

The Johor Bahru Speed King

The second stop of The Mobile World Road Test team in their tour of cities outside the Klang Valley was the southern gateway of Johor Bahru. Their mission: determine who's the fastest telco in our southern metropolis.

 MW Team



Last month, we reported on our road test in Kuantan. You can check out our April 2011 issue to find out who's fastest in Kuantan. The road tests in Kuantan were grueling on the team and after grabbing a bit of a rest, the team pushed on to Johor Bahru (JB), the second largest urban concentration in Malaysia.

Johorians are sophisticated and savvy mobile consumers. The proximity of the city to Singapore ensures that the denizens of this city adopt new technologies very quickly. Our sources inside the telcos tell us that JB is a very important market for all telcos and one that has shown tremendous growth in smartphone and mobile broadband usage.



That makes our road test all the more important. To repeat what we said in our issue last month: "You could have the most powerful smartphone, the coolest apps and the latest operating system; it will all be for naught if your mobile Internet connection is dodgy. There's no two ways about this; a stable and fast connection has become absolutely necessary in this age of Internet mobility."

So it was with a lot of excitement that the team rolled out their test equipment and set out to do the tests in Johor Bahru.

The Test Details

Like the tests in Kuantan, the ones in JB were detailed. Basically we carried out not one but many different tests at each location. First, using a notebook PC and USB modem, we ran speed tests via Speedtest.net. That told us what kind of upload and download speeds we were getting.

We understand that users don't visit speed test sites everyday so, to simulate an actual mobile Internet experience, we visited seven popular websites and checked how fast each site loaded on the Chrome browser. We then kept the notebook away and ran similar speed tests using iPhone, BlackBerry and Android smartphones. That's because telcos actually operate separate networks for smartphones and mobile broadband users. It was important then to know how their mobile device networks were performing.

We also shot videos of two smartphones loading web pages side by side so that our readers can actually see how fast each page took to load. These videos are being processed and will be available on mobile-world.TV very soon.

The test team then did a spot of video watching. We tested how fast it took to load videos from YouTube and another video site using a bandwidth monitoring and usage reporting tool called Network. To ensure the overall integrity of our road test findings, the MW team made sure that they saved screenshots of every test that we carried out in JB.

We also took steps to ensure that our tests were not compromised by the different page sizes of the websites we used in the tests. In case you didn't know, website pages do not stay the same size all the time. For example, sites like Facebook and Yahoo return very different page file sizes every time you access them. One time it could be a 450 KB page and just a few minutes later, that same page when accessed again could be 900 KB. So we had to take a lot of care to ensure that the speeds we obtained were calculated properly.

It sounds complicated because, frankly, it really is complicated. We put in a lot of effort to make sure that our tests were fair to all telcos and that we were covering all the important stuff. Furthermore, since we had travelled hundreds of kilometers, we were not going to be satisfied by carrying out the test at just one location.

The JB edition of the MW Road Tests took place in City Square, Danga Bay and Desa Cemerlang. Even though the attractions of Singapore beckoned invitingly to our team across the short stretch of sea, the team did not waver and completed tests for all three areas.

The JB Mobile Internet Speed King is ...

If the speeds we saw in Kuantan were fast, you can say that Johor Bahru is blazing fast. As a whole, all three telcos returned significantly faster speeds here than in Kuantan.



A mobile user in Johor Bahru is getting speeds in excess of 2 Mbps at most locations and more than 3 Mbps at some locations. Those are very decent speeds and JB folks should be pretty pleased when they surf the Internet on their mobile devices.

Having said that, there were significant differences in speeds between the three telcos. Again, Maxis came up tops! But interestingly, Celcom did comparatively better in JB. Celcom had been in third place in our Kuantan road tests but at JB, Celcom blazed back into second spot, beating out DiGi by clear margins.

The above referred to download speeds which are the most important speeds that any user would be concerned with. But we also checked the upload speeds of each telco and we found that Maxis delivered excellent upload speeds at the locations we tested in JB. Again, when we tested the response times for some popular websites, Maxis was tops in most of the locations and websites.

