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# SHOW DAILY

## Competition Still the Message

### Wheeler addresses BDS, Set-top Boxes, 5G and Net Neutrality

By **Bruce Christian**

The message Federal Communications Commission Tom Wheeler shared Monday with The INCOMPAS Show attendees reiterated a theme that he stressed when addressing the event more than a year ago: “Competition, Competition, Competition.”

Wheeler opened by congratulating INCOMPAS on its name change, and quipped, “I can neither confirm nor deny that your rebranding is what inspired us to rebrand the non-descriptively termed ‘special access’ as business data services (BDS).”

Throughout his remarks, Wheeler focused on competition for BDS, competition



in the video marketplace and competition for new services and innovation that flows from an open Internet.

Starting with BDS, the Chairman said, “Last week, INCOMPAS and Verizon made an important contribution to the public discussion by submitting a joint letter calling upon us to adopt a new approach to special access regulation.”

He said this action demonstrated that the market is changing.

“The principles you and Verizon articulated are very important and will be very helpful to the Commission as it moves forward,”

*(See Wheeler, page 8)*

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# Rebranding a Fitting Change to Industry's Evolution

Rebranding can be a long, arduous and difficult process. INCOMPAS began its rebranding last October when it announced its new name during the fall show in San Francisco. So, six months later, what has been the result of these efforts?

"Our members have embraced this change wholeheartedly," said INCOMPAS CEO Chip Pickering. "They understand the changing nature of our industry and see this evolution as a crucial and important next step in communicating what we stand for and who we represent."

The association took the COMPTEL name in 1985. It stood for the Competitive Telecommunications Association. But the world is very different today.

"The technologies and platforms available for communications have evolved and expanded exponentially since then," Pickering said. "So it seemed fitting that COMPTEL update its brand to more effectively represent the entire innovative and competitive communications industry."



"As INCOMPAS, the organization has continued to fiercely advocate for competition and innovation that benefits the entire communications marketplace, and provide business-building education and networking opportunities for our members and their partners," he said.

And Pickering vowed the organization will continue to enhance and strengthen those offerings. At the same time, it will continue to expand its member base.

"We are confident that a bigger and more diverse organization will benefit the entire industry by strengthening the power of our voice and extending our experience," Pickering said.

"We remain vigilant in our belief that

that world-class communications networks and services are best achieved through a vibrant, competitive marketplace. We will continue to fight for issues like non-discriminatory last-mile access and IP interconnection that are critical to the success of core members," he added.

Even newer platform and content providers, such as Google and Netflix, benefit from the initiatives INCOMPAS supports, so they also will benefit from the same regulatory successes.

"Because they are well recognized in D.C.,

their support of INCOMPAS' efforts can also help increase visibility for those issues," Pickering said, noting that "everyone wins with a broader membership base."

The organization's CEO added that INCOMPAS remains committed to its educational and networking resources for the core member base – the companies that deliver voice telephony, broadband, mobile and fixed wireless, wholesale, backhaul, cloud services and other applications.

"Supporting those members' business growth and access to partners and customers will remain a top priority," Pickering said. □

## Telecommunications Act Celebrates 20 Years

This year is the 20th anniversary of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and the competitive telecommunications industry has come a long way in the past two decades. That bill marked the first major revision to the original Communications Act, which was passed back in the 1930s.

INCOMPAS CEO Chip Pickering, who served as a staff member on the Senate Commerce Committee, where he helped shape the Telecommunications Act of 1996, speaks with some authority regarding the progress that has been made. He said the major accomplishments of the measure have included:

- Opening the local markets for competition
- Interconnection of incumbent and competitive networks
- Encouragement of broadband network deployment

Pickering said passage of the Act is "a clear demonstration of how a bipartisan effort can lead to good policy making that benefits the American people. We need to get back to that as a nation – both parties working together to accomplish good."

Still, some provisions of the Act have not worked out as well as those who crafted it would have hoped.

"There are particular sections that have not been fulfilled," Pickering said, specifically citing Section 629 – the availability of competitive set-top boxes is one example.

"As a result, consumers have suffered," he said. "The cost of renting a set top-box has increased 185 percent since 1994. By contrast, the price for televisions and computers has dropped by 90 percent."

This is an area the Federal Communications Commission is addressing, however, and Pickering said INCOMPAS supports the effort.

"The FCC's plan is simple: Allow consumers to purchase their own video device from numerous retail outlets at costs lower than the monopoly rental rate – which costs families \$231 per household on average annually," Pickering explained.

"Consumers also would have easier access to over-the-top and streaming programming currently blocked by most cable set top boxes," he continued. "That means consumers who want to binge watch their favorite streaming shows would no longer need to switch between program guides, remote controls or devices."

The FCC's proposal would give consumers multiple opportunities to discover new content from independent programmers that have been unable to get carriage on pay-TV channel line-ups.

"Independent programmers could offer this content directly to consumers," Pickering explained. "The new rules would allow consumers more access to over-the-top programming than with traditional cable services, and they would enjoy better viewing experiences." □



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# HyperCube Rebrands as West Telecom Services

**W**est Corporation is integrating all of its business units under a single brand – “West.”

The West subsidiary formerly known as HyperCube has been rebranded as West’s Telecom Services business unit. The new organizational structure unifies the business units on an operational level and gives customers a seamless sales experience across all of West’s functional areas.

For example, West Telecom Services customers can now bolt on E-911 service with their wholesale origination or termination services.

West says it operates the world’s largest conferencing provider and is a leading provider of emergency communications. To leverage these and other strengths, its operations have been consolidated under these lines of business:

- Unified Communications and Conferencing Services – West delivers on-demand audio conferencing, web collaboration tools, video webcasting and other cloud-based unified

communications as a service (UCaaS) solutions. Scott Etzler leads this division.

- Interactive Services – Through automated alerts and notifications, West gives organizations a variety of ways to reach and notify their customers, subscribers and constituents. Skip Hansen sits at the helm of this unit.
- Safety Services – West provides the location database for the majority of the 911 calls made in the United States, playing a critical role in connecting citizens with first responders. Ron Beaumont leads this organization.
- Telecom Services – A licensed CLEC and competitive provider of tandem services, West is an independent provider of toll-free origination services. Beaumont continues to lead this division, as well.
- Specialized Agent Services – Focused on the healthcare market, West is a provider of healthcare advocacy products and services

to employees of large organizations.

This unit is led by Mick Mazour.

With a restructured organization and streamlined business processes, the Telecom Services division at West is poised to help its customers create more efficient and effective communications connections.

West Corporation helps to manage and to support essential communications with services that include unified communications services, safety services and interactive services such as automated notifications, telecom services and specialty agent services.

For more than 25 years, West has provided reliable, high-quality, voice and data services. It is a global organization with sales and operations in the Asia-Pacific, Canada, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and the United States. □

*For more information, visit West Telecom Services’ in meeting room 2 in the Expo Hall, go to [www.west.com](http://www.west.com) or contact [telecomsales@west.com](mailto:telecomsales@west.com).*

## Call One Implements CDG’s MBS Consumer Billing Solution

**C**ommunications Data Group (CDG) announced the implementation of its online MBS billing system at Call One, a Chicago-based CLEC that specializes in professional consulting services and unified communications solutions for mid-market businesses.

After signing a multi-year contract, Call One’s MBS implementation had an aggressive timeline, and included successfully migrating Call One’s data and developing concurrent enhancements to the MBS system.

Once completely developed, Call One will have total automation of communication among all its internal systems and the billing and provisioning systems.

“Our development and support staffs jumped right into the conversion and committed to it – like they always do,” said CDG’s President and CEO, Bob Labonte. “But considering the timeline and scale of the project, they had to take their game to the next level for this implementation. They did just that.”

According to Call One’s President, Alan Burkhard, “the efficiency and professionalism of the CDG staff throughout the rapid MBS implementation was outstanding. Our staff is

enjoying the new system, including features that include being able to review unbillable usage prior to billing. We are looking forward to fostering our relationship with CDG and contributing our ideas for future system enhancements and third-party integrations.”

CDG offers scalable, accurate billing and operational support solutions for voice, video and data for retail and wholesale telecommunications carriers and service providers. Options include: interconnect, CABS, mediation, customer care, plant, trouble, service provisioning, e-care, task management and third-party financial, mapping and facilities management products. Service bureau, online and licensed options are available.

Call One is a full-service technology/telecommunications company for mid market firms. Working with more than 60 leading carriers, Call One consolidates and unifies voice, data and mobile communications – giving its clients more time to focus on their core businesses. □

*For more information on CDG’s products and services, visit booth 219 in the Expo Hall or go to [www.cdg.ws](http://www.cdg.ws).*





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*(Wheeler, continued from page 1)*

Wheeler said. “Both Chip Pickering and Verizon’s Kathy Grillo deserve a special shout-out. ... My own views are in significant accord with your letter.”

Wheeler said finding common ground should start with common sense, and “I believe the principles I am supporting are firmly based in the realities of the marketplace,” adding, “That marketplace is changing – fast.”

He cited how new technologies offer IP-based products alongside traditional legacy circuit-based products and how new entrants are playing a growing role in the BDS market.

“And the importance of business data services to the economy is becoming ever more important,” Wheeler said. “Think about wireless competition today and the coming of 5G wireless networks and the Internet of Things. According to Intel, the number of connected smart devices is going to increase from 15 billion in 2015 to 200 billion in 2020.”

