access smart cards are then purchased by the residents, allowing them the relative luxury of using their WiFi enabled computers throughout the whole hotel complex. It is common these days to see business people surfing the net over breakfast or relaxing in the lounge with their laptop.

Another huge advantage with smart card internet in hotels is for those hotels who offer conference facilities. Using a smart card system means that both exhibitors and visitors to a conference can very simply get access to the Internet, and for technology conferences this is invaluable. The smart card technology is a very good money earner for the hotel or conference centre because often their access point is the only way that the attendees can get onto the net.

About the Author

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