Overall, the residents of JB should not be complaining about their mobile Internet speeds as they are essentially enjoying the same speeds as people in the Klang Valley. But the happiest of all have got to be Maxis users, as the green telco outpaced its competitors in just about every test and every location in JB. After an exhaustive round of tests at three locations, Mobile World concludes that our overall champion telco in the second leg of our mobile Internet cross-country road tests expedition is again Maxis.

Stay tuned as we will share the results of the final destination next month. To conclude this round of speed tests, the MW Road Test team went all the way north to Penang. **MW**

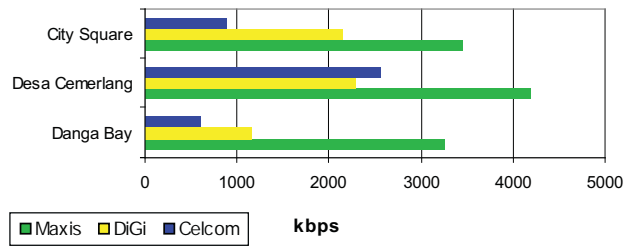
JB Results at A Glance

Download Speed

Good 

Download Speed @ Speedtest.net

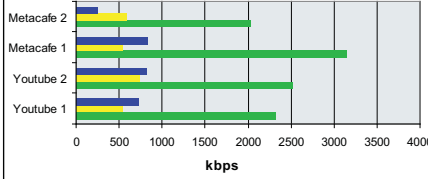
JB Broadband Download Speed (kbps)



Desa Cemerlang Average Streaming Speed (Download)



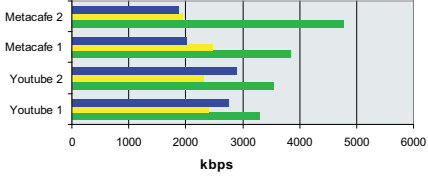
Danga Bay Average Streaming Speed (Download)



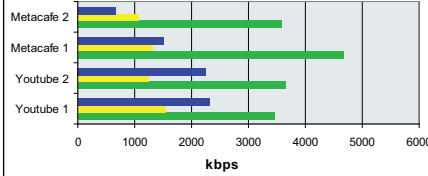
City Square Average Streaming Speed (Download)



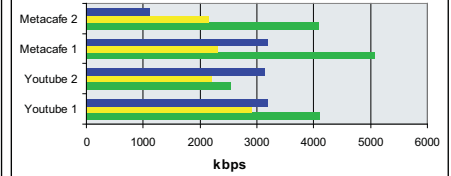
Desa Cemerlang Peak Streaming Speed (Download)



Danga Bay Peak Streaming Speed (Download)

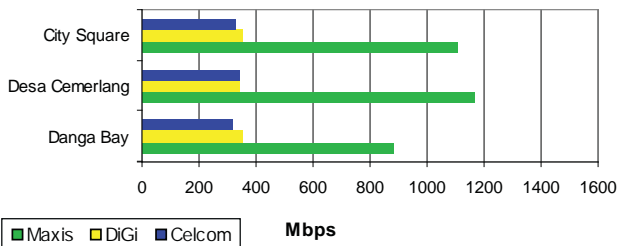


City Square Peak Streaming Speed (Download)



Upload Speed @ Speedtest.net

JB Broadband Upload Speed (Mbps)

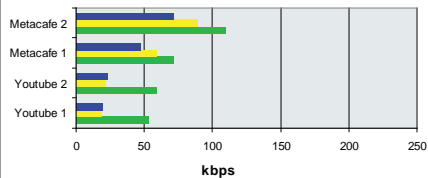


JB Results at A Glance

Upload Speed

Good 

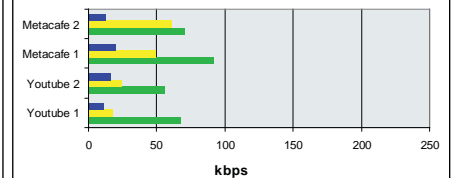
Desa Cemerlang Average Streaming Speed (Upload)