Fifth-generation wireless trials have begun, and the FCC is preparing to designate spectrum for 5G this summer, Wheeler acknowledged, saying that American leadership in this field is a “national priority.”

“Without a healthy BDS market, we put at risk the enormous opportunity for economic growth, job creation and U.S. competitiveness that 5G represents,” he added.

Wheeler said the FCC data as of 2013 show competitive pathways – including cable – reach less than 45 percent of locations where there is demand. And while cable presence grows, some locations are not benefiting from competition.

“For the Commission to be effective, our rules must be based on market realities,” Wheeler stated. “So we need a fresh start.”

That fresh start calls for broad principles to find common ground for the Commission to determine the best ways to act,” Wheeler said, adding he wants the Commission to adopt the proposed BDS framework this month and conclude the proceeding by the end of the year.

“I assure you that I will treat this issue with the urgency it deserves,” Wheeler said. “Where

competition exists, there is little for government to do except to maintain the traditional oversight of telecommunications services; but where competition does not exist, government’s role is to ensure that non-competitive market conditions cannot disadvantage business customers and their ability to compete and innovate in downstream markets.”

Wheeler said the regulatory framework must be technology-neutral, and that companies and technologies that deliver the same kind of BDS should be treated the same. This means where “TDM and IP deliver substitutable services, the market must be judged by looking at both,” he explained.

However, he added the FCC still must encourage the transition from TDM to IP.

“The supply of circuit-switched BDS is still big business, but the future is in IP-based, packet-switched communications,” Wheeler said.

It is why Wheeler has asked the FCC to vote to declare unlawful contract terms used in a series of tariffs that include so-called “all or nothing” contracts that require a customer to make all of its purchases on a single set of terms.

“Unfair contractual terms can both slow the transition by customers away from TDM and to IP and, by limiting the use of IP-based products like Ethernet, actually discourage investment in the construction of new BDS facilities,” he said.

Citing Harold Feld of Public Knowledge, who likens BDS to crude oil, Wheeler said, “You would never buy a barrel of oil, but the price of crude impacts what you pay for almost all energy services. The same can be said of business data services. Business data services matter because they are at the heart of virtually everything using telecommunications.”

He also addressed set-top boxes as a threat to what should be the golden era of video competition, which is characterized by consumers’ ability to mix and match the packages of programming they want from a single provider or many over dedicated network facilities, using the Internet or both.

“Ninety-nine percent of pay-TV customers lease



set-top boxes from their cable, satellite or telco providers,” Wheeler said. “On average, consumers are paying \$231 a year to rent those boxes, collectively \$20 billion. Yes, despite Congress’s mandate, they have no competitive choice.”

The FCC is out to correct that, Wheeler said. “We believe our proposal clearly protects both copyright and privacy, but if it can be made better, we are open for suggestions. Clearly, it’s in the public interest to introduce competition in the set-top box marketplace.”

Wheeler also called for attendees to support net neutrality.

“Access to the Internet may be the most important commodity that exists today,” he said. “In an economy built around information, broadband is the key to individual and corporate opportunity. Broadband must be fast, fair and open.

“Our approach to Internet openness is simple,” he continued. “We must enforce the bright-line rules for no blocking, no throttling and no paid prioritization. We must ensure transparency. And we must apply the case-by-case standards in order to protect consumers from harm.”

The Chairman said he believes it is ironic that the same organizations that complain the open Internet rules aren’t sufficient also complain about the Commission’s ability to create certainty through “ex-post examination” of the market.

Wheeler emphasized one obvious principle in the debate is one of the consistent underpinnings of FCC precedent for decades: “An incumbent should not be able to use its position as a gatekeeper to unfairly discriminate against unaffiliated content or services that may, today or tomorrow, pose a competitive threat to the incumbent’s own business.”

Wheeler said it is time for a fresh start. So, yes, it is time for a fresh start, but the fresh start would be summed up with three words: Competition, Competition. Competition. □





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“Businesses of all sizes grapple with HR questions daily, and often find themselves faced with costly attorney advisory fees or confused by incomplete answers from colleagues or the web,” said Chip Pickering, CEO of INCOMPAS. “We look forward to working with UNITEL to bring another, more cost-effective, option to our members with the availability of UNITEL HR Solutions.”

Several members of INCOMPAS have been pleased with the service include Deb Ward, CEO TSI and Chairwoman of INCOMPAS.

“UNITEL HR Solutions has been a valuable resource for us. We have been very impressed with the professionalism and expertise their certified professionals have displayed. This is an

exceptional service that can help companies stay compliant and save time and money by having HR support available when they need it. I highly recommend you check out UNITEL HR Solutions.”

The human resources function in companies continues to evolve and change especially with all the complexities being thrown at companies regarding the ACA, OSHA, compliance, and other legal issues.

Many companies that UNITEL works with don't have the staff or the money to have a full-time human resources person so they turn those responsibilities over to an employee who is wearing several hats within that company. Many instances occur when a complex HR issue arises and these people don't know where to turn to get the expert guidance they need.

While these companies may turn to web-based HR portals for information, this kind of solution can help only to a certain degree. It takes time and effort to try and research the issue and many times it is difficult to find the right answer to the issue being addressed. Some companies will have to make calls to their attorneys to have questions answered and this can be very costly.

With UNTEL HR Solutions, companies can save money and turn to a trusted HR resource

when they need one. Now instead of costly calls to an attorney or incomplete answers from the web, you can have direct access to certified SPHR/PHR consultants with UNITEL's HR Hotline. You can receive immediate guidance and best practices advice to handle the toughest HR solutions swiftly, and get right back to business.

In addition, UNITEL HR Solutions offers web-based training for employees and managers with more than 200 on-demand courses. These courses cover six popular subject areas – from employment to safety. They can be very useful for new-hire orientation or even continued education for employee throughout the year.

The other component is a comprehensive online HR Library, which has step-by-step guides for federal and state law compliance, COBRA and FMLA, and thousands of invaluable templates, forms, guides and online tools.

There are other benefits, such as bi-weekly newsletters, state and federal compliance alerts, HRCI approved webinars, whitepapers and other valuable resources.

“UNITEL is extremely excited to partner with INCOMPAS and its member companies. We fully understand the HR challenges that INCOMPAS members face each day and believe that UNITEL HR Solutions will be a valuable resource to help them save money while reducing their overall risk related to managing people and safety within their companies,” said Carl Zeutzius, director of Sales and Marketing for UNITEL HR Solutions. “There are many HR web portals on the market today, but what sets UNITEL HR Solutions apart is our live phone access to PHR- and SPHR-certified HR professionals, who can help answer difficult questions that often arise. Our partnership with ThinkHR allows us to deliver substantial price saving to INCOMPAS members”

Many companies turn to UNITEL HR Solutions because they realize they have a lack of experience in-house. Knowing your weaknesses is as important as knowing your strengths, so handing off a task you know you can't handle properly to someone with expertise is a great business decision.

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*If you meet with Carl Zeutzius at the INCOMPAS Show to discuss UNITEL HR Solutions you will be entered into a drawing to win a free one-year subscription to the service compliments of INCOMPAS. You can reach Carl via text/voice at 402-770-7150 or email at czeutzius@unitelinsurance.com.*

## UPN Enters Partnership with National Research Corp.

Unite Private Networks (UPN), a provider of high-capacity, fiber-based communication networks, announced it has entered into a partnership with healthcare research firm National Research Corporation (NRC). UPN is providing dedicated high-speed Internet connectivity to the company.

“UPN's carrier-grade robust fiber-optic network provides NRC high bandwidth Internet with speeds upgradable to 100 Gbps,” said Stuart Howerter, vice president of sales at UPN. “We provide a suite of products including Ethernet, wavelength services, Internet access, and dark fiber, and are looking forward to continuing to help businesses meet their bandwidth needs in Nebraska.”

NRC Chief Information Officer Paul Cooper added, “Our partnership with Unite Private Networks has allowed National Research Corporation to receive better Internet service at a lower cost. UPN effectively doubled our Internet bandwidth, allowing our associates to work faster and more efficiently than ever before and, in turn, provide expedited service

to our clients. We look forward to this ongoing partnership and the far-reaching impact it will have on our organization.”

For 35 years, National Research Corporation has been at the forefront of patient-centered care. Today the company's focus on empowering customer-centric healthcare across the continuum extends patient-centered care to incorporate families, communities, employees, senior housing residents and other stakeholders.

UPN provides high-bandwidth, fiber-based communications networks and services to schools, governments, carriers, data centers, hospitals and enterprise business customers across a 20-state service area. Service offerings include dark and lit fiber, private line, metro-optical Ethernet, Internet access, data center services and other customized solutions.

Headquartered in Kansas City, Mo., UPN has been providing customer focused communications solutions since 1998. □

*For more information, visit booth 423 in the Expo Hall or go to [www.uniteprivatenetworks.com](http://www.uniteprivatenetworks.com).*

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# TeleQuality Encourages Data Centers to Help Protect Healthcare Information

The Ponemon Institute sets \$363 the value of a single stolen health record on the black market. In fact, medical information is worth 10 times more than a credit card number.

While it's true businesses across all industries are being threatened increasingly by cyber crime and hackers, none is being attacked as much as the healthcare industry.

