Configuring an O2 prepay USB dongle in Ubuntu

I've had an O2 prepay (pay-as-you-go) USB dongle for a while, and the packaging states it supports Windows and Mac OS X. It is possible to get the dongle running in Linux however with some configurations.

To easily setup the device, it is recommended you use Network Manager. The modules required are included in Ubuntu/Kubuntu by default, so it is simply a case of configuring the specific settings.

This guide is aimed at newer versions of Ubuntu (i.e. 9.04 and above). It does work on Intrepid, however in my experience it was a little problematic. I am also sure it will work on other popular distributions such as Fedora, but I haven't personally tested it.

Operation

The device has several lights indicating operation modes.

- Flashing blue – indicates power to the device, but no connection has been established
- Green – indicates a GPRS connection has been made
- Blue – indicates an Edge connection has been made
- Light blue – indicates a HSDPA connection has been made

Configuration

Plug in the device. After a couple of seconds, the device should be detected in the Network-Manager drop-down menu.

Before connecting you will need the following settings:

Connection name:	*O2 Mobile* (or any name of your choosing)
Number:	**99#*
Password:	*password* (no capitals)
APN:	*m-bb.o2.co.uk*

All other fields should be left blank.

Click on the *PPP settings* tab and tick the following:

Allow BSD data compression

Allow Deflate data compression

Use TCP header compression

We also need to set the allowed authentication methods. O2 only use PAP, so ensure all entries (except PAP) are unticked.

Connecting

Once the configuration settings have been entered, the device should be able to connect. Select the O2 Mobile entry from the Network Manager menu. Wait a few seconds until the connection is made. The device will also have a solid blue light.

When data is being transferred and there is a solid connection, the light will turn light blue. When no data is being transferred, the light will return to being solid blue.

Landing page

When you have no credit on the account, you will need to go to the O2 landing page. This is located at http://mobilebroadbandaccess.o2.co.uk. While you have no credit, this will be the only page you can access.