

CASE STUDY

How Bahrain Network (BNET) Accelerates Innovation in the Kingdom of Bahrain by Providing Faster Fiber

The widespread availability of high-speed broadband services and healthy competition among internet service providers (ISPs) are crucial drivers of national digital transformation. The Kingdom of Bahrain's Fifth National Telecommunication Plan (NTP5) was developed to accelerate the growth and economic diversification of the telecommunications sector, including rolling out a fiber optic network to 100% of all businesses and 95% of all households across the Kingdom. Bahrain Network (BNET), the sole operator of the national fiber-optic broadband network in the Kingdom of Bahrain, aims to provide ISPs with the infrastructure required to enable providers to meet the demands of both consumers and businesses for world-class telecoms services at fair and reasonable prices.

As the provider of the national broadband network, BNET has developed a single infrastructure to deliver ultra-fast broadband services to thirteen licensees, encouraging healthy competition. As a result of BNET's efforts and services, fixed internet speeds have increased by 3.75x between 2020 and 2023. As one of the first countries in the Middle East to have a fully liberalized broadband market, the Kingdom of Bahrain has seen connectivity drive broad economic development, as well as improved consumer access to ultra-fast fiber.



"We've seen that there is a direct correlation between the ubiquity of broadband access and the impact on GDP. Currently, telecommunications is contributing almost 7% of Bahrain's GDP. In addition to that, we see that broadband is a driver for all other industries."

— Ahmed Jaber Aldoseri, CEO, BNET

BNET's impact on broadband in Bahrain

In order to accelerate competition and facilitate economic growth in Bahrain, BNET reviewed existing global standards for broadband, such as those set by the [Federal Communications Commission \(FCC\)](#), which generally cite 25 Mbps as an adequate download speed and 3 Mbps as an adequate upload speed. With video and teleconferencing becoming increasingly dominant forms of internet traffic, BNET has determined that 100 Mbps should be the minimum acceptable download speed today and, as a result, has officially raised their entry-level speed to 100 Mbps. BNET has further recognized that the minimum acceptable upload speeds should be at 50% of download speeds as more users share content and utilize video on the uplink. This has been reflected for the majority of their fiber packages.

Consumers have a high demand for connectivity, with the average number of connected devices in a Bahraini household rapidly increasing. Consumers want to make video calls, watch streaming entertainment, conduct work, and access remote learning with a high quality of experience. BNET has met these demands by accelerating bandwidth and providing ultra-fast fiber to the home.

By providing equally fast fiber to licensed operators, BNET enables a world class infrastructure in Bahrain. With world-class connectivity, Bahrain can attract new businesses like hyperscalers and data centers — and drive innovation in the region and beyond.

Key outcomes of BNET's efforts

As part of its national fiber rollout, BNET has supported the ambition of the Kingdom to become a digital economy benefiting from ubiquitous broadband connectivity as per its NTP5.



100%
of businesses
are now connected to
fiber optic networks



95%
of residences are
now connected to
fiber optic services



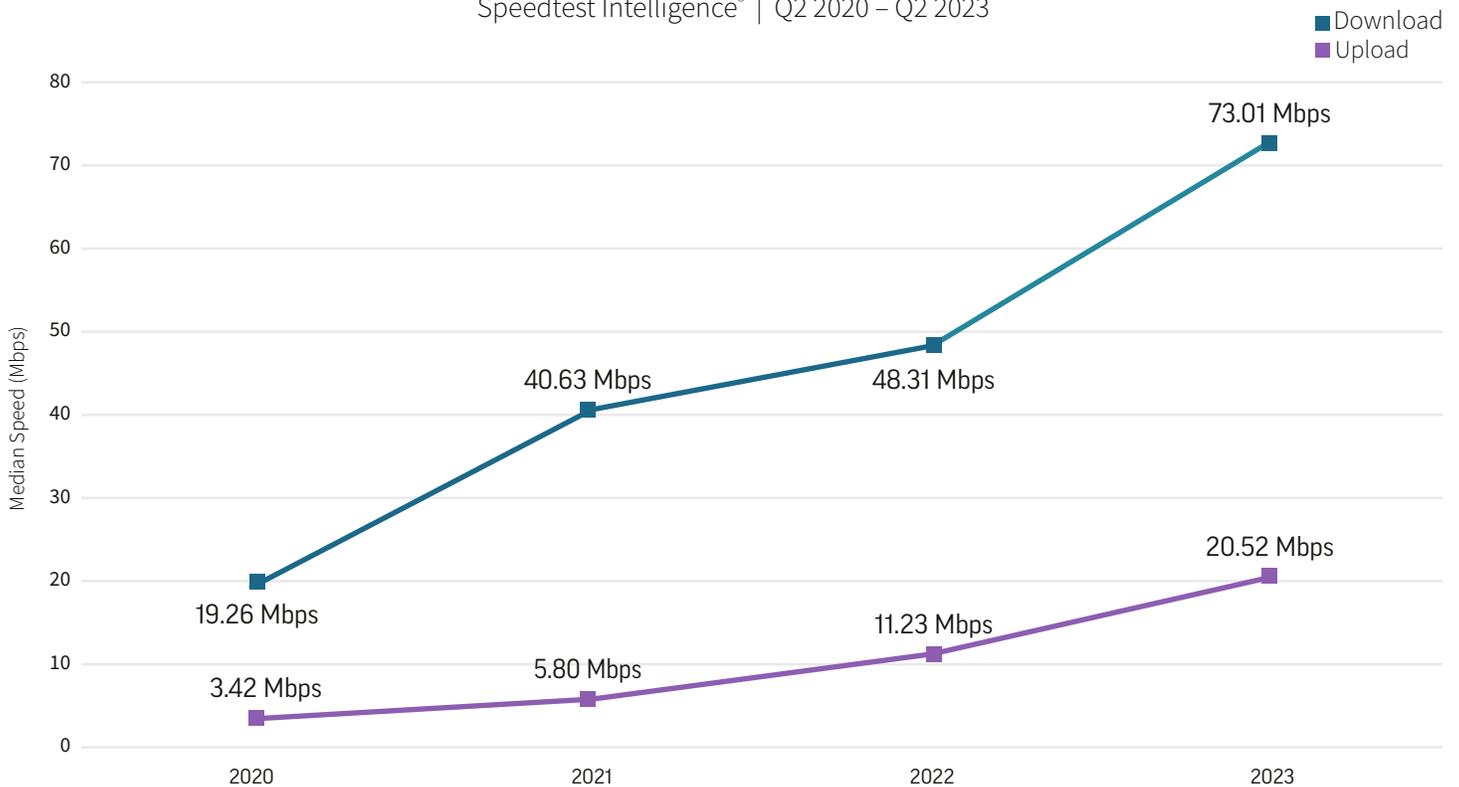
3.75x
increase in national
fixed broadband speeds
since 2020