Healthcare companies experienced a 72 percent increase in cyber attacks between 2013 and 2014, and in 2015 there were 253 breaches affecting 500 individuals or more with a combined loss of more than 112 million records, according to a reports by the Aberdeen Group and OCR.

Security experts say cyber criminals are targeting the \$3 trillion U.S. healthcare industry because many of these organizations still rely on aging computer systems that do not use the latest security features.

Combine that with the simple fact that healthcare providers don't always have an experienced IT workforce that can build and implement a comprehensive disaster recovery plan, the perfect recipe for costly implications such as data ransom is created.

In February, a hacker used malware to infect Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center's computer systems and seized control,

preventing the hospital system from being able to communicate on those devices.

The center only regained control of its network after paying out the ransom of 40 bitcoin, equivalent to \$17,000.

TeleQuality has found that many healthcare providers, especially in rural areas, lack the IT resources necessary to secure their data. So what can data technology and innovation companies do to help the healthcare clients protect their data?

It is imperative that data centers and technology companies start taking a proactive approach in educating healthcare clients on low-tech and high-tech solutions to protect themselves and their patients' data from ransomware and hacking.

Data centers can provide helpful how-to lists to healthcare providers regarding critical data securing activities such as how to:

- **Backup Their Data** – Data centers know the best prevention method to lessen potential damage by a ransomware attack is to make sure information is backed up using the 3-2-1 best practice rule. Healthcare providers may be unaware that they should create three backup copies of their data on two different media with one of those copies on a separate location. This is the most critical component for any business to consider when storing protected, valuable information and data

centers should help educate their customers.

- **Develop a Comprehensive Disaster Recovery Plan** – Often healthcare organizations fail to consider and act on all aspects of disaster recovery from physical facilities and computer hardware and software to communications links, data files and databases, customer services provided, user operations, overall management information systems structure, end-user systems and developing testing criteria/procedures. The reality of today's technological world is not if you get cyber attacked, but when. Ensure the healthcare providers have a disaster recovery plan that is comprehensive so they are prepared.

- **Test the Disaster Recovery Plan Annually** – Many healthcare providers are not aware that having a disaster recovery plan is a great start but isn't enough on its own. They must be made aware that regular testing of the plan is critical to preventing it from becoming outdated. Data centers should encourage healthcare providers to test their plan annually to determine the feasibility and compatibility of backup facilities and to test short-term and long-term battery backup needs.

Here are some tips to teach providers simple ways to prevent ransomware

- Avoid clicking on embedded links in unverified emails
- Regularly update software, programs and applications
- Use a layered protection suite
- Inventory physical devices and systems within the healthcare organization
- Perform vulnerability scans regularly
- Use the UCSC's "Password Strength and Security Standards"
- Manage access permissions and incorporate the principles of least privilege and separation of duties

With three TeleQuality data centers opening this year in Atlanta, Chicago and Phoenix, the company recognizes the urgency to promote awareness and education to data centers and healthcare providers on ransomware and data hacking as it becomes a major threat to the healthcare industry.

TeleQuality's CEO Tim Kolien wants all data center companies to join its commitment to help protect their healthcare clients, to fight the implications of data ransom and data hacking in order to protect health information. □

## ATLANTIC-ACM Delivers U.S. Long Haul Wholesale Awards

ATLANTIC-ACM, a research consultancy and market diligence firm, delivered its 2016 U.S. Long Haul Wholesale Service Provider Excellence Awards on Monday at The INCOMPAS Show. The awards were based on more than 800 customer evaluations of U.S. long haul wholesale service providers for the company's 2016 U.S. Long Haul Wholesale Report Card.

ATLANTIC-ACM President and Managing Partner Fedor Smith delivered the awards to:

- Level 3 for Service Delivery and Customer Service
- Verizon for Brand, Network Performance and Voice Value

- XO Communications for Sales Reps and Billing (tie)

- Zayo for Data Value and Billing (tie)

Founded in 1991, ATLANTIC-ACM is a strategic consulting firm to the telecom and technology sectors. It assists corporate and investor clients in evaluating strategic growth opportunities for successful investment, market entry, optimization and long-term planning.

For more than two decades, the Boston-based firm has helped companies identify opportunities, capture and retain market share, and navigate changing market dynamics, economies and technologies. □

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# Midco Extends Fiber Network in Minnesota

**M**idco has extended its fiber-optic network reach to more locations in Minnesota through a cooperative relationship with Arvig.

The arrangement will help Midco business customers take advantage of growing opportunities to reach Minnesota communities, such as Duluth, Marshall, the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area, Rochester, St. Cloud and more.

The Northern Plains Network already spans 8,400 fiber route miles throughout Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. It connects to the Arvig network through multiple interconnect points, which adds 4,000 fiber route miles available as Type 2 network extensions.

"We've heard increased interest from our current and prospective customers about wanting to make more connections to cities and towns that Arvig covers. This relationship allows those

businesses the chance to still have Midco as their single point of contact – even if they want to connect off the Midco core network in this region," said Scott Smidt, vice president of Business Engineering and Operations at Midco.

"Our relationship with Midco is mutually beneficial," added Dave Schornack, Arvig's director of Business Development. "We look forward to working with Midco to provide connections to customers who are growing and expanding their business networks."

Because Midco has certified the Arvig network, business customers



needing various fiber and networking solutions in the Arvig geographic area will still receive the same service level commitments and reliability they expect from Midco Business and its core network. As a result, these customers can enjoy simplified due diligence as they extend their reach throughout the Upper Midwest.

Established in 1950, Arvig has grown from a small, family-owned telephone company to one of the largest independent full-service telecommunications providers in the nation. Arvig continually reinvests in technology and network operations to deliver next-generation communication services to businesses in Minnesota and North Dakota.

In addition to traditional telecom services, Arvig also provides network cabling, security systems, managed voice solutions, telecom and utility construction, answering services and a full suite of digital media services.

Midco Business is a provider of Internet, networking, Ethernet, phone, cable TV, advertising and carrier services in the Upper Midwest. Businesses of all sizes rely on Midco's Northern Plains Network, an 8,400-mile fiber-optic network connected to more than 40 regional and national fiber networks.

Scalable to eight terabits per second, the Midco network earned MEF 2.0 certification for meeting high industry standards for an Ethernet network. □

*For more information, visit booth 214 in the Expo Hall or [www.midco.com/business](http://www.midco.com/business) to learn more about Midco and how the company gives back to the communities it serves.*

## GSA Optimizes VoIP Carrier Billing for 9 Percent Profit Increase

**A** new VoIP carrier was concerned that the tax set up originally in its billing engine was not reflective of its services and sought out GSA to review and optimize its taxation.

GSA's regulatory review uncovered errors in the regulatory code set up in the carrier's system, which allowed for reduced liabilities.

Additionally, GSA's research identified overrides – rules that can be applied to products for special tax consideration – that were never applied to the carrier's tax rating set up, which could have been a result of the carrier's lack of understanding on overrides.

Regardless of the circumstances, the review uncovered the oversight and enabled the carrier to take advantage of the qualified exemptions.

Finally, GSA performed a tax optimization exercise for the carrier, reviewing customer invoices for truth-in-billing and taxation accuracy. GSA optimized the carrier's invoices by applying e911 and federal recovery fees allowed by law and properly calculated. This enabled the carrier to recoup expense outlay for obligatory tax and regulatory compliance.

These changes resulted in a 29 percent reduction of tax burden on the carrier. Looking at it from a bottom line, GSA's project increased the bottom line contribution/profit by 9 percent.

In an increasingly competitive market, this was a major boost to the carrier, which is feeling the competitive pressure.

GSA can do this for your company as well. If you have manual processes involved in your tax and regulatory reporting, or if you have older resources (advisors and systems), GSA can examine at your reporting methods to see if there are ways to improve your bottom line.

With more 14 years' experience in the industry, GSA has performed regulatory reviews for telecommunications providers since its inception and is perhaps the most experienced with understanding guidelines surrounding federal and state regulatory and tax rules. Combined with its repositories of data on more than 24,000 jurisdictions, GSA's professionals bring their expertise to all engagements. □

*For more information, visit GSA at booth 312 in the Expo Hall, go to [www.gsaudits.com](http://www.gsaudits.com) or call Karine Vosberg at 678.304.6469.*

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# Ciena Encryption Solution Decreases Breach Risks

In today's web-scale world, where more applications reside in the cloud, businesses need the assurance their data are secure at rest and in-flight.

An industry first and backed by Ciena's coherent optics, the WaveLogic Encryption solution offers new optical-layer encryption capabilities to match high-capacity infrastructure needs from 10G to 100G, 200G and beyond, from metro to ultra-long haul distances. This solution provides simple-to-implement, always-on, data encryption.

Security solutions exist to protect data at rest. However, high volumes of critical data are continuously in-flight, traveling beyond the walls of the data center and across large networks. Additionally, an increasing number of govern-

ment-mandated regulations for data protection have made securing in-flight data a higher priority in networks.

"High-profile security breaches are commonplace in the news today," said Sterling Perrin, senior analyst at Heavy Reading. "Service providers tell Heavy Reading repeatedly that security risks are the number one concern when they talk to their enterprise customers today.

"These concerns are only rising as more and more data moves to the cloud. And, while encryption inside the data center or enterprise campus is well established, service providers are now realizing that encryption of in-flight data is an important component of their holistic security strategy," Perrin said.

