

Regulator allows computer-to-phone calls now

Soon, for the first time in the country, you would be able to make calls from computers to fixed line as well as mobile phones.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Monday permitted Internet service providers (ISPs) to offer this service. The measure will bring the country's telecom sector in tune with global trends and will curtail the grey market tendencies, TRAI said.

Currently, a voice call can only be made from one computer to another, but not from a computer to a mobile or a fixed line phone.

The move is expected to intensify competition in the domestic long distance segment, to the benefit of consumers.

'It is envisaged that customers will ultimately benefit from cost effective and innovative Internet telephony service,' TRAI said in a statement.

'These recommendations will put Indian telecom sector in tune with global trends. The grey market tendencies shall be curtailed,' it added.

As per TRAI's recommendations, STD service providers would be connected to ISPs through public Internet based on a mutual agreement.

Such an arrangement is expected to open huge channels of revenues for ISPs.

The Telecom Engineering Centre (TEC), the technical wing of the Department of Telecom, will work out the telephone numbers from identified blocks, which will be allocated to ISPs, and fixed line and mobile service providers, TRAI said.

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