With 100% of businesses and 95% of residences connected (89% of all addresses), BNET continues to adopt the latest innovative technologies. BNET aims to provide access to the world's leading fiber optic network services for all licensed service providers in the Kingdom, in line with fair and equal terms and conditions.

As measured by Speedtest®, BNET has increased fiber speeds in the Kingdom by 3.75x over the last three years.

Increase in Fiber Speeds in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Speedtest Intelligence® | Q2 2020 – Q2 2023

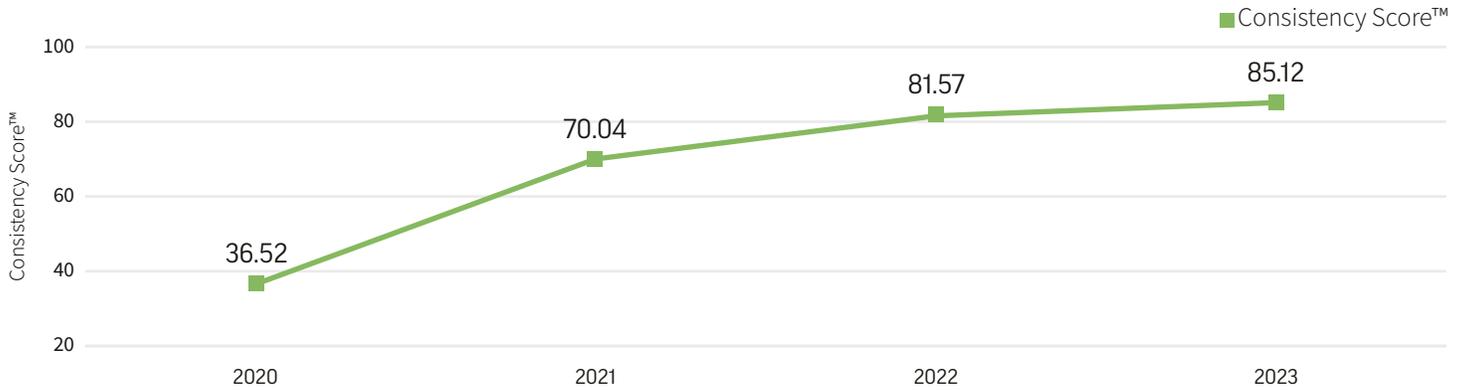


Based on analysis by Ookla® of Speedtest Intelligence® data for fiber download and upload speeds in Bahrain for Q2 of years 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. Ookla trademarks used under license and reprinted with permission.

While fast speeds are important, providing consistent quality of service and customer experience is also a key indicator of network quality. BNET's fiber has successfully become 2.31x more consistent since Q2 2020, as measured by [Ookla's Consistency Score™](#). This score reflects the percentage of BNET's fiber data samples that meet a minimum threshold of 25 Mbps for download and 3 Mbps for upload speeds.

Increase in Consistency Score™ for Fixed Broadband in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Speedtest Intelligence® | Q2 2020 – Q2 2023



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As the national broadband network provider, BNET has worked with its customers to help explore areas of low broadband penetration. By launching a coverage map, BNET has given ISPs guidance on where to promote their services — with the aim of enhancing internet connectivity among all residents of the Kingdom. This interactive map highlights fiber coverage rates per blocks in the Kingdom of Bahrain, aiming to provide an accessible and user-friendly dashboard to all licensed operators.

BNET Coverage Map of Fiber Coverage Per Block

Kingdom of Bahrain | 2023



Ookla looks forward to tracking Bahrain's growth and improved connectivity as BNET continues the expansion of its fiber rollout and drives innovation in the Kingdom.