He explained, "By integrating security functions directly into its coherent chipsets, Ciena's WaveLogic Encryption provides protection from breaches for all high capacity links, something we believe will be well received by both service providers and their end customers."

With Ciena's WaveLogic Encryption solution, data can now be secured as it leaves the private cloud and protected as it traverses across the network, across any distance, without sacrificing the end-user experience.

Ciena's WaveLogic Encryption solution addresses all infrastructure needs and provides added network security for service providers and large enterprises, such as financial service firms, healthcare and government organizations. The solution is Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) certified and meets the highest security standards recognized globally in the industry.

"Safeguarding critical data has become a major priority in today's web-scale world. Previous infrastructure solutions have been cumbersome to manage and burdened by separate boxes, impacting throughput and latency," said Francois Locoh-Donou, senior vice president and COO for Ciena.

"Our new WaveLogic Encryption solution is simple to deploy and provides a strong and effective defense with an additional level of protection to enable end-to-end security," Locoh-Donou added.

Powered by Ciena's WaveLogic 3 Extreme chipset, the solution provides software programmable modulation to enable 100G encryption with QPSK modulation and 200G encryption with 16QAM modulation – an industry first.

WaveLogic Encryption is simple to deploy and protocol agnostic, meaning it simultaneously encrypts any traffic type coming into the network, including Ethernet, fiber channel, OTN, IP, SONET, and SDH. It encrypts the entire wavelength before the data leave the building or data center, and transports it transparently with virtually no added latency, making efficient use of network resources and maintaining quality of end-customer experience.

Additionally, Ciena's software-based MyCryptoTool features a dedicated management user portal that provides full control to the end enterprise user or security officer to manage all security parameters. □

*For more information, visit Ciena at booth 201 in the Expo Hall or go to [www.ciena.com](http://www.ciena.com).*

## Optelian Selects Jabil Circuit to Deliver Next-Gen Products, Services

Optelian FLEX Architecture is used by more than 200 service providers, network operators and enterprises seeking more modular, intuitive and cost-effective service delivery.

To that end, Optelian is taking advantage of Jabil Circuit Inc.'s manufacturing and photonics capabilities to reduce product costs, increase operational efficiencies and drive continued product innovation.

"With Jabil as our manufacturing partner, Optelian can grow and scale in ways we couldn't before," said Dave Weymouth, Optelian's co-founder and CEO. "We have the agility to bid on different and larger business while trusting Jabil to support our product design, engineering, supply chain and manufacturing needs."

Jabil said Optelian chose it for the role in part because of the former's commitment to the optical industry, as evidenced by Jabil's June 2015 acquisition of photonics company AOC Technologies. Jabil continues to recruit key photonics talent around the world, including for a local operation alongside Optelian's team in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Optelian expects to use Jabil to support its entire product lifecycle management. Additionally, the company plans to take advantage of Jabil's intelligent global digital supply chain with predictive analytics to reduce component lead times and increase supply chain accuracy.

The company also anticipates the move to a complete sourcing model with Jabil to accelerate business scaling.

Jabil is an electronic product company providing electronics design, production and product management services to global electronics and technology companies.

Optelian is a full-service provider of optical networking solutions that move customer data reliably at the lowest total cost of ownership. The company offers a comprehensive portfolio of products to provide a dynamic infrastructure that delivers multiprotocol services. The Optelian FLEX Architecture comprises modular elements that are focused on the optical and circuit network layers.

The architecture enables the deployment of networking services from access to core, passive to packet, and 100M to 100G. Optelian provides the transport infrastructure – the foundation for packet networks.

With agile design capabilities and North American engineering, Optelian's solutions fulfil any network requirements. Optelian's professional services ensure networks are optimally planned and deployed. These service offerings along with 24x7 customer technical support ensure that Optelian delivers the technology and services to enable next generation networks. □

*For information visit booth 128 in the Expo Hall, [www.optelian.com](http://www.optelian.com) or contact [info@optelian.com](mailto:info@optelian.com).*



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# Schedule at a Glance

## TUESDAY, APRIL 12

7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

### Registration Open

Prince George's Exhibition Hall Registration Desk E

7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

### Deal Center Open

Expo Hall  
Sponsored by Granite

7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

### INCOMPAS Board Meeting

National Harbor 2/3  
(Board members only)

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

### Attendee Breakfast

Expo Hall

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

### The New Faces of INCOMPAS

Expo Hall (The Hub)

10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

### Expo Hall Open

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

### Refreshment Break

Expo Hall  
Sponsored by Generali Global Assistance

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

### Encryption vs. Security

INCOMPAS Theater

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

### Attendee Lunch

Expo Hall

1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

### Cloud Risk and Compliance Strategies

INCOMPAS Theater  
Sponsored by Juvo Technologies

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### The Evolving Privacy and Cybersecurity Landscape

INCOMPAS Theater

3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

### Refreshment Break

Expo Hall

3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

### Expo Hall Grand Prize Drawing

INCOMPAS Booth #320  
Sponsored by Sales Tax Associates

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

### Chairman's PAC Reception

(Invitation Only)

5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

### Closing Party – Backyard BBQ

Gaylord Atrium  
Sponsored by Google Fiber

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

### Deal and Dash

National Harbor 4/5  
Sponsored by Granite

## 13 Members Elected to INCOMPAS Board of Directors

**M**embers of INCOMPAS, the competitive networks association, yesterday elected 13 companies to serve on the organization's Board of Directors for the 2016-2018 term during the annual membership meeting, which took place during The INCOMPAS Show. The newly elected board members join others who are serving their 2015-2017 terms.

### Companies elected to the board for the 2016-2018 term include:

#### SMALL CATEGORY

- **ComSpan** – Mark Scully, President
- **Global Convergence Solutions** – Chris Birdsall, Executive Vice President, Global Sales
- **TeleQuality Communications Inc.** – Tim Koxlien, CEO

#### MEDIUM CATEGORY

- **Alpheus Communications LLC** – Scott Widham, CEO
- **ANPI** – Randy Lemmo, Executive Vice President, Strategic Business
- **FirstLight Fiber** – Kurt Van Wagenen, President and CEO
- **Inteliquent** – John Schoder, Chief Marketing Officer
- **Sunesys** – Alan Katz, Vice President

#### LARGE CATEGORY

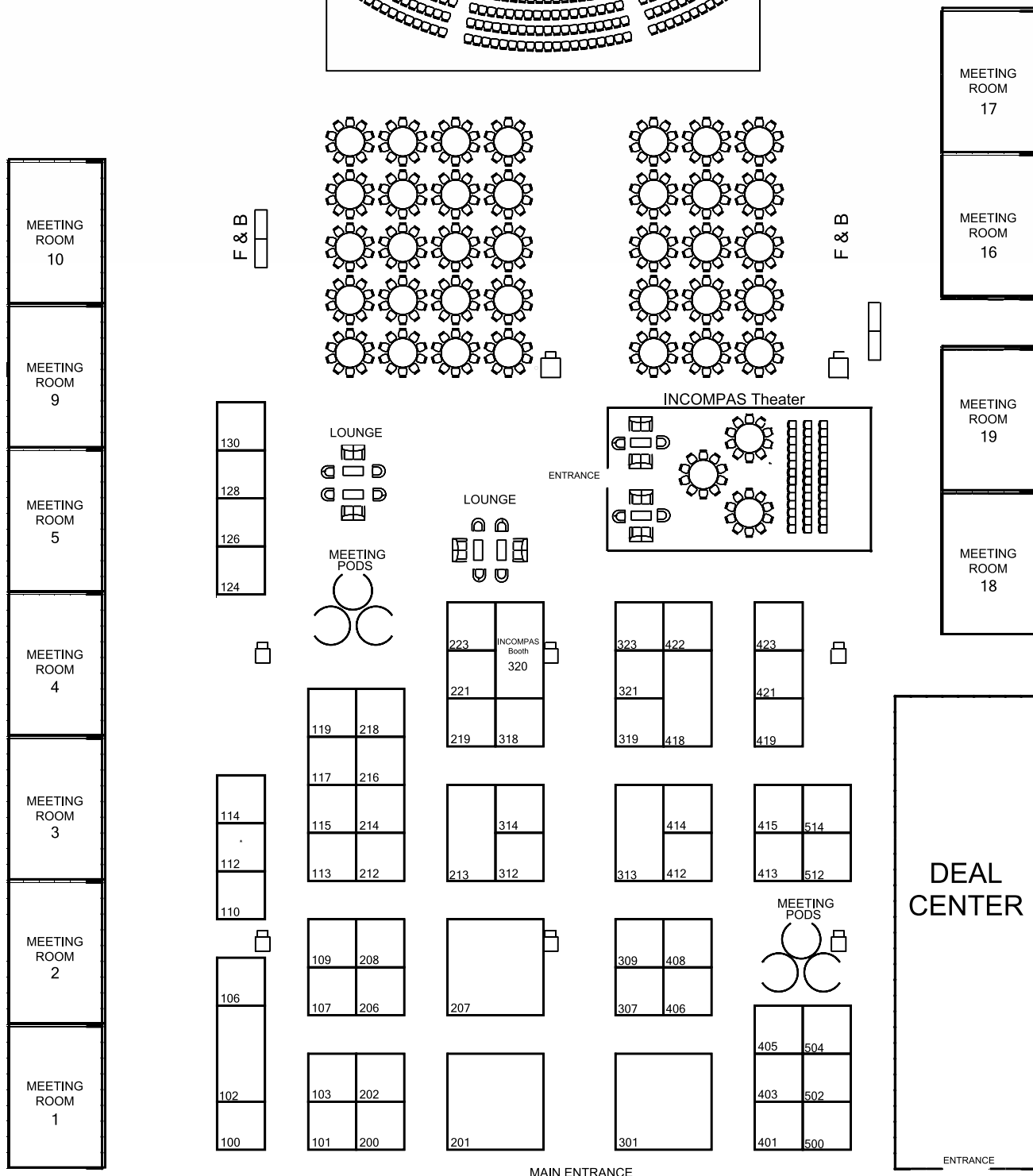
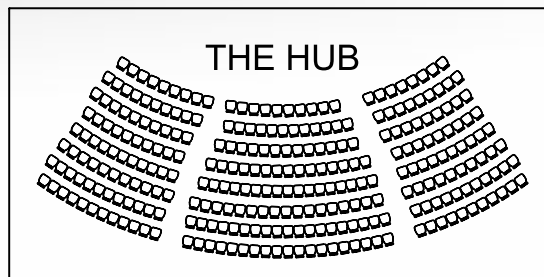
- **EarthLink** – Chris Murray, Senior Vice President, Public Policy
- **Granite Telecommunications LLC** – Mike Galvin, General Counsel
- **Level 3 Communications LLC** – Joseph Cavender, Vice President and Assistant General Counsel, Federal Affairs
- **Sprint** – Charles McKee, Vice President, Government Affairs Federal and State Regulatory
- **Windstream** – Eric Einhorn, Senior Vice President, Government Affairs

