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RCom to offer laptops at nominal instalments

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IMAGINE OWNING a laptop with Internet connections for just Rs 1,500 per month.

Replicating its ultra low-cost handset model that revolutionised India's mobile communication industry, Anil Ambani-controlled Reliance Communications (RCom) on Tuesday partnered with five leading IT giants to offer laptops with high-speed net connections at nominal monthly instalments.

Intel, Acer, Asus, HCL and Lenovo have partnered with RCom in this venture.

The laptops would be available at RCom's retail offices on payment of Rs 1,500, with instalments of a like amount payable for two years. The

scheme will begin on November 1.

"The growth in Internet penetration is linked with the growth in computer penetration. We are planning to minimise the cost and helping consumers to access computers and net connection at an unimaginable cost," said Mahesh Prasad, president, RCom.

RCom currently has over one million consumers and offers services across 20,000 towns and 4.5 lakh villages. The new partnership is expected to increase PC penetration by around 30 per cent in the first two quarters. The company expects a 30-35 per cent increase in its net additions by the end of this financial year.

The company has partnered with at



least five banks to provide this offer to consumers.

According to analysts, the move would broad base the revenue stream for RCom. "This will increase the net addition and better retention of a consumer. In addition, this will increase the average revenue per user (ARPU).

ARPU of a data user is more than double that of a voice user," said a telecom analyst, working with a Mumbai-based brokerage firm. The average revenue that RCom earns from voice consumer stands at around Rs 300 in a month while that of an Internet user is more than Rs 750.

RCom shares were up 11.25 per cent to close at Rs 258.20 at Bombay Stock Exchange on Tuesday.

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