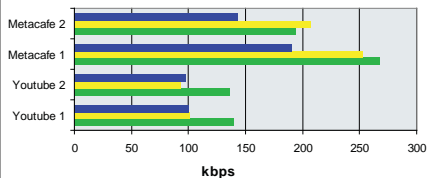
Danga Bay Average Streaming Speed (Upload)



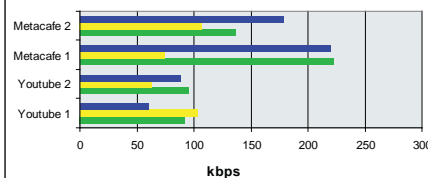
City Square Average Streaming Speed (Upload)



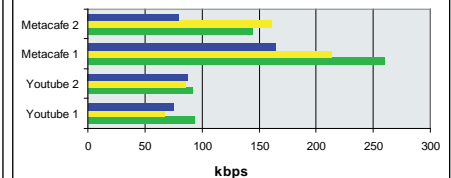
Desa Cemerlang Peak Streaming Speed (Upload)



Danga Bay Peak Streaming Speed (Upload)



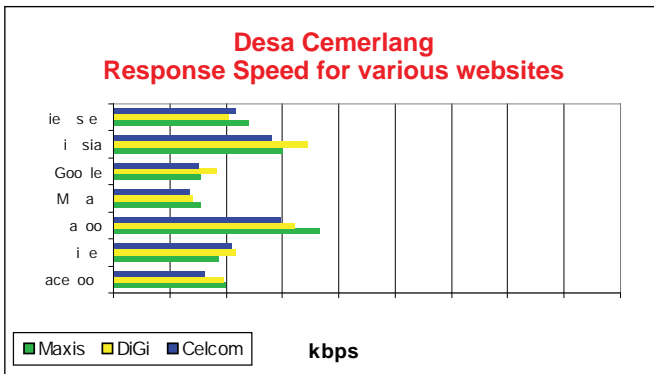
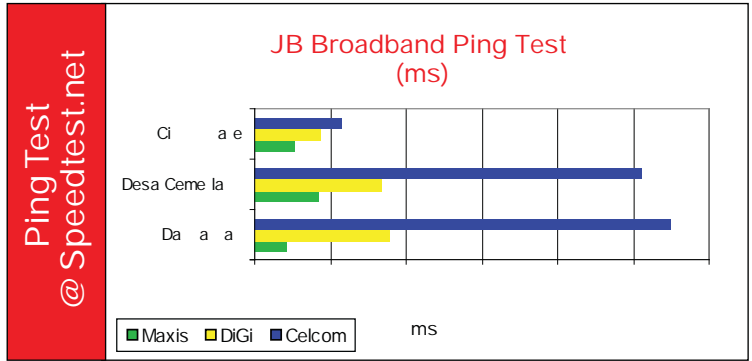
City Square Peak Streaming Speed (Upload)



JB Results at A Glance

Broadband Ping Test

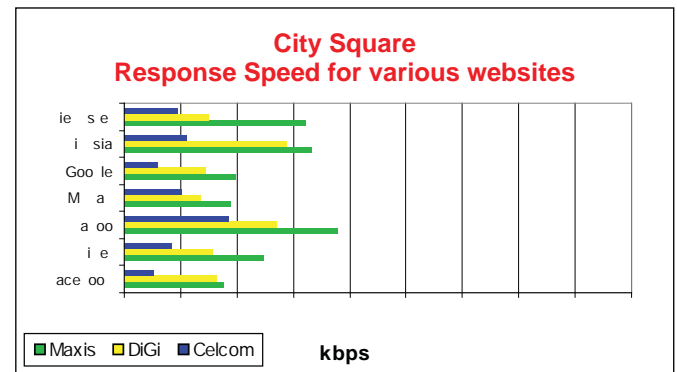
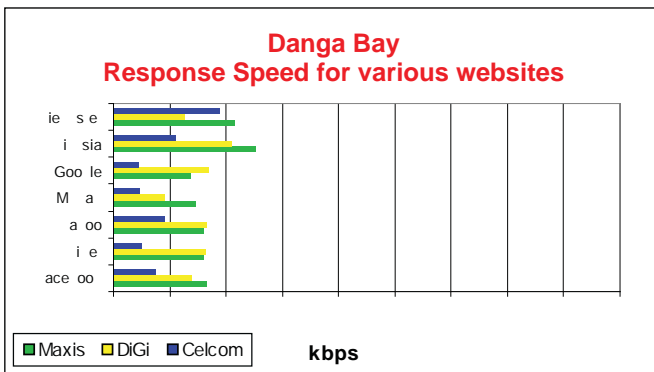
Good



