Inside Towers

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$14K in OSHA Penalties

In February 2014, a cell tower collapsed in Clarksburg, West Virginia, resulting in two fatalities and two employees being seriously injured. The company, S and S Communication Specialists, was cited by OSHA for safety hazards and fined $14,000. "These deaths are a painful reminder of the dangers associated with communication towers, and are at the root of OSHA's directive on communication tower construction activities," said Prentice Cline, OSHA area director for Charleston. "OSHA is concerned about the alarming increase in preventable injuries and fatalities at communication tower work sites. The agency is collaborating with the National Association of Tower Erectors and other industry stakeholders to ensure that every communication tower employer understands how to protect workers performing this high-hazard work." The company was fined a $7,000 penalty for each of the two violations, which is the maximum amount allowed by law for a serious violation. The company has 15 business days from receipt of the citations and proposed penalties to comply, meet with OSHA's area director, or contest the findings.

Oi Buoys SBA

Over the past week, the three major tower companies posted Q2 earnings, and all have reported strong international growth. SBA Communications was no different, and the company is excited about their future in the Brazil market. "We announced an acquisition from Oi, of an additional 1,641 sites, which is expected to close in December of this year. Our thinking behind that acquisition is as follows; this is a great deal for us. It was exclusively negotiated, given our strong relationship with Oi. These are high growth wireless sites, purchased at a lower multiple and price per site, than the acquisition we closed with Oi at the end of the last quarter. Given our positive history with Oi, we expect the integration of these sites to go very smoothly," said President and CEO Jeff Stoops. "While our motivation here was primarily financial, there was also a strategic rationale behind the acquisition. We continue to be very optimistic about the Brazil market long term. There is a large and likely, never to be repeated number of communication sites available for purchase this year in Brazil. We wanted to participate in those opportunities, at least to the degree necessary to secure our position in Brazil, as a substantial tower operator long term, similar to the position we have built in the United States. With the closing of the Oi transaction by year end, we will own approximately 7,000 sites in Brazil, which we believe will secure that position."

You Can Hear Them Now

T-Mobile reported that their VoLTE coverage is now available nationwide. The company said that 2.8 million VoLTE-capable devices are currently running on its network and that more than 52 million VoLTE calls to date have been placed. The jump to nationwide coverage comes just two months after T-Mobile initially launched VoLTE in Seattle. Wireless Week reported, “This isn’t the first time T-Mobile has made what seemed like speedy move to the nationwide qualification. In October 2013, just over six months after announcing its first seven LTE markets, T-Mobile labeled its LTE network nationwide with more than 200 million people covered. T-Mobile said its LTE network now covers more than 233 million people. Along with that update, the carrier said it has already begun putting up 700 MHz gear at its cell sites and field testing compatible handsets.”

WOW! That’s a lot of Fiber

WOW! Business, a communications and cloud service provider, has announced that they were selected by multiple wireless operators to provide fiber backhaul to more than 500 cell phone towers in the Chicago metropolitan area. The company will build 50-plus contiguous fiber rings connecting the cell tower base stations to mobile switching centers (MSC) that link to the global Internet backbone and public switched telephone network (PSTN). The first sites are expected to be operational in the fourth quarter of this year, with project completion slated for 2017. "Consumer hunger for new media-rich mobile communications, coupled with the dynamic explosion of voice, data and video traffic, is driving wireless carriers to increase bandwidth at their cell sites," said Brad Cheedle, senior vice president of WOW! Business.

An Inside Job

In Taunton, Massachusetts, the police believe the same thief who stole copper wire from the base of an AT&T cell phone tower this week might also be responsible for a similar case at a second tower in the city. According to the Taunton Gazette, “An AT&T worker told a responding Taunton police officer Monday afternoon that someone had made off with 50-feet of copper pipes worth $1,100. Also taken, police said, were copper ground wires and two ground bars belonging to the police department’s radio system.” There was no damage to the gate, lock, or fence. The AT&T worker told police that officials in Attleboro were investigating a former cell-tower employee who has combinations to locks and knows how to remove the copper items.

