

# The Time is Now

Hong Kong-based Producer-Screenwriter Robert Sparks has become a fan of SmarTone-Vodafone Mobile Broadband simply because he can't afford the time to wait.



(clockwise from right)  
**1.** The Producer-Screenwriter is always on-the-go to look for filming locations for his upcoming movie about time travel.  
**2.** Sparks need to stay connected anywhere, anytime with his head producer in the U.S..  
**3.** With his SmarTone-Vodafone USB modem, Sparks need not worry about network breakdown, even inside a retro cha chaan teng.

**R**obert Sparks can be found in the most unlikely corners in Hong Kong. From a retro Cha Chaan Teng to the farmland in Tai Po, the Producer-Screenwriter always has his notebook in hand staying connected. The up-and-coming Director is currently developing the feature film "Sifu and the Amazing World of Kung Fu", a Kung Fu time travel story set in Hong Kong (based upon his No.1 downloaded in China online show sifutv.com) with Arthur Sarkissian Productions (the "Rush Hour" franchise). On top of Sparks' to-do list is finding filming locations that resemble 1950s' Hong Kong. This often means a trip deep in the New Territories or high in the mountainous areas, where ordinary broadband services are prone to failure, yet it is where Sparks needs connection the most.

The Cantonese speaking, witty Producer has had enough tragic-comedic "Stephen Chow" moments using hotspots and Wi-Fi in the past. "Like a Stephen Chow movie, the connection went great, great... and suddenly dead," Sparks recalls in Cantonese his frustrating experience. Once a supporting actor in Chow's "King of Comedy", Sparks' humor is unmistakable, but his expectation for the consistency of his Internet connection is no laughing matter. When it comes to mobile broadband service, there is one thing Sparks would never compromise: "I know I keep saying the same thing, but it is all about consistency". "SmarTone-Vodafone Mobile Broadband is very reliable. Apart from the daily use in city areas, I've also tried it in an area really deep in Sai Kung and a boat trip from Central to Lamma Island. It actually works and it is consistent too. That's weird because it is where even mobile network would be cut out," says Sparks, "This is a dream come true, because a lot of other services have to be close to those "hubs" or something and then you go online, it dies."

Not even Sparks' home Internet service is immune to this unfortunate fate. It has now become a habit for him to plug his SmarTone-Vodafone USB modem to his home computer. Without

plausible reasons, Sparks' home Internet service dies and disappoints him time and again. Not surprisingly Sparks' SmarTone-Vodafone mobile broadband has become his great companion: "I don't always have my laptop with me but I always have the USB modem for god-forbid emergencies." With a seamless HSPA Internet network which supports 14.4 Mbps download and 5.76 Mbps upload throughout Hong Kong, SmarTone-Vodafone Mobile Broadband's stable, high-speed connection is no miracle. Sparks has been a user of similar Internet services in the US, but they are nothing near the stability offered by SmarTone-Vodafone Mobile Broadband. "Even in LA, nothing works that consistently, unless you have satellite dish on your car like in Star Wars," jokes Sparks.

"Now" is another magic word for Sparks. "The Lead Producer Arthur in the U.S. may call me at any time," says Sparks, "Once I was working near a farm area in Tai Po when my phone rang...Arthur wanted access to some notes, saying 'I need this now'."

Thanks to SmarTone-Vodafone Mobile Broadband, Sparks got his job done right away. And not only is his Boss happy: "As an up-and-coming Producer, I need to be able to send information I have from anywhere 24 hours a day," says Sparks, "If you don't do something now and people are waiting on you, you look unprofessional. The clients would start to feel as if they aren't important." Even for his pastime, Sparks benefits a great deal from SmarTone-Vodafone's service. "I like going to the movies and I often need to book tickets online. My friends are very 'Hong Kong'. When they want to see a movie, they want it now. It is no exaggeration when Sparks says, "SmarTone-Vodafone Mobile Broadband saves my life".

"Cut" is no longer just a director's favorite word under this less-than-favorable economic climate. With a tight budget, Internet conference and telephone services are the answers to trans-national business communication. Having worked with John Mauldin from Steven Spielberg's technology team and served as the entertainment recruiter for the I-Connect Initiative project (that was based on the Universal Studios lot), Sparks realized the importance of iChat for intensive video



**SmarTone-Vodafone USB modem supports up to 7.2 Mbps download and 5.76 Mbps upload.**

conferencing and Skype for general communication in his field. Sparks is happy to know that SmarTone-Vodafone Mobile Broadband works perfectly with these applications.

IT savvy, Sparks uses Gmail wisely to keep track of his screenplays drafts and script notes, an action that requires a flawless connection to the Internet. "The biggest fear for any writers is having written the best thing you've ever written and it's gone. That's why I don't have confidence in Wi-Fi," says the screenwriter. With stable Internet access, Sparks is able to use his digital camera, instead of his mobile phone, to take and store high-resolution images via Gmail. "SmarTone-Vodafone Mobile Broadband is good for what the Internet is good for. Things you get from the Internet now you get from anywhere," says Sparks, "It is a missing link in the communication age."

Sparks' opinion is shared by professionals from other fields as well. Before Sparks became a loyal user of SmarTone-Vodafone Mobile Broadband, three of his acquaintances—from the financial, entertainment and medical industries—had recommended the service.

"So many things are so fashionable, but they don't work, but this (Star Wars) Stormtrooper-like USB modem is fashionable and it works!" says Sparks, who is glad to say there is never a need for him to use SmarTone-Vodafone's customer service—"it never fails".

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