JB Results at A Glance

Speed of logging to the webpage

Good



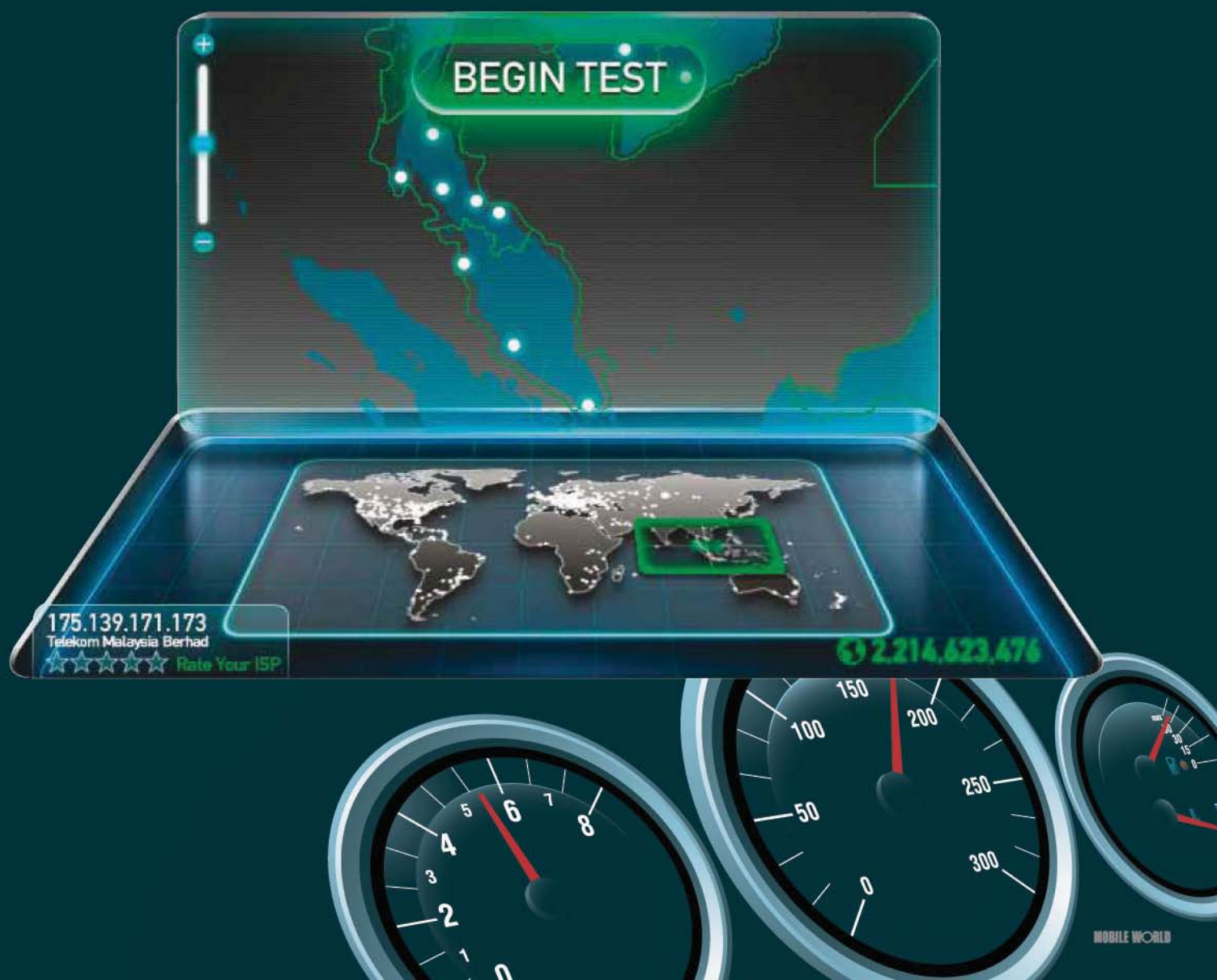
Screenshot of the test on mobile device



Who's fastest in Kuantan?

The Mobile World Road Test team literally hit the roads recently when they swooped into Kuantan on a mission to check on mobile Internet performance there. The results were quite interesting.

T MW Team



Screenshot of the test



You could have the most powerful smartphone, the coolest apps and the latest operating system; it will all be for naught if your mobile Internet connection is dodgy. There's no two ways about this; a stable and fast connection has become absolutely necessary in this age of Internet mobility.

Mobile World magazine has always recognized this. That is why we regularly run road tests that monitor what our telcos are dishing out. Our last road test back in April 2010 created waves among the telcos. We went all over the Klang Valley and put the three leading mobile service providers through our tests. Maxis turned out to be the victor that time around, which proved that they were one step ahead of the pack.

The real beneficiaries of our tests however are users like you and me. Our road tests keep the telcos on their toes and ensure that consumers enjoy a better mobile experience. If you can recall, slightly more than a year ago, social networks were full of consumers ranting about slow speeds and congested networks. While raising such issues on social media has its own impact, our way of addressing this was to run road tests that clearly show who is on the ball and who needs to improve. We like to think that we contributed to the all round improvements in service quality. Since we ran our road test last year, complaints have largely stopped, especially in the Klang Valley. These days, one gets pretty decent mobile broadband speeds because telcos have invested in upgrades and expansions.

This year, we decided to go outside the Klang Valley for the road tests. After looking at various possible cities, we finally settled on Kuantan, Penang and JB. These three cities represent the east, north and south of our peninsula. All in, the MW road test team logged more than 1,000 kilometres in one week as they went from city to city carrying out the tests.

The road tests were done on working days in late February 2011. Instead of overloading our readers with too much information in one

go, the results will be shared city by city over three months, starting with Kuantan.

The test details

We take road tests very seriously. Like our previous tests, the one in Kuantan was pretty detailed. Basically we carried out not one but many different tests at each location we went to. First, using a notebook PC and USB modem, we ran speed tests via Speedtest.net. That told us what kind of upload and download speeds we were getting.

We understand that users don't visit speed test sites everyday so, to simulate an actual mobile Internet experience, we visited seven popular Websites and checked how fast each site loaded on the Chrome browser. We then kept the notebook away and ran similar speed tests using iPhone, BlackBerry and Android smartphones. That's because telcos actually operate separate networks for smartphones and mobile broadband users. It was important then to know how their mobile device networks were performing.