# Expo Hall, Exhibitors and Meeting Rooms

# INCOMPAS Expo Hall Floor Plan

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Ciena	201
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Windstream	Chesapeake H, I
Zayo Group	Expo Hall, 17



# Communications Data Group Joins MEF

**C**ommunications Data Group (CDG) has recently joined the Metro Ethernet Forum (MEF). The MEF is a global industry alliance comprising more than 200 organizations, including communications service providers, network equipment/software suppliers, testing organizations and other stakeholders.

The MEF is the driving force enabling agile, assured and orchestrated “third network” services for the digital economy and the hyper-connected world, with user-directed control over service capabilities and cloud connectivity.

These on-demand services build on an interconnected Carrier Ethernet 2.0 foundation and use lifecycle service orchestration (LSO) to enable automated and virtualized networks with software-defined network (SDN) and network

function virtualization (NFV).

“Joining the MEF was a logical choice for CDG,” said CDG’s Vice President of Product Development Stan Redden. “As a billing and operational support systems company, being a member of organizations involved with defining technical specifications and standards for telecommunications services is crucial.

“When CABS billing emerged in the 1980s, CDG was on the frontline. We were one of the initial companies to join the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS) Order and Billing Forum (OBF), and we were the first independent software development vendor to sit on the C/BOS Technical Review Group,” Redden noted.

“With the growth of Carrier Ethernet and the shift toward on-demand and orchestrated services, we knew we needed to be part of the MEF,” he continued.

“So when the opportunity came along to be the first billing vendor to join the MEF, we jumped on it.

“At CDG, we are deeply invested in being involved with the development of new technologies, and we are very excited and proud to be part of this forum, which includes some of the most influential companies in our industry,” Redden added.

MEF’s COO Kevin Vachon said, “Overcoming service providers’ billing challenges is an integral part of MEF’s LSO vision for end-to-end automation of the network services lifecycle. We are pleased to have CDG join the MEF and contribute to the development of standards that enable service providers to profit from third network services orchestrated over more automated, virtualized and interconnected networks.”

The MEF is the driving force enabling agile, assured and orchestrated third network services for the digital economy and the hyper-connected world, with user-directed control over service capabilities and cloud connectivity. Optimized for real-time, QoS-enabled, secured traffic and integration of value-added network functions-as-a-service, third network services are delivered over automated, virtualized and interconnected networks globally powered by LSO, SDN and NFV.

Leveraging its global community of operators and technology vendors, the MEF builds on the robust \$80 billion carrier Ethernet market and provides a practical evolution to the third network with LSO, SDN and NFV implementations that build upon a CE 2.0 foundation.

The MEF has established a technical and implementation framework that includes architecture, information models, service definitions, operational processes, open source community and certification programs. MEF work is conducted internally and – under the guidance of the MEF UNITE program – in collaboration with global standards organizations and open source projects. For more information, visit [www.MEF.com](http://www.MEF.com)

CDG offers scalable, accurate billing and operational support solutions for voice, video and data for retail and wholesale telecommunications carriers and service providers. Options include interconnect, CABS, mediation, customer care, plant, trouble, service provisioning, e-care, task management and third-party financial, mapping and facilities management products. Service bureau, online and licensed options are available. □

For more information visit booth 219 in the Expo Hall or [www.cdg.ws](http://www.cdg.ws).

## NGN Establishes PoP at Colo Atl’s Downtown Atlanta Facility

**N**GN, a member-owned cooperative operating more than 1,600 miles of fiber optic infrastructure in North Georgia, announced it has established a point-of-presence (PoP) at Colo Atl, a provider of carrier-neutral colocation, data center and interconnection services in Atlanta.

The cooperative now offers wavelength services (1, 10, 40 and 100Gbps) and Layer 2/3 services over its MPLS network (10Mbps to 10Gbps) via its newest PoP.

“With a new PoP at Colo Atl’s highly regarded colocation facility in downtown Atlanta, NGN will add additional fault tolerance and route diversity to its network,” said Paul Belk, president and CEO of NGN. “This strategic move helps us to better serve both our members and other carriers.

“By moving existing interconnects from other data center facilities to Colo Atl’s facility, we will not only strengthen our network, but also decrease our OpEx due to the no cross connect fee policy in Colo Atl’s Meet Me Area,” Belk said.

Colo Atl is also home to the Georgia Technology Center, a test bed and live production facility for network communications equipment; and the Southeast Network Access Point, which provides next-generation Internet Exchange solutions, including SDN peering, testing and implementation.

“We’re very proud to welcome NGN to our Colo Atl family,” said Tim Kiser, owner and founder of Colo Atl. “NGN has quickly built a very important network throughout the Southeast and more specifically within Georgia.

“This announcement speaks to its continued growth and to Colo Atl’s reputation as a key PoP for NGN and many other tenants and carriers in the Southeast,” Kiser continued. “We look forward to providing NGN and its highly valued members with colocation and interconnection services at the most affordable rates available in Atlanta.”

NGN was founded in 2009 and operates more than 1,600 miles of fiber optic infrastructure from its headquarters in Clarkesville, Ga. Its state-of-the-art, low-latency digital optical network serves solutions to carriers, service providers and technology-reliant businesses and organizations throughout the Southeast.

Unlike most telecommunications corporations, NGN is a corporation of cooperatives owned by its members including Habersham Electric Membership Corporation (HEMC), Blue Ridge Mountain Electrical Membership Corporation (BRMEMC) and NGN Connect. □

For more information on NGN, visit [www.ngn.coop](http://www.ngn.coop) or contact [info@ngn.coop](mailto:info@ngn.coop).



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# Access One Deploys Equinox Protector Application

Nashville-based Equinox Information Systems announced that Access One, a business technology and communications services provider offering a full range of hosted PBX, voice, data, managed IT and cloud solutions, has selected and deployed the Equinox Protector fraud management system (FMS).

As part of Access One's commitment to award-winning customer service, it continually seeks to improve its fraud management process. The search to further automate its FMS efforts ended with Access One licensing the Protector solution. Processing hundreds of millions of call records per day, Protector is recognized as one of the industry's most reliable and affordable tools for combating telecommunications fraud.

"At Access One, we strive to provide our customers with the absolutely best experience

in the industry," said Matt Gray, switch engineer at Access One. "Equinox gives us the same personalized attention and care that we offer our customers, so it's a pleasure to work with them. And their Protector system provides first-rate monitoring and detection tools that automatically alert us to, and stop, unwanted network events."

The most installed FMS in the United States, Protector provides real-time fraud protection by instantly notifying analysts when suspicious activity occurs, with higher risk incidents triggering more frequent, escalated alerts, including the ability to shut down activity automatically when warranted.

The web-based FMS also includes integrated case management tools to speed investigation and incident closure. Protector's reputation is well-earned, having saved carriers hundreds of millions of dollars in fraud losses last year.

"Equinox's goal is to be the leading fraud management solution supplier to the telecom industry," said Equinox Executive Vice President, David West. "We are confident in Protector's market-proven abilities to benefit Access One not only in loss mitigation, but also in employee productivity and customer satisfaction gains."

Access One is based in Chicago, and is a privately-held company founded in 1993. Known for unparalleled customer service and cutting-edge network, Access One provides growing businesses with a complete end-to-end communication solution for traditional and multimedia applications.

From high-speed data and Internet to voice and integrated communications, colocation at secure data centers and managed IT support, Access One offers a complete portfolio of feature-rich products – each tailored to meet a specific business need. For more information, please visit [www.accessoneinc.com](http://www.accessoneinc.com).