SYMBOL	TIME & PRICE		CHG & % CHG		DAY'S LOW & HIGH		VOLUME
AMT	04:02pm EDT	94.35	-0.04	-0.04%	94.08	95.61	1,694,852
CCI	04:01pm EDT	73.47	-0.71	-0.96%	73.41	75.02	1,569,021
CIGW	03:40pm EDT	0.388	-0.012	-2.98%	0.368	0.42	41,141
SBAC	04:00pm EDT	106.17	-0.76	-0.71%	105.23	107.50	863,085
TMUS	04:00pm EDT	33.41	+0.47	+1.43%	32.82	33.45	8,499,307
VZ	04:00pm EDT	49.83	-0.59	-1.17%	49.83	50.52	17,942,380
S	04:03pm EDT	7.45	+0.10	+1.36%	7.30	7.60	19,000,188
T	04:00pm EDT	35.33	-0.26	-0.73%	35.28	35.82	23,662,719

SBA Communications Receives “Buy” Rating from Jefferies Group

SBA Communications’ stock had its “buy” rating reiterated by stock analysts at Jefferies Group in a report issued on Tuesday. They currently have a $120.00 price target on the stock, up from their previous price target of $115.00. Jefferies Group’s price target would suggest a potential upside of 10.13% from the company’s current price. According to the Ticker Report, “A number of other analysts have also recently weighed in on SBAC. Analysts at Raymond James raised their price target on shares of SBA Communications from $118.00 to $127.00 in a research note on Monday. Separately, analysts at Barclays raised their price target on shares of SBA Communications from $104.00 to $125.00 in a research note on Monday. They now have an ‘overweight’ rating on the stock. Finally, analysts at RBC Capital raised their price target on shares of SBA Communications from $115.00 to $122.00 in a research note on Monday. “

Crown Castle International Corp. Given Average Rating of “Buy” by Brokerages

Shares of Crown Castle International Corp. have earned a consensus recommendation of “Buy” from the twelve ratings firms that are covering the company, ARN reports. Five analysts have rated the stock with a hold rating and seven have issued a buy rating on the company. The average 1-year target price among analysts that have issued ratings on the stock in the last year is $87.20.

Zoning and Moaning

Town Victory Hits Wireless Hard

Town officials in Hempstead, New York, are hailing a federal court ruling that halts the construction of cell towers in Wantagh, calling it a victory for the residential community and the town. The dismissal last week came nearly four years after the town zoning board of appeals rejected T-Mobile Northeast's bid to put six transmitters atop the Farmingdale-Wantagh Jewish Center on Woodbine Avenue. Town Supervisor Kate Murray said the decision by District Court Judge Arthur Spatt in Central Islip "signifies another crucial victory for Hempstead Town and Wantagh neighbors." The phone towers "never conformed to the character of this community," she said in a statement. Many Wantagh residents had opposed the towers in the residential neighborhood. Charles Kovit, Hemp-

stead's chief deputy town attorney, said the dismissal, which resulted from an agreement between the two sides, "means the telephone company can never bring this particular case back to the courts." He added that the town had been ready to go to trial in the case. The dismissal "culminates a long effort against the unwanted proposal in this proud residential community," Councilman Gary Hudes explained in a statement. Hempstead has one of the nation's toughest wireless communications laws, town officials said. "While the victory is sweet, we'll continue to remain vigilant in the face of other potentially troublesome cell antenna applications in our communities," Murray proudly stated.

AT&T Gets Closer to Moose Mountain

The zoning board in Hanover, New Hampshire, will hold a public hearing on an appeal from AT&T after the board turned down AT&T's previous request to build a new cell tower overlooking downtown Hanover. The request for a tower off Three Mile Road, on Moose Mountain, is part of continuing efforts by phone companies to upgrade high-speed wireless coverage to the college town. AT&T wants to build a 150-foot tower less than a mile from an existing 395-foot tower owned by New Hampshire Public Television also located atop Moose Mountain. "The taller tower was built in the 1960s and will soon reach the end of its lifetime," Town Manager Julia Griffin explained. AT&T had already ruled out the possibility of adding equipment to the older tower, and instead is asking the Hanover Zoning Board of Adjustment for permission to build its own, provided it doesn't reach an agreement with NHPTV on rebuilding its aging facilities. This is the latest stage in at least a year's worth of debate involving AT&T, NHPTV and the town on replacing the tower and extending wireless coverage in the area. Currently AT&T has a temporary 120-foot tower on Moose Mountain, but obviously it's not a permanent solution. Consumers are clamoring for high-speed wireless coverage, access to 4G in particular, which the temporary tower can't provide. After the public hearing, the zoning board is expected to deliberate a week later on whether to allow the telecommunications company to build a new structure if its negotiations with NHPTV fail. Although talks have dragged on for years, AT&T spokesman Will Keyser said on Wednesday that the company hoped to conclude discussion soon, provided all parties act in good faith. "We do feel like we're close," Keyser said.