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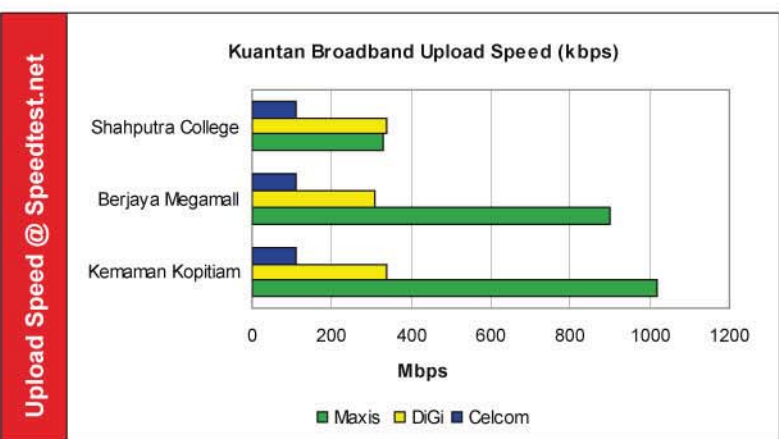
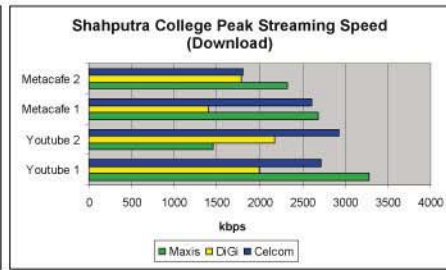
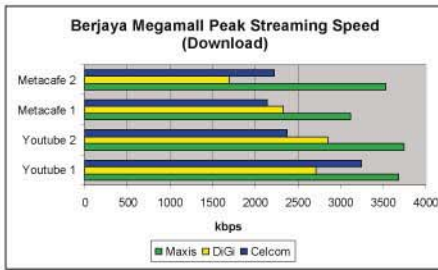
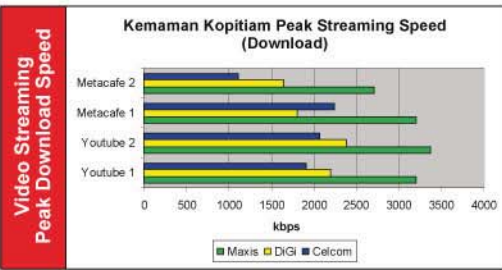
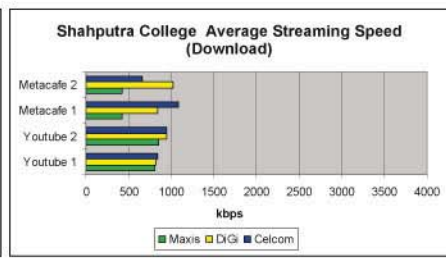
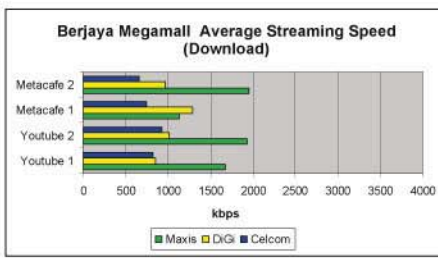
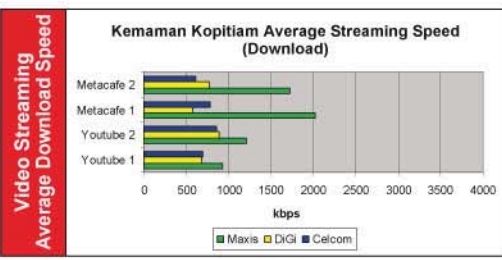
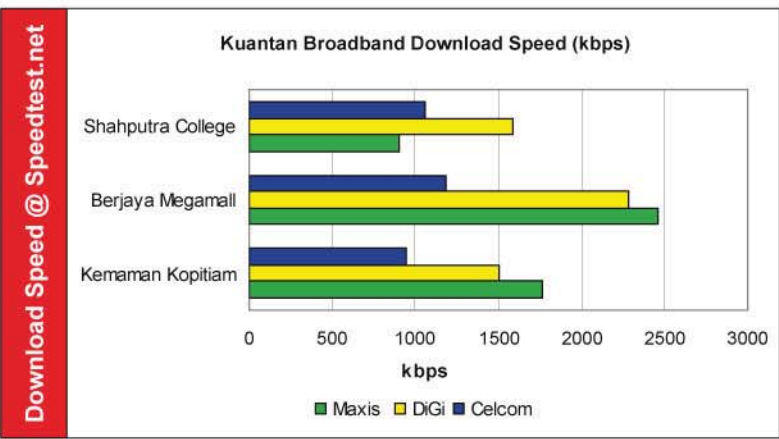
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We make it sound easy but in reality it's pretty complicated stuff just ensuring that our tests were fair to all telcos. These days, Website pages do not stay the same size even for a short while. We could be loading Yahoo one time and the page size could be 450 KB and just a few minutes later, that same Yahoo page on another test could be 900 KB. So we had to take a lot of care to ensure that the speeds we obtained were calculated properly.