Since 1986, Equinox has helped telecommunication customers worldwide stop fraud, mediate usage data, manage expense and optimize revenue. The company's data mediation, fraud management, revenue/expense management, routing assurance, usage analytics, network analysis, and custom application development solutions are currently deployed in virtually every sector of the telecom industry, including cable/MSOs, wireless, wireline, rural independent, CLEC, UCaaS/hosted VoIP, wholesale and conference calling providers. □

*For information, visit booth 208 in the Expo Hall or [www.equinoxis.com](http://www.equinoxis.com).*

## LIT Networks Joins INDATEL Family

INDATEL has grown into a nationwide network characterized by 28 statewide facility-based member/owners and affiliates. LIT Networks is one of the latest facility-based affiliates to join the INDATEL family.

"We are very pleased to have LIT Networks on-board and certainly supports a core strategic initiative to expand the footprint and grow the base," said Max Huffman INDATEL's COO.

LIT Networks is based in Virginia and presents another relevant demand opportunity for INDATEL to expand its portfolio of services by anchoring an East Coast aggregation PoP in Ashburn, Va. This will allow deployment of the INDATEL Rural Ethernet eXchange (REX) scalable, low-latency wholesale Ethernet access to rural and urban areas utilizing industry standard ENNIs.

Through INDATEL's network, which is comprised of many authorized service providers, one can operate via a single source for quotes, orders, service delivery, network operations and billing. These capabilities offer carriers and systems integrators a national point of contact to serve rural and urban-based enterprise customers.

In addition, INDATEL provides high-quality, aggregated priced content delivery network (CDN) peering and transit IP services.

INDATEL has national aggregation PoPs at Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Seattle and Minneapolis.

LIT Networks is a partnership of seven regional fiber networks from Virginia to Georgia that provides seamless optical transport to major peering points and data centers in the Southeast. This unique partnership of regional networks offers a high level of diversity for customers looking to connect to corporate hubs, U.S. carriers, international carriers and wireless tower sites.

This fiber network uses a common transport platform that increases the value of its member networks by extending their ability to reach unserved and underserved markets. LIT Networks has more than 2,500 buildings and more than 200 towers on-net.

INDATEL is a nationwide network that provides fiber connectivity to rural and urban America. It excels in delivering reliable broadband connectivity via fiber optic network routes nationally.

Uniquely positioned to provide broadband telecommunications services to many places other carriers cannot go, the INDATEL network represents more than 90,000 fiber optic route miles of middle-mile network and hundreds of thousands of last-mile fiber optic facilities via its members and a fast-growing base of affiliates.

The INDATEL network serves more than 5,000 communities and more than 40,000 fiber-serviceable on-net and near-net buildings. □

*For more information visit booth 313 in the Expo Hall or go to [www.indatelservices.com](http://www.indatelservices.com).*



The lunch line forms on the Expo Hall floor, and attendees like what they see.

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# Great Plains Communications Acquires Pinpoint Network

**G**reat Plains Communications, the largest privately owned Nebraska telecommunications company, has completed its acquisition of Pinpoint Network Solutions and the Pinpoint Broadband business units of its regional fiber company, Pinpoint Holdings.

The Pinpoint acquisition adds 1,200 fiber miles, including 135 additional miles in the greater Omaha, Neb., metro area, to the current 6,000-plus mile Great Plains Communications fiber optic network that encompasses the state of Nebraska, extending into Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, South Dakota and Wyoming.

“These additional fiber assets will further establish Great Plains Communications as a strong, Nebraska-based provider for both enterprise and carrier customers seeking diverse route options, access to additional commercial buildings, and true redundancy on this newly expanded network that is monitored 24x7x365 from our network operations center,” said Todd Foje, CEO of Great Plains Communications.

The acquisition was announced in December and was officially completed in February.

Pinpoint Holdings Chairman and President J. Richard Shoemaker said, “With the formal acquisition process complete, both companies look to ensure that customers experience a seamless migration and are able to start taking advantage of the opportunities this newly created, powerful

network will provide. The acquisition completion also allows Pinpoint Holdings to refocus on other Nebraska opportunities.”

Clients have been notified of the acquisition completion by Great Plains Communications and meetings with these companies are underway. Foje said, “We are excited to bring these new clients and employees on board and look forward to a bright future with all of them.”

Pinpoint Broadband Inc. is a provider of telecom backbone service to carriers and enterprise companies in the Midwest. Services include dedicated Internet access, Ethernet transport and colocation services. Pinpoint Broadband has a presence in the leading carrier hotels in the United States, including 600 Federal, 350 Cermak, 1623 Farnam, Denver Gas and Electric, among others.

Great Plains Communications service offerings include the more than 6,000-mile regional fiber network with community access rings, last-mile and middle-mile solutions. With a 105-year history of providing reliable and innovative solutions, Great Plains Communications has a progressive approach to accommodating the needs of all regional and national telecommunications carriers, LECs, ISPs, wireless carriers and other service providers utilizing superior custom engineering and custom build strategies. □

*For more information visit booth 413 in the Expo Hall or go to [www.gpcom.com](http://www.gpcom.com).*

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# XKL to Provide Broadband Connectivity Nationwide

**X**KL LLC, a provider of fiber optic networking solutions, announced an initiative to provide broadband solutions to rural communities throughout the United States.

As the country continues to recognize the importance of Internet connectivity in underserved and low-income areas, XKL products are suited to provide high levels of broadband to schools and municipalities.

In March, the Obama administration announced its ConnectALL program, which promises to deliver quality broadband technology to all Americans, noting access to Internet connectivity is a "path to greater opportunity."

To fund this initiative, the administration requested the Federal Communications Commission reform a previous, \$1.5 billion-per-year phone subsidy program to a national broadband subsidy that ensures low-income Americans can access the Internet.

With broadband usage continuing to increase throughout the United States, and with efforts in place that only underscore that trend, a cost-effective solution that allows for substantial bandwidth flexibility is needed.

XKL products are built to sustain these broadband efforts, and the company's adaptable network topologies are able to service multiple facilities with just 1RU appliances.

With 10-minute installation times and a simple, user-friendly interface, XKL solutions are ideal for organizations that do not have optical networking staff in place. Furthermore, XKL's 10 channel, 10G appliances provide a flexible growth path that allow for ongoing increases in capacity.

"Founder and CEO Len Bosack engineered XKL products with the future in mind," said Chad Lamb, director of engineering for XKL. "Every network begins at Layer 1 and XKL appliances have the capacity to achieve 10 years of uptime without having to take the system offline.

"Solutions that are built to last, plus a strategic pay-as-you-grow bandwidth solution, makes XKL products optimal for any organization, especially those without connectivity experience and with limited IT resources," Lamb added.

"Connecting underserved regions is a priority for the United States, and XKL stands behind its products to assist in this effort," XKL Director of Business Development Joe DePetro added. "We are excited to work with rural dark fiber providers, as well as local telephone, cable and managed service providers to increase the amount of bandwidth they can supply to their customers."

Privately owned and operated by Cisco Systems co-founder Bosack, XKL provides high capacity DWDM optical networking products for robust enterprise deployment, service providers, and seamless cloud migration. The company is headquartered in Kirkland, Wash. □

For information, visit [www.xkl.com](http://www.xkl.com).

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# DDoS Attacks Increase; NTT Com Prevails

Cyber security remains in the headlines with world leaders. They and network engineers are talking about the hazards, the risks and are searching for remedies.

A recent report by provider Akamai found an increase in total distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks of 149 percent in the fourth quarter of 2015 compared with the same period in 2014. The study also said the average DDoS attack lasted nearly 15 hours.

That means 15 hours during which customers can't shop online, pay their bills or check email.

One of the most common types of online threats, a DDoS attack is an attempt to make a network resource unavailable by interrupting or suspending services of a host connected to the Internet. These attacks can strike at any time, potentially crippling network infrastructure and severely degrading user experience.

Depending on the type and severity of the attack the impact might result in network damages, decreased productivity and irreparable harm to a company's brand.

Any organization with an online presence is a potential target for a DDoS attack, and yet many organizations have inadequate security strategies in place for defending against such a threat.

Early DDoS attacks were focused primarily on flooding network resources with unwanted traffic so that legitimate traffic would be unable to reach the intended target. More recently, application layer attacks designed to compromise a specific service on a host have become more prevalent.

Because application layer attack traffic looks similar to legitimate traffic, traditional security measures, such as filtering, firewalls and IPS/IDS are not sufficient defenses.

In addition, attackers are learning from the defending countermeasures being used and adjusting their attacks towards other targets and vulnerabilities.

The motivations of attackers can range from social and political protests to financial extortion with the intent to disrupt governments, organizations or businesses and cause financial or reputational harm.

In many cases DDoS attacks are the cover for other crimes, such as property, fund or data thefts. Websites dedicated to reporting abuses or censorship often become targets of DDoS attacks as well.

Internet-centric businesses, online retailers and e-commerce websites are especially vulnerable even if they have some DDoS mitigation tools in place. However, insufficient budget resources, shortage of qualified personnel and

lack of C-level support are still critical barriers to preventing and mitigating attacks, a report from the Ponemon Institute found.

There is no single defense strategy to defend against today's sophisticated and evolving DDoS threat landscape. Instead, a layered defense approach is recommended that combines traditional security measures, vast availability of bandwidth, intelligent DDoS mitigation systems and sound risk management strategies.

