



Media release

IS FIBRE TO THE HOME AN AFRICAN ALTERNATIVE?

Fibre to the Home can assist building a sustainable future

Johannesburg – 13 August 2009: During the TelTech Africa 2009 conference, currently on in Johannesburg under the theme '*Driving growth in Africa Telecom: Should Operators or Technologies compete...?*', Nadia Babaali, Communications Director of the FTTH Council Europe, has put the spotlight on Fibre to the Home (FTTH), a technology that is relatively unknown to Africa.

With FTTH, high capacity optic fibre comes right up to the home or the building of the user, allowing ultra fast Internet connections of 100Mbps or more over vast distances. It is the only technology that offers symmetrical connections, allowing the effective use of real-time interactive applications. The superior technology of FTTH not only makes it future proof, but it also makes it much cheaper to maintain.

According to the President of the FTTH European Council Europe, Karel Helsen, FTTH offers solutions that will have a key impact on three critical areas: society and the quality of life; the economy and the environment.

The real broadband interactivity of the FTTH technology is well-suited for applications in health, education and finance for people who cannot travel long distances to medical facilities, banks, schools and universities. FTTH would enable medical practitioners who have access to the necessary applications to consult and assess patients via live video-based applications. eLearning would give students access to learning resources and tuition without physically having to attend lectures.

The application potential of FTTH in security is vast. Through the combination of massive bandwidth capacity, high speed and endless applications entering the market, it facilitates the use of video surveillance, remote access control and the layering of sound and audio applications to offer currently unheard levels of security for cluster home complexes, business districts, shopping centres and entire villages.

FTTH also has a positive impact on the environment. Because it allows the adoption at home of a wide range of day-to-day applications, users will travel much less, further improving their carbon footprint. Using FTTH and FTTH services can save up to the CO² equivalent of driving a car for 4,600 km every year – for every household!

Africa is faced with a huge digital divide with Internet access unavailable to the majority of its people. In South Africa only 1.058 million people, less than 2.5% of the population are broadband users. The National Broadband Forum believes that South Africa should aim to provide broadband access to every town and village at the cheapest rates on the continent by 2014.

Mr. Helsen reflects on the applications of FTTH in Africa: “Africa is faced with huge challenges to bring the Internet to the people. FTTH offers solutions that not only will bring the Internet right to their homes but also will allow for a flow of new services. The technology is there, waiting to be put to use.”

About the FTTH Council Europe: The FTTH Council Europe is an industry organisation with a mission to accelerate the availability of fibre based, broadband access networks to consumers and businesses. The Council promotes this technology because it will deliver a flow of new services that make a decisive difference in the lives of consumers and companies and create value for the wider society. Its members include leading telecommunications companies and many world leaders in the telecommunications industry. More information can be found on: www.ftthcouncil.eu

For more information:

Creative Communications SA (Pty) Ltd
Benita Dreesen – Managing Director
Telephone: +27 21 855 00 21
Cell: +27 722 63 20 91
www.creative-communications.co.za