

The fiber revolution helping bridge the digital divide

“Glass is King”. That’s a phrase you hear a lot when talking to people involved in designing, building, and operating broadband networks. Getting that glass, more commonly known as fiber, deployed across parts of Europe has been a challenge.

Fortunately, we’re at an inflection point in our industry where an insatiable appetite for fiber assets from the investment community, combined with government funding opportunities, are driving an unprecedented level of fiber builds deep and wide throughout our continent.

What’s driving the explosion in fiber deployments, and how does this impact our communities?

The pandemic has accelerated behavioral changes that drive increased bandwidth consumption, especially upstream traffic. Work from home & virtual learning applications require high speed symmetrical broadband that can most easily be delivered via fiber-based services. Access and aggregation traffic forecasts were moved up significantly, prompting the saying “2021 is the new 2031” from a network traffic perspective.

Broadband service providers (BSP’s) and network operators who run consumer, small business, enterprise, and wholesale businesses have increasingly viewed fiber-based passive optical networks favorably, choosing to deploy next-gen PON networks for their greenfield builds. This enables the BSP to quickly go to market with new high speed symmetrical services, new tier packages, and customized offers to meet the growing bandwidth needs of their customers. It also simplifies their operational efforts, as they can minimize outside plant disruption of their existing infrastructure and move higher bandwidth customers or neighborhoods nearing saturation over to the new FTTP network.

New fiber builders appreciate the simplicity and flexibility inherent in choosing a software-driven platform that manages the end-to-end FTTP network. These platforms leverage next-gen PON fiber technology and give the greenfield operator significant runway upon which to develop and launch innovative new services over that platform for years to come.

While the fiber revolution has been tremendously impactful to the BSP, those who benefit the most are communities who have traditionally been underserved from a broadband perspective. BSP’s are leveraging private and government funding to reach under- and non-served communities. Communities are recognizing high speed broadband service as a key tool to attract new residents and businesses to their towns. As greater numbers of

people choose to 'work from anywhere', rural communities are using their new high speed broadband capabilities to lure remote workers, which results in greater revenues flowing to those communities.

None of this would be possible without the tremendous work ethic, creativity and community responsibility exhibited by our member operators and their employees. Despite all the challenges posed by COVID, BSP's have increased their pace of fiber builds, new subscriber installations, and upgrades for current subscribers.

Operators have developed innovative approaches to subscriber installations during the pandemic. Embracing solutions that promote subscriber self-install has safeguarded customers and our operators' employees. Programs increasing mobile app adoption have resulted in subscribers moving to a digital experience. Adoption of cloud-based data analytics platforms gives BSP's insight into their subscriber's in-home broadband and wi-fi experience. This has driven customer support and operations teams to resolve issues more quickly and, in many cases, prevent trouble tickets and support calls. These operational improvements have resulted in a reduction in truck rolls and in-home visits, driving greater expense reductions to the BSP.

As we plunge further into the 'great fiber buildout', let's remember to recognize the hard work our member operators have gone through to help pave the way to bridging the digital divide.

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About Calix:

Calix cloud and software platforms enable service providers of all types and sizes to innovate and transform. Our customers utilize the real-time data and insights from Calix platforms to simplify their businesses and deliver experiences that excite their subscribers. The resulting growth in subscriber acquisition, loyalty and revenue creates more value for their businesses and communities. This is the Calix mission; to enable communications service providers of all sizes to simplify, excite and grow.

