Verizon Adds 24 FiOS Communities

From BBP Wires

Verizon announced that it will extend its triple-play FiOS services to 24 more communities in New Jersey, bringing the total to 147 in that state. The 24 new locations are: Cedar Grove, Fairfield, Livingston, Verona, Bogota, Middlesex, Allenhurst, Avon, Bradley Beach, Deal, Freehold Township, Howell Township, Interlaken, Loch Arbour, Neptune City, Neptune Township, Ocean Township, Shrewsbury Township, Mt. Olive, Roxbury, Branchburg, Bridgewater, Green Brook, and Raritan. The company will seek a franchise agreement from the local authority before offering video service in a selected community. FiOS service includes Internet access at speeds up to 30 Mbps downstream/5 Mbps upstream.

Competition Raises Broadband Speeds

BBP Staff

NEW YORK – As Verizon's rollout of its FiOS fiber-to-the-premises service continues, consumers in FiOS communities are faced with an embarrassment of riches. In Reston, Virginia; Sarasota, Florida; Fort Wayne, Indiana; and Howard County, Maryland, cable provider Comcast is upgrading its premier cable broadband service to 16mbps downstream and 1mbps upstream. The service is comparable in price and speed to FiOS's second-highest tier. Comcast denies that the upgrades are related to competition from FiOS. Rather, the company says, it wants to test new high-speed broadband applications and has chosen these markets as testbeds. However, other cable providers, including Cox and Adelphia, have also raised broadband speeds in FiOS communities.

FTTH Products Are Integrated onto Chips

BBP Staff Report

NEW YORK – As the FTTH equipment market matures, more of the electronics are being programmed directly into chips, instead of being assembled from discrete components. In high-volume production, dedicated chipsets are extremely cost-efficient and exercise downward pressure on the costs of FTTH systems. Several recent examples include:

- NeoPhotonics announced a Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) Triplexer Module. Triplexer transceiver modules, located in the optical network terminals (ONTs) on the customer's premises, receive and transmit voice, video, and data signals. PLC technology integrates the transmission, receiving, and filtering functions onto a single chip. In addition, the standard 2x2 form factor gives FTTP equipment manufacturers a simpler "plug and play" design process. Chris Pfistner, NeoPhotonics' director of global access business, said that Neophotonics' product was the first PLC-based triplexer module that is plug-in compatible with existing conventional modules.

- Zarlink and Passave used their complementary chipsets to demonstrate triple-play FTTH services at gigabit speeds. Passave's PON (Passive Optical Network) chipset provided IP telephony, high-definition IPTV, and IP data services, while Zarlink's CESoP (Circuit Emulation Services over Packet) processor handled traditional circuit-switched telephony services, thus avoiding the need for

costly access lines for legacy services. The two companies demonstrated a fully loaded and congested network with many users, multiple high-definition applications, and high-bandwidth upstream and downstream traffic, exhibiting predictable quality of service.

- Oki Electric announced a uBOSA (Micro Bidirectional Optical SubAssembly) chip for use in FTTH modules. Oki's silicon lens makes possible bidirectional communication in a chip just 2mm square. The conventional method of building FTTH optical components requires more than 40 optical parts and involves a complicated packaging process, which made it difficult to reduce costs. By comparison, Oki's uBOSA reduce the number of parts to 15.

- Conexant Systems has introduced a family of system-on-chip controllers for passive optical networks (PONs), with support for VoIP and IP multicasting. The controllers are designed for optical network units (ONUs) on the client side of FTTP, multi-dwelling-unit, and FTTN EPON/GEPON applications.

ADTRAN Product Enables Converged Networking

From BBP Wires

HUNTSVILLE, AL –Seeking to provide a smooth migration path to next-generation services like IPTV and VoIP, ADTRAN introduced its Total Access 5000 Multi-Service Access and Aggregation Platform. The new platform lets service providers deliver services across an all IP/Ethernet core without stranding their legacy service base. It provides both emerging and existing service interfaces over copper and fiber, easily supporting even the most bandwidth-intensive applications. Its scalable architecture is designed to migrate with the network, providing flexible copper and fiber termination options. In addition, the Total Access 5000 offers uplink into both legacy and next-generation core networks, including support for both TDM and VoIP switches.