120-Foot Tower Too Small

At a recent Siting Council Meeting in Redding, Connecticut, local residents made sure their opinions on a cell tower proposal were heard. Many of the residents who spoke at the meeting have accepted the fact that a new tower will replace the existing 80-foot structure. They also made it known that the tower should be 120-feet tall, not the 150-feet that AT&T wants built. "Just be as moderate as possible" when considering the height of the pole, Eugene Connolly told the siting council — a panel of nine councilmen from across Connecticut that has exclusive jurisdiction to approve new-build towers operating in a cellular system. "In shortening the cell tower by 30-feet, you will still accomplish 98% of what you would at 150-feet," he explained. Daniel Laub, an attorney representing Message Center Management and AT&T, said that his clients feel the 150-foot pole is preferable for a number of reasons, including

"better coverage" and fewer dropped calls. With a 120-foot pole, residents will experience "more dropped calls, and areas remaining without service," Mr. Laub noted. The resulting signals would be "weaker and less robust, which can lead to less data input and slower coverage," he said. One local resident, Ron Jass, also said he believed a 120-foot pole would not "do the job." It's great that these residents have such strong opinions on what should be built in their town, but offering their uneducated opinions on what should "do the job" is pretty silly. I wonder if they argue with their doctor when he prescribes that a medicine be taken for five weeks. "Actually doctor, I think three weeks would be plenty, which should do the job." My personal opinion aside, no decision was made at the public hearing. The overall proceedings were to be continued on a date to be decided.

Tower Talk

TowerXchange Meetup Africa

Half of Africa's towers will have been transferred from MNOs to independent towercos by the end of 2015, according to TowerXchange

The independent tower company business model has achieved 'launch velocity' in Africa. "Since the first deal in 2010, 18% of Africa's 160,000 telecom towers have been transferred from Mobile Network Operators to independent tower companies. TowerXchange forecasts that tower companies will own or operate 38.8% of Africa's towers by year end 2014, and more than 50% by the end of 2015," said Kieron Osmotherly, CEO of emerging market tower industry research firm and community host TowerXchange.

What is happening?

Over US $2 billion has been invested in African tower transactions over the past four years. However, African independent tower companies (towercos) have been raising even more capital in anticipation of a further US$3bn worth of assets being sold before the end of this year. Among 35,000 towers for sale currently being tracked by TowerXchange are the remainder of Airtel's 15-20,000 African towers in 17 countries, after the sale of the first tranche of 3,100 Airtel towers to Helios Towers Africa was announced earlier this month; plus almost all the remaining towers in Nigeria. By the end of 2014, TowerXchange forecast that 84% of Nigeria's towers will be owned or operated by towercos. Continue reading here.

New Products

TWR/Hark DM900 Alarm Monitor

Our Remote Monitoring systems were among the first products FCC approved that allow the elimination of "Quarterly Light Inspections" saving their owners thousands of dollars annually. These systems are designed to interface with all FAA Approved Alarmed lighting systems and additional site equipment such as generators or AC units utilizing contact closures or voltage alarms. The DM900 is a highly sophisticated standalone product that delivers quality monitoring at a reasonable price. The DM900 has eight inputs that can be figured for contact closure or voltage alarms. Remote monitoring options include CDMA/GPRS Wireless Modems, Ethernet TCP/IP, Satellite, POTS Line, or Windows based software. For more information please call our Sales Department at 713-973-6905, email us at info@twrlighting.com or visit our website: www.twrlighting.com.