

“We Are Convinced The Future Is Fiber”

Developers And Officials See The Light



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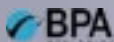
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I saw a notable sign of the times on my recent trip to South Carolina to visit developer Jeff Hesla. We walked the land that Jeff is preparing for his 325-home development, Sunset Summits, in a wooded enclave in the Greenville-Spartanburg area. Then we pored over the architectural plans and color renderings that bring to life his vision for a spot where “Old Southern Charm meets Future Technology.” Want to know what really jumped out at me? I have seen lots of advertising for new home developments, and I have been waiting for just what Jeff has done. In his printed materials and local full-page newspaper ads, the top features this savvy businessman has chosen to highlight – more prominently than the Japanese landscaping, the mountain views, the nearby schools and golf course – are the benefits of “unlimited broadband fiber capacity.” The ads emphasize the peace of mind and luxury that await a homeowner — from “never having to come home to a dark house again,” to the satisfaction of video conferencing, VoIP and HDTV. If you have seen ads like this for other developments, tell us about them. I must add that there is much more to say about Sunset Summits and its use of FTTH to create a secure, livable neighborhood suitable for today’s telecommuting families. Check out www.sunsetsummits.com.

We believe the new Fiber-to-the-Home statistics reported in our cover story signal a turning point. With 3.5 million American homes expected to have access to fiber optic connections by year’s end, we see an emerging conviction that FTTH is the most desirable option.

We saw evidence of this at the Fiber-to-the-Premises Workshop we hosted October 28, in Portland, Oregon. The room was filled to overflowing with public officials who attended because they now realize this is a topic they cannot ignore. We will be holding more workshops around the country, with the next one scheduled for February 3 in Loma Linda, Calif. See www.bbpmag.com. After that we will be hitting Minneapolis

and Nashville later in 2006.

Other indicators reinforcing our conviction about reaching the turning point are messages like the one I just received from a Florida developer, David Miller, who said:

“As developers we recognize that what we design and build will be around for a long time. Providing the best technology available creates very real long-term benefits and value for our customers.” David describes his project as: “mixed-use, 700 residential units, 300,000 square feet of commercial/office, located on a 150-acre in Gainesville, Fla.” And he adds, “We are convinced that fiber to the home or premises is a key component in the future and want to utilize it in our development. Currently we are being bombarded with companies wanting to put in fiber and need some assistance in sorting out the options.”

We are getting more such inquiries, and increasingly developers state up front that they have decided fiber is the right broadband solution. Developers are just one group of our readers, but we have a special admiration for them. I must confess that two years ago when I traveled around the country interviewing them as part of my due diligence in acquiring Broadband Properties, I often felt exasperated when I heard them dismiss FTTH as an innovation they did not need. Now I see these same folks making decisions and moving ahead. Without being technologists, they seek out trustworthy technological and financial expertise in order to assure themselves they are going to make a profit and meet other business objectives, such as differentiating their properties and creating an asset. We are delighted that Broadband Properties is so often a starting point in their research.

Now, to get the big picture about FTTH, read our cover story!

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