Tellabs' New ONTs Appeal to Small Enterprises

From BBP Wires

NAPERVILLE, IL – Service providers can now deliver broadband over fiber to small businesses through two new Tellabs Optical Network Terminals (ONTs). The new ONTs, which support voice, video, high-speed Internet, and T-1 services, are designed to simplify operator migration to an all-IP network. The 1600-631 ONT is optimal for small businesses, with support for 8 telephony lines, an Ethernet connection, 2 T-1 connections, and a cable TV interface. The 1600-641 ONT benefits multiple-tenant locations such as office parks with support for 16 telephony lines, 8 Ethernet connections, 4 T-1 connections, and a cable TV interface. Small businesses can obtain all services over a single fiber-optic connection that delivers Internet access at speeds that had been prohibitively expensive and impractical.

Amino Adds Firefox Browser to IPTV Offering

From BBP Wires

LONDON – IPTV took another leap into the mainstream this month when British provider Amino announced that it would bundle the popular Firefox software with its IPTV set-top boxes. The open-source browser, now used on one out of every seven PCs, will be ported to Amino's system and provided to IPTV customers starting in Q3 2006. Amino's version of Firefox will give customers a familiar, easy-to-use, and free navigational tool that is customized and optimized for IPTV viewing.

Movie "Download-to-Own" Services Introduced

BBP Staff

NEW YORK – What's going to drive customer demand for higher bandwidth? Movie downloads may become a major factor. Universal Pictures announced that it is allowing British consumers to download films, including blockbusters like "King Kong," through the European branch of the Netflix film rental service and through AOL UK. (The service will be introduced in the United States at a later date.) Customers can watch the downloaded films on their computers and portable media devices, and are also sent DVDs by mail for viewing on their televisions. Warner Brothers has made plans to launch a similar service in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. While there are other ways, both legal and illegal, of downloading movies, Universal's and Warner's offerings are the first "download to own" services, where the customer buys a permanent, legal digital copy of a film, and so may appeal to a larger group of consumers.

Rapid Growth in Asia's FTTH Usage Forecast

From BBP Wires

NEW YORK – The number of Asian FTTH households will grow from 5 million in 2005 to 40 million in 2010, according to a new report from The Diffusion Group. The 40 million households are expected to represent about a quarter of all Asian broadband households.

The Diffusion Group cites three reasons for this explosive growth: First, FTTH is relatively less expensive to provide in Asian cities, which have very high population densities. Second, Asian consumers, especially young urban professionals, see fiber-to-the-home as a status symbol. Finally, and most important, service providers expect that consumer demand for services will reach the 60-80 Mbps range within a short time. . "This may sound crazy to European or North American operators offering 1-10Mbps," said Frank Marum, senior analyst with TDG and co-author of the report. "However…when you start to pipe a wide variety of bandwidth-intensive, two-way services over a broadband connection, the head room of a 30Mbps connection can vaporize quickly."

Entrisphere Introduces New Line of Remotes

From BBP Wires

SANTA CLARA, CA– Entrisphere announced two new Optical Network Units that support fiber-to-the-business, multi-tenant/multi-dwelling unit, fiber-to-the-curb, and fiber-to-the-node applications. The ONUs are packet-based remotes with IP service-aware features. They are extremely flexible, delivering IPTV, POTS, VoIP, high-speed data, ADSL2+, VDSL2, DS1, Ethernet, RF video, HiCap data, and special services; they also offer flexible mounting and enclosure options.

This flexibility enables carriers to push fiber as far as economically feasible in any situation, and to deliver high-bandwidth services to customers in a variety of different circumstances. Carriers can upgrade to new platforms and services without replacing the ONUs. "Carriers need the flexibility to deliver any service to any customer in a campus or multi-tenant environment," said Jeff Heynen, directing analyst for broadband and IPTV at Infonetics Research. "Entrisphere is among the first equipment makers to support this requirement with a line of modular ONUs that support all services in a variety of deployment scenarios."

New Cabinet Retrofit Kit from Pannaway Provides a Smooth Upgrade Path to Next-Generation Broadband Services

From BBP Wires

PORTSMOUTH, NH – One of the largest expenses for telcos, especially rural telcos, that are upgrading to high-performance broadband services is replacing their AFC cabinets, or remote switches. Pannaway Technologies' new retrofit kit promises to reduce this expense. According to Pannaway, retrofitting an old AFC 48 cabinet to accommodate IP-Ethernet-based triple-play broadband networks costs 60 percent less than decommissioning the old cabinet, preparing the site, and buying and installing a new cabinet. Once upgraded, the cabinets can deliver Primary Line VoIP with guaranteed Lifeline calling and E 911 services, all-digital IPTV with Ring Trip avoidance technology, and backhaul transport that scales from 1 to 10Gps.

