

# DIRECTV and Thomson Launch New Version of Multifamily Housing MFH3 Distribution System

From BBP Wires

**EL SEGUNDO, CA** – Recognized with a Cornerstone Award at the 2008 Broadband Summit as the most significant and innovative technology for the multifamily housing market, the MFH3 (Multi-Family Housing version 3) satellite-based distribution platform developed by DIRECTV (www.directv.com) and Thomson (www.thomson.net) is being rolled out with a new software release doubling the number of DIRECTV receivers it supports, providing a more cost-effective installation for large properties and enabling injection of local content such as on-site amenity video feeds.

To speed deployment of the new technology, DIRECTV has established new strategic partnerships with several companies including AFL Telecommunications (www.afltele.com), which is now the leading end-to-end fiber-to-the-home MFH3 system integrator, along with some of its largest customers, YRT2 (www.yrt2.net), and Crystal Clear Technologies (www.crystalcleartechnologies.net).

The MFH3 platform has been installed in many properties, including Mill Creek in Bluffton, South Carolina (by YRT2) and Bridgemore Village in Nashville, Tennessee (by Crystal Clear Technologies).

MFH3 enables the delivery of all DIRECTV programming and services using existing in-building wiring by converting DIRECTV signals into IP video packets and sending them to IP-enabled DIRECTV receivers. The system – not to be confused with IPTV – uses IP technology as a simple distribution platform to deliver satellite TV and other services over a single home-run connection from a private on-property headend to each customer dwelling. In addition to supporting DIRECTV's standard receivers and HD DVR receivers, the IP distribution platform will also support voice, Internet and interactive services over that single connection, enabling the delivery of triple-play bundles.

The new software release allows MFH3 to more than double the receiver

capacity and provides support for local content insertion, enabling residents to access and view their building's custom amenity feeds and other unique on-site video services.

"Customers in multifamily housing, whether they live in large vertical or garden-style buildings, not only have a superior alternative to cable, they now have access to virtually all of our services and technology, from HD to international programming," says Tony Goncalves, vice president, of telco and MDU sales for DIRECTV. "The MFH3 platform provides a unique and simple solution for our customers who want the benefit of the full DIRECTV experience, and provides a great business opportunity for our dealers, who can now offer a competitive, cost-effective and cutting-edge solution to multifamily property owners. MFH3 is also ideal for new fiber infrastructure systems integrators and telcos that are building out new fiber plants."

In a separate announcement, DIRECTV signed a definitive merger

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agreement with 180 Connect ([www.180connect.net](http://www.180connect.net)), one of North America's largest providers of installation, integration and fulfillment services to the home entertainment, communication, and home integration service industries. The transaction, which will provide DIRECTV with control over a significant portion of its installation and home service network, is expected to close in the third quarter of 2008.

Under the terms of the agreement, DIRECTV will acquire 100 percent

of 180 Connect's outstanding common stock and exchangeable shares for the coincidental price of \$1.80 per share.

UniTek USA has agreed to acquire 100 percent of 180 Connect's cable services operating unit and certain DIRECTV installation services markets in exchange for UniTek's satellite installation services in New York City, Burbank, California, and Bloomington, California, and cash. This transaction is expected to be completed immediately following DIRECTV's acquisition of 180 Connect.

By acquiring 180 Connect, DIRECTV will gain control of one of its largest installation and home service providers in 45 US market locations throughout California, Colorado, Oregon, Washington, Utah, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Arkansas, Virginia, Hawaii and western Pennsylvania, and hopes to use this control to improve the customer experience. Prior to the acquisition, DIRECTV had outsourced all its installation service operations through 13 home service provider companies.

## Occam Networks Announces FTTH Quick Start Training and Consulting Program for SIP

*From BBP Wires*

**SANTA BARBARA, CA** – Occam Networks ([www.occamnetworks.com](http://www.occamnetworks.com)), a supplier of Ethernet and IP-based loop carrier equipment, launched its FTTH Quick Start Program, a training and consulting service enabling service providers to turn up fiber-based deployments quickly and efficiently. The program is geared especially to providers using Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) for VoIP.

Russ Sharer, Occam's vice president of marketing, calls FQS part of Occam's efforts to provide the most rapid "time to revenue" for network deployers.

Occam is introducing FTTH Quick Start in three packages. The Basic Package includes an Occam technical support engineer working in person at the customer site and assisting telco staff in the basic installation and configuration of the first optical network terminals (customer-premises equipment). The engineer will also provide hands-on training on optical line terminal (central-office equipment) provisioning, ONT configuration scripts including SIP end-point provisioning, and DHCP management. Firmware problems in some vendors' ONTs have stymied seamless VoIP deployments.

For telcos new to deploying fiber, FQS is available with an Outside Plant (OSP) package that may be added to the Basic Package. In the OSP Package, an Occam field engineer works on site and assists telco technicians with fiber installation, qualification and turn-up. This may include activities such as fiber splic-

ing, light meter usage, ONT mounting and line qualification.

"Occam's FTTH Quick Start program has been very useful as Farmers Telephone deploys fiber into its network for the first time," says David Garrett, Central Office/Network Operations Manager of Farmers Telephone Cooperative in Alabama. "The Occam team spent time with us on site, walked us through a wide range of installation, configuration and provisioning details, and helped us get our upgraded network turned up quickly and smoothly."

Finally, Occam's DHCP Plus Package can be added when engineers would like extra training on DHCP and ONT provisioning. Occam provides a technical support engineer to assist the telco with the installation and configuration of its DHCP/TFTP servers. This pack-

age assists telcos in turning up new servers or reviving and customizing older servers, and covers how to set up and maintain a fiber deployed network. The DHCP Plus Package also includes installation and setup of the ONT Configuration Manager.

"As telecommunications service providers roll out new service bundles that include IPTV, HDTV, Video on Demand, network-based gaming and other bandwidth-intensive applications, their network configurations will invariably become more complex," says Erik M. Keith, senior analyst for broadband infrastructure at Current Analysis. "Occam's FTTH Quick Start program is a strong example of the increasing support access equipment providers will have to provide to ensure long-term satisfaction of their telco customers."

## FTTH Vendor Wave7 Optics Acquired by Enablence

*From BBP Wires*

**OTTAWA, ONTARIO** – Enablence Technologies ([www.enablence.com](http://www.enablence.com)) has acquired Wave7 Optics, a provider of fiber-to-the-home systems, for \$10.5 million and 2 million shares of Enablence. Tom Tighe, Wave7's president and CEO, became president of Enablence's Network Division.

Enablence manufactures FTTH transceivers, and, according to its CEO Arvind Chhatbar, it is "now in a position to be a supplier of both ONTs and transceivers." Chhatbar says that acquiring Wave7 provides Enablence with an immediate channel to deploy its transceivers while broadening the addressable market for Enablence products, including all FTTH network elements.