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# COVID-19 How did the sector cope?

During the lockdown, telecommunications operators reported an increased demand on internet bandwidth, particularly from their residential broadband customers.

It may come as no surprise to learn that online video streaming services made up for a significant proportion of the increased bandwidth usage.

Operators habitually plan for sudden spikes in bandwidth demands and although the total lockdown created an unprecedented increase, it was reassuring to learn that networks coped with the increased internet traffic without significantly compromising service levels, network security or integrity.



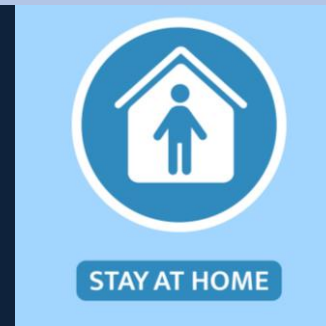
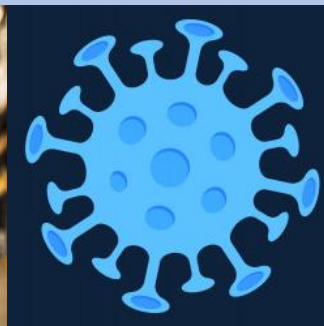


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# COVID-19 What did we learn?

The sudden restriction on the movement of people presented a challenge which was almost impossible to prepare for. Nevertheless, telecommunications operators had to quickly adapt their processes and obtain essential service work permits in order to maintain service levels and meet the lockdown requirements.

Although some level of network maintenance can be carried out remotely, a lot of the critical work involved in the smooth operation of a communications network are inevitably carried out in person and on site.





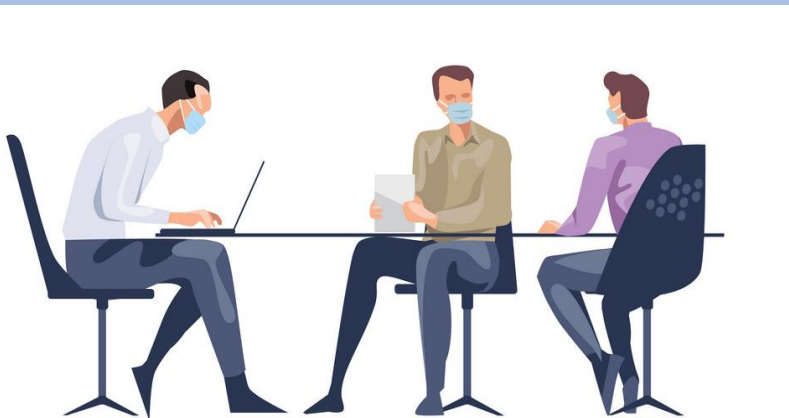
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# COVID-19 Were customers affected?

The lockdown restricted the movement of customers, making it difficult for those who are used to paying their bills in person, to do so.

As well as providing their customers alternative forms of payment either online or over the phone, telecommunications operators whose customers encountered such issues adopted a relaxed approach to collecting payment during the lockdown, giving customers more time to settle their bills.

Some small businesses whose employees were unable to go to work, were allowed to temporarily suspend their services until they returned to work.





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# COVID-19 Lessons learned?

Working through the lockdown presented the communications sector with a unique opportunity to reflect upon a difficult and testing time which also provided a unique opportunity to learn from that experience.

Local telecommunications operators confirmed that although the lockdown had been difficult and tested their systems, resources and capabilities to the limit, being better prepared for the future has become a top priority.



From a regulator's perspective, it is encouraging to learn that the sector managed to maintain service levels across all markets with minimal downtime and that now more than ever, both customers and operators have realised the true potential of having resilient and high quality communications services.



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