Kuantan Results At A Glance

Download Speed

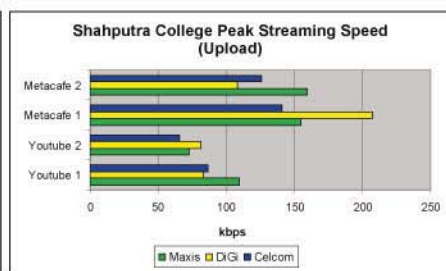
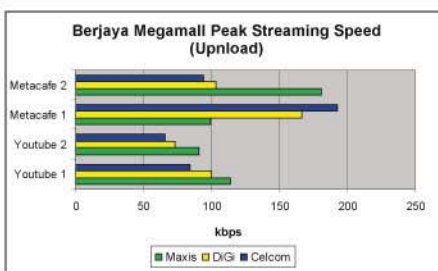
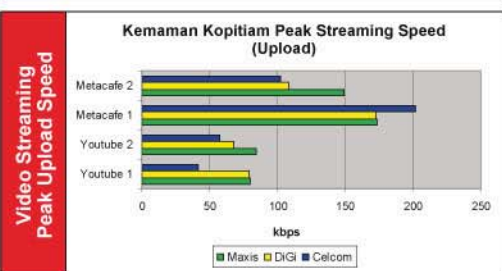
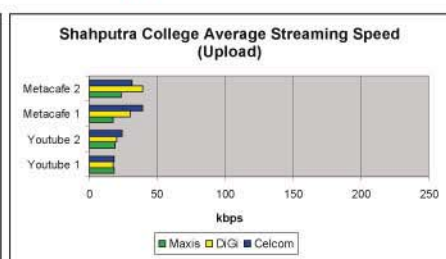
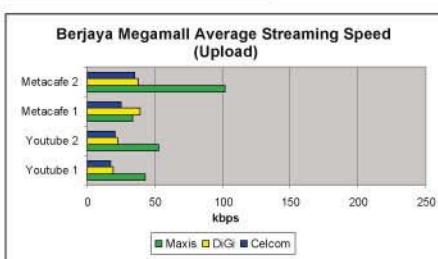
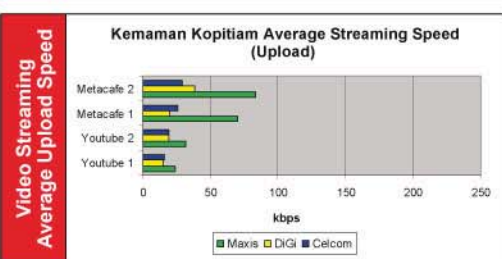
Good 



