Speed-based unlimited data plans proliferate in European markets - research

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European mobile operators are increasingly varying advertised speeds on unlimited plans to create new upselling opportunities beyond data budgets. Tarifica, a market analysis service specialised in telecoms subscriptions and pricing, looked at 465 unlimited consumer postpaid plans from 39 international markets. The evaluation found variations in advertised downlink bandwidth among a number of European carriers, including KPN and Odido in the Netherlands and A1 and Drei in Austria. In total, around 20 percent of the plans sampled came with a lower speed limit than another postpaid subscription from the same carrier.

Odido and KPN both offer four speed tiers in unlimited data plans. At Odido, speeds of up to 20 Mbps can be bought on a 24-month contract at EUR 25 monthly, whereas a EUR 7.50 premium increases the ceiling to 400 Mbps. This continues a trend that started at the Dutch operators in 2023 with Odido's first speed-based unlimited data plan, with KPN following suit in the following year.

The same approach is now spreading elsewhere in Europe. Tarifica identified speed-based unlimited data offerings in sixteen markets. UK operator EE's plan provides a 100x upgrade in advertised bandwidth to 1 Gbps for a premium of about 19 percent. Vodafone Portugal, meanwhile, doubles the advertised speed to 1 Gbps from 500 Mbps for an extra 20 percent in fees. Tarifica observes that more widespread adoption could help mobile operators tempt price-conscious customers while reserving a faster tier for those willing to pay more, though the number of subscribers happy to accept the premium may depend on the perceived value of experiences.

CATEGORIES: Mobile
COMPANIES: KPN, A1, Vodafone, Vodafone Portugal, EE, Tarifica, Odido
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