



# Inside Towers

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## [FCC Probes Verizon, AT&T, Others on Special Access](#)



Complaints from Sprint and Level 3 have sparked an FCC investigation into how Verizon, AT&T, CenturyLink, Inc. and Frontier Communications, Corp. conduct business in the special access sector of the data industry. The agency's Wireline Competition Bureau said last week that it received complaints about the four companies abusing their dominance in that part of the wireless market, notes both *Tech Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. The foursome effectively control the wires that were built by the legacy AT&T monopoly. The bulk data connections provide a network for businesses to connect to retail outlets, ATM machines and cell towers.

The smaller companies like Sprint pay for access to the networks and claim they are being charged exorbitant fees and that they are being locked into 7-to-10-year contracts with stiff early termination charges. *Tech Times* reports Sprint said it paid a hefty fine when it decided to move its 38,000 tower sites to another service provider.

Verizon and AT&T have denied the allegations and defended their fees as industry-standard practices.



## Wireless Gets Boost in Land of Blueberries

To locals of Washington County, Maine, wireless dead zones and frequent data service issues have been a common occurrence. The county, known worldwide as the world's largest producer of blueberries, is vast, barren, and very rural. Most wireless carriers have found it difficult to provide dependable network coverage in the region.

The president of Wireless Partners LLC, Robert Parlsoe, said all of that is changing. "About a week ago, you couldn't upload or download large files. You were roaming, and you were getting, at best, 2G coverage and it was not contiguous" MPBN News reported. Now, Wireless Partners has partnered with Verizon wireless to extend 4G LTE to the area, as soon as this winter.

The budding partnership includes a massive project to build 13 new cell towers, and lengthen wireless broadband to 32 additional sites. Said Parlsoe, "Roughly in about 45 days and certainly—hopefully—before the snow flies, we'll have the entire network installed and operating." The project is a strong statement indicating Verizon's dedication to extending 4G LTE to rural America.

The data network will be centrally situated near the Route 1 and Route 9 corridors. Route 1 will cover the area between Ellsworth and Eastport. Meanwhile, Route 9 covers the region between the Bangor and Calais.

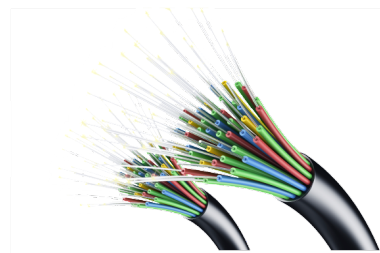
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## Communities Seek to Organize Homegrown Data Networks



A crowd-sourced campaign for a high-speed, fiber-optic internet network is slowly gaining momentum in the suburbs of Baltimore. The group, the Baltimore Broadband Coalition, is trying to appeal to businesses who would like to invest in a city-wide fiber-optic data network, similar to the one Google agreed to build in Kansas City, MO., in 2011.

Philip Spevak, one of the coalition's key organizers, said the number of supporters should help motivate the city. "This is an advocacy effort to help to change what has been the city's plan, or lack of plan, on broadband," Spevak told the *Baltimore Sun*. "The city of Baltimore is currently researching ways to implement a broadband network in the city and surrounding suburbs." A recent study by Magellan Advisors took stock of Baltimore's existing communications infrastructure, and highlighted options for future investments.

Other cities throughout the nation have been experimenting with high-speed data networks, either as utilities, non-profit networks, or private-public partnerships. It is generally recognized that consumers want a fast data network, but the leap from want to need has not occurred in many places.

However, in one rural community, the need is recognized. In Jackson County, N.C., three wireless companies are seeking to build communications towers in the area. The new towers are expected to bring uninterrupted wireless service to the community. In a recent countywide survey, only job opportunities was more important than connectivity when contributors were asked how to improve quality of life, reports the *Sylva Herald*.

Although the rural community does not currently have any sort of broadband infrastructure, planners are seeking federal funding to begin work. In the meantime, wireless Internet service has been a very integral part of improving lifestyle, connectivity and happiness the county. While wireless communications do require towers and their necessary equipment, wireless internet is much cheaper than broadband services, and more naturally suited to reaching rural areas. Instead laying out miles of copper or fiber-optic cables, signals can be passed from towers to receivers.

In Sylva, a local businessman is hoping to create a system of towers crisscrossing the county to bring wireless Internet to his customers. The company, called SkyFi, was started by Travis Lewis. Jackson county officials have indicated they would like to give him more support. According to one commissioner, "If we could help him build his infrastructure, we'd like to do that," noted the *Sylva Herald*. These local efforts represent the need for more high-speed data networks throughout the country. While fiber-optic networks may not be suitable in some areas, the wireless industry has great potential to meet the data network needs of rural communities.

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SYMBOL	TIME & PRICE	CHG & % CHG	DAY'S LOW & HIGH	VOLUME
★ AMT	04:04pm EDT 96.91	+0.12 +0.12%	96.15 97.14	1,808,815
★ CCI	04:04pm EDT 83.17	+0.61 +0.74%	82.46 83.25	2,620,308
★ SBAC	04:00pm EDT 112.16	+1.34 +1.21%	110.68 112.96	1,212,163
★ S	04:00pm EDT 4.36	-0.05 -1.13%	4.31 4.45	11,067,123
★ T	04:00pm EDT 33.75	+0.12 +0.36%	33.51 33.85	20,085,492
★ TMUS	04:01pm EDT 40.70	-0.51 -1.24%	40.04 42.06	3,490,659
★ VZ	04:02pm EDT 45.24	+0.54 +1.21%	44.79 45.80	19,746,080

## Barclays Lowers Expectations on SBA Shares

Equities researchers at Barclays are maintaining a “overweight” rating on shares of SBA Communications (Nasdaq: SBAC) but earlier this week lowered the price expectation on the Jeffrey Stoops-led Boca Raton, FL tower company to \$130 from \$136. Barclay’s pricing gives SBAC shares a potential upside of 17.77 percent.”