Recognizing the ongoing and increasing threats from DDoS attacks, NTT Com has deployed technologies to help mitigate these threats. Built on industry-leading DDoS protection platforms, NTT Com's global Tier-1 IP network and around-the-clock expert monitoring services, the company's DDoS Protection Service allows for fast and effective actions to minimize the impact of a DDoS attack.

When notified of a possible attack, NTT Com's expert Network Security Team analyzes key network data to confirm whether an attack is in progress, and then rapidly re-directs incoming traffic through the mitigation platform.

The DDoS Protection Service platform is built on best-of-breed technology, which removes attack traffic and passes legitimate "clean" traffic onto a network, allowing businesses to stay online and function during the attack.

NTT Com offers the technology, experience and flexibility that communications service providers, CLECs, ISPs, network operators and Internet-centric businesses need to design and implement a comprehensive and successful DDoS defense strategy. □

*For more information about NTT Com and its DDoS attack protection, go to [www.us.ntt.net](http://www.us.ntt.net).*

## ANPI Opens UCaaS Solution to VARs and MSPs

ANPI, a provider of unified communications as a service (UCaaS) solutions, announced it will offer its award-winning UCaaS solution to VARs and MSPs for private label.

With the private label solution, ANPI provides all the advanced features, tools and collateral so a provider can market, sell and deliver an innovative, custom-branded UCaaS solution.

The fully-integrated solution includes hosted IP PBX functionality with unified messaging, presence, multimedia collaboration and seamlessly integrated mobility supported by a carrier-grade network and enablement resources that allows partners to be selling in 90 days.

ANPI has enabled more than 100 ILECs to sell their own branded solution.

"The UCaaS market is a multi-billion dollar marketplace with a tremendous growth profile, and with ANPI's unfolding suite of UCaaS solutions, we are well positioned to realize the opportunities in this growing and vibrant marketplace," said Mike Cromwell, ANPI CSO/CMO.

ANPI can enable a partner to be up and running with its own branded offering in less than 90 days.

The most unique aspect of ANPI's offering is its "build-to-bill" order and customer management platform. The software platform, known as Atlas, consolidates order management, fulfillment, provisioning and customer care of the

solution into a single platform, giving providers complete control and a personalized process management experience.

ANPI has invested more than \$24 million into the UCaaS solution and built it on top of a carrier-grade voice network that transports billions of minutes per year.

The UCaaS solution was purpose-built from the ground up to enable ANPI partners the ability to own the customer experience from proposal through implementation.

ANPI offers a private label hosted unified communications solution for carriers and as direct connections, wholesale long distance, peering, tandem access and SS7 solutions.

Based in Springfield, Ill., ANPI began serving rural telecom companies in 1996, and today serves the voice and data needs of nearly 800 ILECs, CLECs, IXCs and regional wireless carriers, as well as more than a thousand business customers throughout the United States.

ANPI also owns and operates a nationwide IP network with switching and/or PoP facilities in Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and New York City, and monitors all activity around-the-clock in its own network operations center. □

*For more information, go to [www.anpi.com](http://www.anpi.com) or call 877-366-2674.*

# FTS, Think Big Bring Fiber, Broadband to Kent County

In January, Kent County, Md., issued a request for proposal (RFP) for the design and construction of a fiber optic broadband network. The mission sought to create a fiber infrastructure to improve connectivity to essential anchor institutions, priority funding areas, industrial parks and communities around the county.

Bidders were encouraged to propose creative design recommendations for the network, particularly to connect all possible 54 sites and areas that Kent County specified in the RFP. Any additional features, services and forward-thinking design elements would also be considered.

A project timeline was set for up to four years with preference for an accelerated project timeline that broke the construction into phases.

In response to the RFP, FTS Fiber presented a proposal with a unique funding approach and faster timeline that exceeded Kent County's goal of providing high-speed internet connectivity to its residents.

FTS Fiber, along with other Maryland-based partners, specifically Think Big Networks,

proposed a solution to replace the costly, limited and unreliable services available with the existing backbone of incumbent ISPs in Kent County.

The FTS Fiber platform offered a modernized fiber optic solution with up to 40 times more throughput than the incumbent solution that would also deliver one gigabit of Internet access to every home.

Most importantly, in supporting Kent County's objectives of maintaining a strong fiscal position and investing in technology infrastructure, FTS Fiber's network is able to drive economic growth, create jobs and improve quality of life for residents and local businesses.

The company has targeted a rollout in three phases over the course of two years.

Kent County's dark fiber backbone will be an integral part of a long haul communications network between Ashburn, Va., and Virginia Beach. This network, requested by major content providers, is part of several international cables that will be installed from Europe and South America to Virginia Beach in 2017 and 2018.

Kent County and the surrounding counties on the Delmarva Peninsula will serve as a gateway and international point of presence in optical transport.

Think Big Networks is ISP-based and uses cutting-edge technologies for large bandwidth. It leverages the speed and reliability of a fiber-based network to provide a bandwidth experience unavailable on legacy mediums. The Think Big Networks staff has the engineering, deployment, operational and management experience to keep networks running fast and smooth for the best end-user experience.

FTS Fiber is a dark fiber supplier providing carrier-class network infrastructure in rural areas and major markets of the United States. It produces reliable and secure, neutral fiber paths for various network operators and business sectors, including content and internet providers, healthcare, education, government and real estate developers. □

*For more information visit booth 114 in the Expo Hall or [www.FTSFiber.com](http://www.FTSFiber.com).*

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# Inteliquent Unveils Omni Offering for Next-Gen Providers

Inteliquent Inc., a national voice, text and messaging network for communications service providers, announced, the launch of Omni, a comprehensive voice and messaging solution for the over-the-top (OTT) and direct inward dialing (DID) market.

For the first time, Omni will enable communication providers to easily and efficiently power their solutions using Inteliquent services.

"The world of telecommunications can be complex, so we developed Omni, a one-stop-shop, to make integrating voice and messaging functionality into any solution easy and accessible," said Brett Scorza, Inteliquent's CIO and executive vice president of Product Development. "Omni allows our customers to focus time and resources on growing their businesses and creating the best solutions for their customers."

Omni equips service providers, whether they are more traditional telecommunications or next generation communications service providers, with all inbound and outbound voice call flows, message-enabled DIDs, inbound and outbound SMS and MMS messaging, and the market's

most user-friendly Web portal and APIs for seamless integration and automation.

"As a wholesale solutions provider focused on delivering quality service, we needed to infuse our inbound DID service as cost effectively as possible," said Neil Rosenblit, CEO, Blitz Telecom. "We chose Omni because we wanted our communications routed through the most reliable network and because it provided us complete control over our communications functionality, while enabling us to easily automate and scale. The portal is also very intuitive, shortening our learning curve to help us save costs and expedite our solution's time to market."

Omni is delivered through Inteliquent's high-quality network, which is used by many of the top telecommunication companies in the United States. The network connects millions of voice calls every day.

The new platform expands the company's offering to providers in the next generation market, a key component of Inteliquent's Growth Forward business strategy.

"Demand for communications that enables

two-way connections is increasing rapidly. This is the new paradigm for communications and, through Omni, we've created the infrastructure to power it," said Alissa Clousing, Inteliquent's vice president of product. "Inteliquent is constantly innovating and moving beyond voice to better serve our customers and reach new entrants in the communications world to diversify our revenue stream, one of our primary focus areas of our Growth Forward plan. This truly signifies our evolution from a traditional voice-only telecommunication provider to the premier interconnection partner for communication providers of all types."

Inteliquent is a premiere interconnection partner for communication service providers of all types, including voice, text and messaging. Inteliquent is used by regional wireless carriers, cable companies and CLECs in the markets it serves, and its network carries approximately 17 billion minutes of traffic per month. □

*For more information, visit meeting room 31 in the Expo Hall or go to [www.inteliquent.com/industry-solutions/next-generation](http://www.inteliquent.com/industry-solutions/next-generation).*



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# Somos Launches Resource to Support Toll-Free Text Market

**S**omos, a provider of trusted, neutral toll-free registry and numbering administration services for the telecommunications industry for more than 20 years, announced it has unveiled a new resource on its website to educate toll-free service providers (RespOrgs), messaging providers, messaging aggregators and other companies on text enabling toll-free numbers and the role they play in this growing market.

More than 40 million toll-free numbers are in use throughout North America, roughly half of which are expected to become text-enabled in the next few years. Somos operates the Texting and Smart Services (TSS) Registry, an authoritative, centralized provisioning and routing database for all multimedia services associated with toll-free numbers.

The TSS Registry is the only formal industry-wide system that follows CTIA – the Wireless Association – guidelines for validating the text enablement of toll-free numbers, providing complete transparency into all communications services associated with that number.

The successful adoption of texting to toll-free numbers hinges on the role of toll-free service providers that reserve, assign and manage toll-free numbers.

*This resource is the latest initiative from Somos in its role upholding fairness and full transparency for the use of toll-free numbers.*

Somos has launched an educational resource on its website at [www.somos.com](http://www.somos.com) that provides companies interested in text enabling toll-free numbers for themselves or their customers with all the information needed to help enhance value and build stronger connections.

This online resource details the value of text enabling toll-free numbers, as well as an overview of the messaging ecosystem and

how it functions to protect the integrity of toll-free numbers.

Here you will find instructions on how to connect with or become a service registrar. In addition, toll-free service providers can get information on the process of receiving notification and validation requests.

This resource is the latest initiative from Somos in its role upholding fairness and full transparency for the use of toll-free numbers.

