

- Reviewed data for each panelist and removed data where speed changes such as tier upgrade or downgrade appeared to have occurred, either due to a service change on the part of the consumer or a network change on the part of the ISP.
- Identified panelists whose throughput appeared inconsistent with the provisioned service tier. Such anomalies were re-certified with the consumer's ISP.¹⁶
- Verified that the resulting downstream-upstream test results corresponded to the ISP-provided speed tiers, and updated accordingly if required.

Of the more than 9,000 Whiteboxes that were ultimately shipped to panelists, 7,377¹⁷ units were reporting data in March 2011. ISPs validated 81% of these panelists, of which 9% were reallocated to a different tier following the steps listed above. The remaining 19% of panelists were validated based on comparing the performance data and line performance characteristics with the available service tiers from the appropriate ISP. Eliminating panelists who either changed ISPs during the month of March 2011 or did not produce data for this trial during that month produced the final data set of the approximately 6,800 volunteers included in this report.

Ultimately, the study found that 51% of panelists accurately identified their service tier, although some of the disparities between reported and actual service tier may have stemmed from volunteers who changed their service tier between the time their service was initially validated and the time that they received a Whitebox. We note that the consumers that volunteered to participate in this study and obtain access to detailed data regarding the performance of their broadband service might be more interested in and knowledgeable about the basic advertised characteristics of their broadband service than most broadband subscribers.

E. Protection of Volunteers' Privacy

A major concern during this trial was to ensure that panelists' privacy was protected. The panel was comprised entirely of volunteers who knowingly and explicitly opted-in to the testing program. Full opt-in documentation was preserved in confidence for audit purposes.

All personal data was processed in conformity with relevant U.S. law and in accordance with policies developed to govern the conduct of the parties handling the data. Data was processed solely for the purposes of this study and is presented here and in all online data sets with all personally identifiable information (PII) removed.

To fulfill these privacy requirements a range of material was created both to inform each panelist regarding the details of the trial, and to gain the explicit consent of each

¹⁶ For example, when a panelist's upload or download speed was observed to be significantly higher than that of the rest of the tier, it could be inferred that a mischaracterization of the panelist's service tier had occurred. Such anomalies, when not resolved in cooperation with the service provider, were excluded from this report, but are present in the raw bulk data set.

¹⁷ This figure represents the total number of boxes reporting during March 2011, the month chosen for this report. Shipment of boxes continued in succeeding months and these results are included in raw bulk data set.

panelist to obtain subscription data from each of the participating ISPs. These documents were reviewed by the Office of General Counsel of the FCC and the participating ISPs and other stakeholders involved in the study.