Wave7 Optics Introduces New Optical Networking Terminals

From BBP Wires

Atlanta, GA – Nearly half of the cost of FTTP consists of equipment at the customer premises. In order to push overall FTTP costs down, several vendors have been redesigning their optical networking terminals (ONTs), the devices that connect outside with inside wiring. Wave7 Optics recently introduced a new series of "EFM" (Ethernet in the First Mile) ONTs. Two of the new models are compact, cost-effective devices that accommodate only IP-based services. According to Wave7, these devices are redefining the economics of deploying EPON FTTP networks. The third device supports not only IP services but also standard telephony and RF video.

New Devices Distribute High-Bandwidth Services Over In-Home Coax

From BBP Wires

LOS GATOS, CA – Because the structured wiring that supports high-bandwidth services is relatively recent, telco customers in older homes face expensive rewiring if they want to receive these services. For the 110 million homes with coaxial cable installed, an alternative is to use a device that allows IPTV or other services to be distributed over coax. Until recently, this required putting an extra "box" into the customer's premises – a solution that was complex and expensive to install.

Coaxsys, which has developed technology for distributing IPTV over coax, and XAVi Technologies, a manufacturer of IPTV modems, recently announced the availability of a modem that incorporates Coaxsys's technology. This allows customers to receive IPTV service over coax with a single piece of equipment, reducing installation cost and complexity.

The modem integrates Coaxsys's TVnet technology by way of a Mini-PCI card inside the modem's casing. Later in 2006, Coaxsys plans to make a TVnet chip available, further reducing the cost of this technology.

While Coaxsys is using proprietary technology, many other firms have signed onto an industry standard specified by the Multimedia over Coax Alliance (MoCA), and are beginning to develop MoCA devices. Eight device makers – Actiontec, Entropic, Linksys, Mototech, Motorola, Panasonic, 2Wire and Westell – were all recently awarded MoCA certification. Entropic will be providing the MoCA chipset that Motorola plans to use in its new advanced digital set-top boxes. Additional firms, such as Fujitsu, JDSU, Tellabs, and Entrisphere have joined MoCA but have not yet certified devices.

Sumitomo Reduces FTTx Deployment Costs

From BBP Wires

Sumitomo Electric Lightwave announced the FastCat Core Alignment Fusion Splicer, the industry's first splicer with dual heaters. According to Sumitomo, the new splicer improves productivity in the field by 70 percent, helping to reduce overall FTTx deployment costs.

The FastCat's design, which reduces the bottleneck of heater wait time by 88 percent, makes it the fastest fusion splicer on the market With an individual heater cycle time of only 30 seconds (60mm Fiber Protection Sleeves) and a splice cycle of only 9 seconds, the FastCat reduces labor time and costs while increasing deployment speed.

The FastCat can be used to splice fiber in the central office or headend, in the feeder portion of the FTTx network where speed is crucial, and at terminals leading to the final drop to the premise or home. The multi-position monitor accommodates both front-to-back and back-to-front viewing. Bundled with the splicer is image processing software for performing core alignment and estimating splice loss. Use of the software typically reduces splice loss to less than 0.02dB for single-mode fiber and less than 0.01db for multimode. Like other Sumitomo splicers, the FastCat is manufactured with durable metal rather than plastic materials.

Alloptic Deploys FTTH in Bahrain

From BBP Wires

LIVERMORE, CA – Australia-based Madison Technologies, along with local partners AJM Kooheji and Sons, have selected the Alloptic access network solution for deployment in the El Areen development within Bahrain. Utilizing the Alloptic solution, the GEPON infrastructure will provide residents with bandwidth for technology, security, broadband Internet, home automation, and video entertainment. Al Kooheiji of AJM and Sons explained that Bahrain's status as a banking and financial hub and a rapidly growing tourist destination made it crucial to deploy the best available technology. According to a spokesman for Madison Technologies, FTTH will be used for all its upcoming projects in Bahrain.

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