BMW Wireless Internet Service

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Presentation Overview

- Role of the BMW Regional Assembly
- Rationale for BMW Wireless Internet Service
- Applicant Criteria established
- The Successful Projects
- Supply & Demand in Rural Areas
- Features of the Service
- Sources of Funding for BMW wireless
- Challenges facing wireless in BMW Region

1. Role of BMW Regional Assembly

- Established in 1999 to give effect to designation of Ireland as two regions for structural funds purposes
- Managing Authority for BMW Regional Operational Programme under the NDP 2000-2006
- Monitors the impact of EU & Exchequer spend within the BMW Region.
- Highlights issues of concern to the region at National & EU level.

2. Rationale behind BMW Wireless Service

- Fundamental need to extend the benefits of broadband to rural areas of the region

- Wireless as a technology relatively un-tested in rural Ireland as the **"Last Mile solution"** in extending broadband from mainline fibre connections.

- Minimum disruption – no digging

- Inexpensive

- Need for complementarity with National Broadband Rollout (19 MANs)

- Need for strong local dimension to the management & promotion of the service – Bottom up

3. Applicant Criteria established

- Rural Towns of less than 2000 population
- Consortium approach invited involving Telcom provider & local Town/community.
- Towns excluded from list of 123 towns targeted for broadband investment under the NDP - eligible
- Inclusivity of service – affordable to all
- Compliant with all Regulatory requirements
- Demonstrated level of demand for the service
- Financially viable in 3-4 years
- Technically feasible addressing, in particular backbone network connectivity challenges
- Provision for Marketing, Network/Customer support

4.   The Successful Projects

1   Ballinlough Co. Roscommon/Ballyhaunis
       Co. Mayo in association with Last Mile
       Wireless.

2.   Strokestown, Co. Roscommon in
       association with Leap Broadband.

3.   Virginia, Co. Cavan in association with
       Digiweb Ltd.

4.   Dungloe, Co. Donegal in association with Eircom.

5.   Lanesboro, Co. Longford/Ballyleague, Co. Roscommon in association with ESB Telecomms.

6.   Killala, Co. Mayo/Enniscrone, Co. Sligo in association with AI Bridges Ltd.

All of the successful towns are represented by either Community/Enterprise Development Associations/Community Councils, Area Co-Operatives or local Chambers of Commerce.

5. Supply/Demand in Rural Areas

- Merging the 'Bottom up' & 'Top Down' approach of the community & Provider, respectively

- Inter-Agency endorsement – Local Authorities etc

- Extensive surveys conducted of local business, public services & prospective residential users

- Use of local media as an effective way to 'educate' the local public and generate interest in Broadband

- Market Positioning of the service to get the customers

- Aggregating Demand – multiple location connectivity

6.   Features of the Service

- 'Always on' service with download speed @ 512k
- Line of Sight Technology, IEEE 802 standards
- Relatively modest set up cost (< €140,000 per project)
- Servicing local business, SOHO, core public services and residential users with cost effective monthly tariffs.
- Demand levels 'realistic' in pilot phase (30-50 in Yr 1)
- Joint approach of town/Telco in management, implementation & promotion of the service
- Financially viable after year 3
- Scope to offer further applied services e.g CCTV, Video

7.   Funding Streams

- EU Programme of Innovative Actions

- Dept. of Community Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs – CLAR Programme

€518,000 in Grant aid supporting Broadband in 9 Towns

8. Challenges for Wireless

- Consortium sustainability
- Financial Challenges
- Quality of Service
- Competition – Cheaper & more widespread DSL rollout for example
- Maintaining an inclusive service locally
- Economies of Scale – Expanding catchment area beyond the pilot
- Future Proofing Wireless as a Technology in Rural Ireland as a Last Mile Solution

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