Formerly known as SMS/800 Inc., Somos provides trusted, neutral numbering and registry administration services for the telecommunications industry. Somos operates the SMS/800 toll-free voice registry for administration and routing data for all toll-free numbers in the North American Numbering Plan, as authorized by the Federal Communications Commission.

Somos also operates the TSS Registry, the centralized registry for administration and routing data for toll-free messaging and multimedia services. □

*For more information, visit meeting room 3 in the Expo Hall or go to [www.somos.com](http://www.somos.com)*

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# Equinox Added to BroadSoft's Program

Nashville-based Equinox Information Systems announced its addition to BroadSoft's Xtended Solution Partner program.

Since 1986, Equinox has been helping customers in the telecommunications industry stop fraud, mediate usage data, manage expense and optimize revenue. Its business assurance solutions, TeleLink and Protector, both support and are interoperable with BroadSoft's BroadWorks platform, qualifying Equinox for inclusion in the list of solutions providers BroadSoft maintains as part its Xtended Ecosystem.

"BroadSoft's Xtended Partner program reaffirms our commitment to an open platform strategy that enables the seamless interoperability and integration of BroadSoft's unified communications services with devices, systems and third-party applications," said Steven Kaish, vice president, Partner Ecosystem, BroadSoft.

"We are thrilled to add Equinox Information Systems to our growing partner ecosystem, as it will allow service providers to confidently deploy

business assurance solutions that integrate easily with their existing equipment and usage records," Kaish added.

Equinox specializes in two product lines. TeleLink solves business assurance challenges by making usage data actionable. It does so by mediating, enriching and summarizing usage data

*'We appreciate BroadSoft's formal recognition of our applications' interoperability.'*

– David West, Equinox

from the raw files it collects. TeleLink stores this data for reporting and in-depth analysis, while also transforming it for delivery to downstream operational and business support systems.

Protector is an automated fraud management system that monitors call and data usage records for real-time fraud detection. Currently monitoring

hundreds of millions of call records per day for its customers, Protector has earned a reputation as the most reliable and cost-effective solution on the market by saving carriers hundreds of millions of dollars in annual fraud losses.

"Over the past 29 years, we have deployed Equinox solutions to mediate, process, protect and store data for numerous customers whose networks include BroadSoft equipment," said Equinox's Executive Vice President David West. "We appreciate BroadSoft's formal recognition of our applications' interoperability by adding us to their Solution Partner Program."

To learn more about BroadSoft, visit [www.broadsoft.com](http://www.broadsoft.com).

Founded in 1986, Equinox' solutions are scalable, reliable and interoperable, Equinox serves every sector of the telecom industry, including cable/MSO, wireless, wireline, ILEC, CLEC, VoIP and wholesale providers around the globe. □

For more information, visit booth 208 in the Expo Hall or go to [www.equinoxis.com](http://www.equinoxis.com).

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# TimelyBill OSS Offers All-Inclusive Pricing

**T**imelyBill offers all-inclusive pricing for award-winning billing-as-a-service platform.

The TimelyBill complete back office solution specifically is developed for communication service providers. With more than 50 tightly integrated components, it supports the full customer lifecycle.

The single monthly fee includes everything. Implementation costs are flat-rate with no hidden charges. Other benefits include:

- Real-time quoting
- Trouble management
- Built-in provisioning
- Tax engine integration
- Turnkey customer/agent portals.

Free lifetime upgrades, technical support and user training.

TimelyBill understands that no two organizations are alike. So its OSS/BSS was created to provide the maximum in flexibility and reliability. And TimelyBill is designed to put users in control of the system. They can add/modify fields, labels, validation rules, permissions, create

custom fields, store customer data in multiple languages, and more.

The ability to customize TimelyBill, along with its open APIs, provides customers with a billing system that fits seamlessly into their environment. It also lowers or removes the costly modifications often required with other billing systems.

Bill Perfect Inc. develops, markets and integrates the award-winning TimelyBill OSS.

TimelyBill is a hosted billing and operations support system for communications service providers. Whether they are looking at VoIP, triple play or quad play, TimelyBill's single-stack solution was built to meet all of back office needs. □

*For information or a demonstration, visit booth 301 in the Expo Hall; visit [TimelyBill.com](http://TimelyBill.com) or call Patrick at 954.889.6699 x9131.*

## Thermo Credit Funds Factoring Facility for California Contractor

**T**hermo Credit LLC has provided a \$500,000 factoring facility to Integrity General Engineering Contractors Inc. of California.

Integrity, which provides underground utility services, plans to use the money to support working capital requirements associated with its growth, including future plans to expand into the distribution gas space.

Integrity's CEO Tony Vedova said, "Because we are a start-up, this facility is an extremely important part of our growth model. We needed a flexible solution that recognizes our customers and their AR terms, which Thermo Credit was able to provide."

Seth Block, executive vice president of Thermo Credit added, "Integrity is an example of the type of well-run company with which we (See Thermo, page 33)




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# WOW! Wholesale to Invest Near-Net Fiber Strategy in 18 Markets

**W**OW! Wholesale, a division of WOW! Business, announced will invest in and aggressively pursue a near-net fiber strategy to provide broadband access to more commercial buildings in 18 Midwest and Southeast markets.

Establishing fiber-based network points-of-presence in hundreds of commercial buildings near its own metro Ethernet networks enables WOW! Wholesale to expand the addressable market for its service provider customers, along with increasing new business opportunities through WOW! Business direct and indirect sales channels.

In the process, the company expects to leverage its local fiber assets by driving more broadband traffic onto its metro Ethernet networks.

“By lighting more buildings near our own local fiber networks and revamping our pricing structure to make it more attractive and disruptive for wholesale and retail customers, we expect to significantly expand our metro Ethernet access business,” said Jim Greene, director, WOW! Wholesale. “As we establish fiber-based network points-of-presence in hundreds of commercial buildings in these 18 markets, high-speed dedicated Internet access, voice, data and cloud services will become available to the tenants located in those buildings.”

WOW! Wholesale already has begun to implement its near-net fiber strategy by extending its

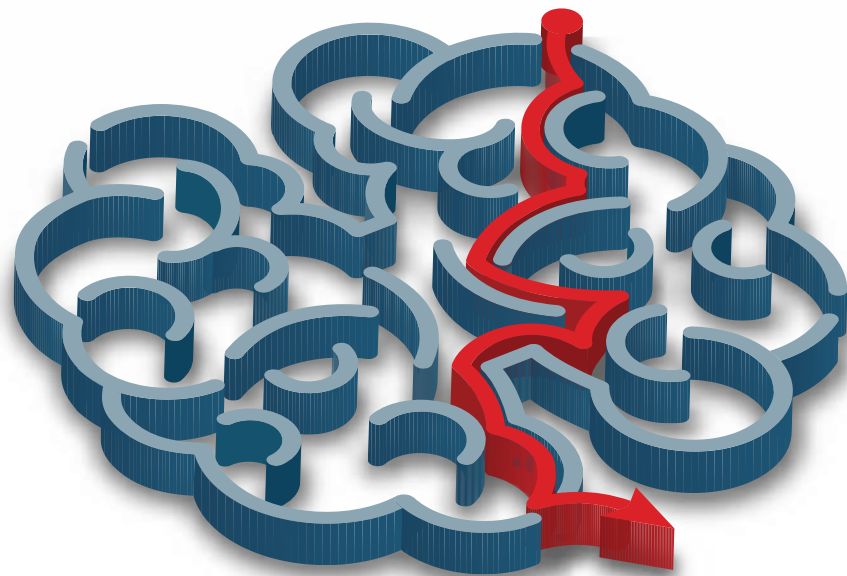
fiber network to a number of buildings near Wacker Drive in the downtown Chicago central business district and 17 other cities in the markets it serves.

The cities targeted in the company’s near-net fiber strategy includes: Auburn, Dothan, Huntsville, Montgomery and Valley, Ala.; Panama City and St. Petersburg, Fla.; Augusta, Columbus and Fort Gordon, Ga.; Charleston, S.C.; Chicago; Evansville, Ind.; Detroit and Lansing, Mich.; Cleveland

and Columbus, Ohio; and Knoxville, Tenn.

WOW! Business provides IP-based network, data, voice and cloud services for small and medium-sized business (SMB), enterprise, government and wholesale customers. □

*For more information about WOW! Wholesale services please visit [www.wowforbusiness.com/company/wholesale](http://www.wowforbusiness.com/company/wholesale).*



*(Thermo, continued from page 32)*

are looking to work. We feel our facility will take them to the next level.”

Thermo Credit’s lending partner, Thermo Communications LLC funded the facility.

Integrity is a general engineering contractor that provides underground utility services to the utility industry, ranging from long-line conduit installations for power and fiber to underground structure installations.

The company has a management team with more than 100 years of combined experience in the industry and it supports a geographic market from Los Angeles to the Mexican border to the south and Arizona to the east. Integrity is a union contractor and a certified Woman Owned Minority Enterprise through the PUC of California.

A privately held funding company that provides asset-based loans, accounts receivable financing and factoring services, Thermo Credit specializes in the communications and technology industries. It serves established, well-run companies that need capital to expand their business, improve operations or fund an acquisition. □

*For more information, visit booth 323 in the Expo Hall, go to [www.thermocredit.com](http://www.thermocredit.com) or contact Seth Block at 504-620-3101.*

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