Kuantan Results At A Glance

Upload Speed

Good 

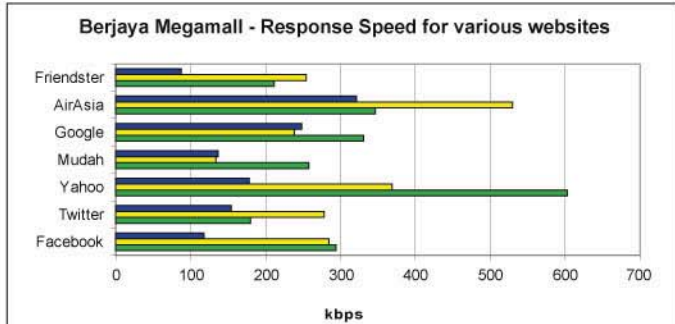
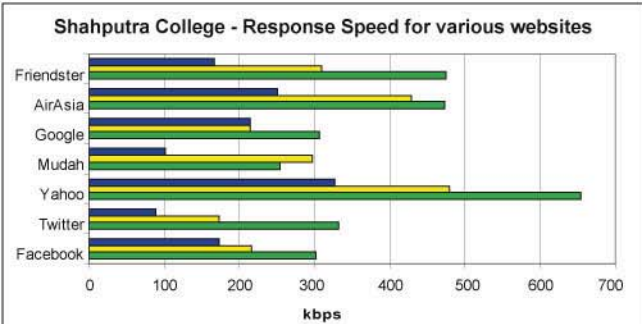
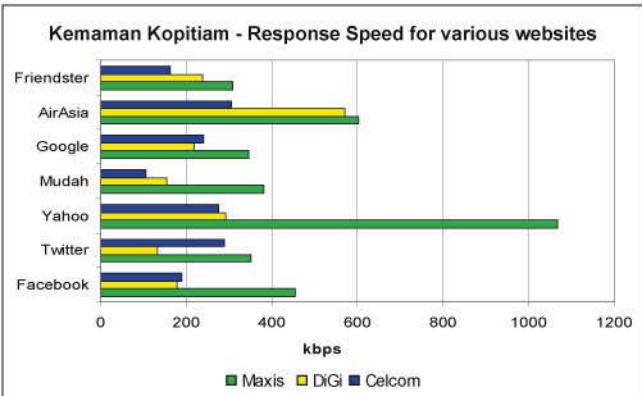


Kuantan Road Test Results At A Glance

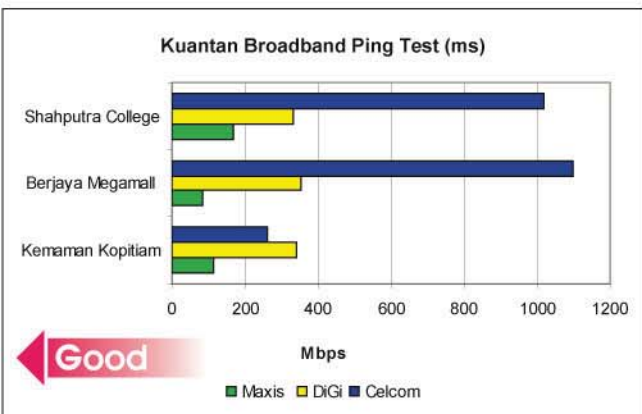
Speed of Logging to the Webpage

Good 

Speed on 7 websites



Ping Test Time @ Speedtest.net



The Kuantan speed demon is ...

Generally, we are happy to say that we are pleased with the speeds we got from all three telcos in Kuantan. Speedtest.net showed that most of the time, a user can expect 1 Mbps and in some cases more than 2 Mbps, from any of the telcos. Those are pretty decent speeds.

As you can see from the results, overall Maxis came through as the best for mobile broadband connections using USB modems connected to notebooks, especially at the Kemaman Kopitiam location. The battle was slightly more even between DiGi and Maxis at Berjaya Megamall with Maxis ahead in 4 out of 7 tests on popular Websites. Maxis was tops again at Shahputra College area. While Celcom did not win any speed battles, it nonetheless delivered fairly decent speeds too.

As far as smartphones are concerned, Maxis won at Kemaman Kopitiam and Shahputra College while DiGi took the honours at Berjaya Megamall.

In conclusion, after testing three locations around the city, Mobile World can say with authority that Maxis is the fastest in Kuantan.

After a long day's work, the MW team headed not for beaches of Kuantan but onwards to Johor Baru for another round of tests. You can find out who rules in JB in our next issue. **MW**



And finally, just to make sure that our road test team did not laze around in Kuantan and sneak off to the Cherating beach, we specified that they should repeat the same tests at three locations, namely, Kemaman Kopitiam along Jalan Besar; Berjaya Megamall and Shahputra College in the Indera Mahkota area. This was tough work that started in the morning and ended deep into the night. But it achieved our aim of determining who's the fastest in Kuantan.