

FTTP Technology Breakthroughs Detailed at Austin Conference

Global telecom service providers gathered in Austin, Texas, to learn of the latest advances in fiber to the premises (FTTP) technologies at a conference sponsored by 3M Company and Hitachi Telecom (USA), Inc.

The FTTP Summit Conference featured updates on the progress of fiber deployments around the globe and demonstrations of technical advances that promise to fundamentally alter the economics of end-to-end fiber networks, according to its organizers. These developments are spurring the pace of deployments globally by reducing their cost through advanced transmission techniques, simplified installation practices, and cost-effective components.

Conference attendees represented six countries and 10 major service providers and OEMs.

3M and Hitachi demonstrated a working end-to-end FTTP gigabit PON (passive optical network) solution to validate the advantages of FM video transmission over conventional AM transmission and the applicability and robustness of mechanical fiber optic splicing despite temperature extremes. FM transmission networks accommodate flat cleave mechanical splices and PC connectors to achieve optimum performance while yielding significant cost savings over traditional fusion fiber splicing.

In Japan, with 8.8 million fiber drops completed and 200,000 new drops added every month, FTTP programs are among the world's leading deployments. The technologies, topologies and installation practices enabling this rapid pace were detailed at the conference by Hiromichi Shinohara, NTT vice president and executive director of the company's Information Sharing Laboratory Group.

The accelerating pace of fiber deployment in the United States was described by Joe Savage, president of the US FTTH Council, to conference attendees. Fewer than 200,000 homes were passed by fiber just three years ago, compared to a total of nearly 8 million in March of this year, according to Savage. The number of homes connected has also spiked up sharply, with 1.34 million FTTH homes connected in March 07. The subscriber growth rate, at 99 percent, makes the United States the fastest-growing FTTH market, and subscribers express higher satisfaction with fiber than any other broadband medium.

"The conference was an excellent opportunity to update network planners about the latest technologies and installation practices," said John Beagley, vice president, sales and marketing, Hitachi Telecom (USA), Inc. "Increased interest and advances in FTTP will result."

According to Denny Krutsinger, division vice president of the 3M Communication Markets Division, "Attendees said that their understanding of the new economies of fiber end-to-end deployments was improved and updated by the conference."

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3MMary Kay Knief, 512-984-2146orHitachi Telecom (USA), Inc.Pete Westafer, 770-797-2518

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