



In an update to the article “The Internet of Things – By Satellite”, published earlier this month, Tooway have confirmed that its consumer plans do not allow the ports on the modem to be opened up for external access to services in the home, such as smart thermostats. This makes Tooway a much less compelling option for the home, as remote energy management takes on ever greater importance.

Steve Petrie, Northern European Director for Tooway, said this week: “In principle, there is no technology [sic] reason why the Tooway service and the KA-SAT satellite cannot be used for remote control over the internet of remote devices in the home. However ... the ports on the consumer modem are locked down to allow consumers to use the service without having to implement additional security applications, such as firewalls, to prevent unauthorised external access to their modem/network.

“For those wishing to control systems remotely, Eutelsat [recommends] one of its professional services offerings. It uses the same modem technology as the Tooway service but the ports are open to provide this service”.

Satellite broadband forums for the installer community are clearly aware of this situation: one post by YaBB Administrator summarized it as: “But my question is: I have clients with remotely

monitored PV and/or thermal RE systems that I build ... Tooway tech support says I need to sell the customer a Pro account. There is nothing like a 8Gb account that has a comparable price to the standard 8Gb account, and I get a fixed (public) IP address that I don't actually need”.



Customers are also expressing frustration. One who declined to be identified stated: “I was a Tooway customer before KA-SAT, and I was fully able to control my internet-connected thermostat in my holiday home in France. I upgraded to KA-SAT, and this no longer worked. It took me a good while to work out the reason, but all my provider can offer is a commercial Tooway package, which is way too expensive for what I need”. Commercial packages for Tooway start at around €50 per month for the “Pro Telemetry” package (2Mb up and down, 2GB cap), but more like €80 for reasonable speeds and caps (sources: Sat2Way, Europasat, Avonline).

In conclusion it appears that Tooway do not currently offer a viable solution for remote homes where any remote management of equipment such as heating, lighting and security is a requirement.

However the good news is that there are some very strong alternatives out there. The Astra 2F satellite drives SES Broadband Services, which offers very competitive rates, comparable speeds, and an open modem. While it was originally launched with TV in mind, broadband speeds up to 20Mb down and 2Mb up are available for prices starting at €30 a month (Europasat) (and several lower cost options available).

As it becomes increasingly clear that energy management and conservation will be driving smart home investment for the next few years, the ability to control smart devices will become a

## Internet by Satellite – Tooway Update

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key decision maker for installers and customers in remote regions.

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