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## Zoning & Moaning

### Cape Elizabeth, ME Accepts New Tower Modifications



A federal judge recently decided to allow Verizon Wireless access to a vacant water tower located in Cape Elizabeth, Maine. Verizon plans to use the tower for additional antennas to help serve the surrounding area. In response, the Town Council of Cape Elizabeth unanimously decided to accept the decision, and forego

appeals.

A lawsuit had been filed by Verizon in federal court more than a year ago, when the Town Council rejected a

proposal to install the antennas on the 80-foot tall water tank. Verizon's goal was to improve wireless communications along nearby coastal communities. The tank, which had been unused since 2007, currently houses another antenna which tracks the local sewage treatment system.

"Ben McDougal, the town's code enforcement officer, denied Verizon's request for a building permit, citing a municipal zoning ordinance that requires cell antennas to be subordinate or accessory uses of an 'alternative tower structure,' such as clock towers, bell steeples and water tanks," reported *The Portland Press Herald*.

U.S. District Judge Jon Levy based his decision on Verizon's antennas which he felt qualify as an allowed accessory use of the tank's principal use; whereas, McDougal originally decided the water tank did not qualify as an alternative structure. Although the appeal period for the federal decision extends till the end of October, Verizon is expected to resubmit its plans for the antennas and other modifications soon.

## CTIA Names Startup Lab 2015 Class

The CTIA Innovation Network, a community of industry accelerator programs, innovation spaces and investor portfolios from around the world sponsored by the CTIA-The Wireless Association, has named the winners of the Startup Lab 2015 class.

Held in Las Vegas and San Francisco last month, the program sourced companies from around the world focused on mHealth, cybersecurity, identity management, wireless and the Internet of things.

CTIA's Startup Lab "connects seed and growth-stage companies with the CTIA Innovation Council's mobile industry leaders." The CTIA Innovation Council, investor partners, Kelley Drye & Warren LLP and F6S made this year's Startup Lab possible.

This year's winners are:

ArmorText (Washington, D.C.) – First Place & Cybersecurity Category Winner

YipYap (Austin, TX) – Second Place (Tied) & Wireless Category Winner

Zest Health (Chicago, IL) – Second Place (Tied) & mHealth Category Winner

CyberTimez (Winchester, VA) – Internet of Things Category Winner

OneVisage (Lausanne, Switzerland) – Identity Management Category Winner

PEQ (Kansas City, MO) – 2015 CTIA Innovation Council Investor Pick

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## Tower Tribe

## CBRE Hires Five in Telecom Advisory Services

CBRE's Telecom Advisory Services group has expanded with the hiring of five, three of which represent newly-created positions. **Cris Kimbrough**, an archaeologist and project management pro with more than 20 years of experience in cultural resources management and more than seven years in the telecom industry, is now managing director, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). **Talia Gilmore**, a senior tribal coordinator for a national firm specializing in environmental and regulatory compliance for the telecom industry, is tribal outreach manager. **Laura Mancuso**, with 10 years of experience as a historic preservation professional and more than five years of experience in the telecom, is director, cultural resources. **Ruthann Gates** has joined as director, project management and client manager based in Phoenix, and **Rob Atzl** joins as a director, project management and

client manager working in Rochester, NY.

CBRE's Valuation and Advisory Services provides appraisal, property condition, environmental, zoning and telecommunication consulting services to a broad client base. It employs a staff of more than 1,700 appraisers, engineers, architects and environmental scientists in more than 300 global major metro areas.

## Michael A. Janson Appointed FCC Open Internet Ombudsman

**Michael A. Janson** has been appointed FCC Open Internet ombudsman for the public's primary point of contact with the agency for formal and informal questions and complaints related to open Internet rules. He replaces **Parul P. Desai**, who returns to her previous position as an attorney adviser in the media division's audio bureau. Janson, a lawyer who holds a Ph.D. in political science from University of Pennsylvania, will continue in his position in the Wireless Bureau.

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### Tower Jobs

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### Tower Calendar

#### IWCE Webinar - Wednesday, October 21 - 2 to 3 p.m. ET

The Connected World - How Secure is the Internet of Things?

What are the vulnerabilities these new technologies and connections create? Can a smart fridge lead to a hack of the International Space Station? Can a connected heart monitor bring down the power grid? Featuring Bill Butler, chair, cyber and information security director, Capitol Technology

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#### Nokia Cloud Webinar - Thursday, October 29, 11 a.m. ET

Carrier Cloud Transformation - Profitability, Challenges and Strategies

Discussion on the current status of telco cloud deployments across the globe and in the United States. Mobile broadband operators face many challenges and exciting new opportunities to build profitability by using cloud transformation. Featuring Dana Cooperson, research director, Analysys Mason; Pieter Knikkink, head of service provider management for Telco Cloud Nokia; and Sami Pekkala, Telco cloud chief architect, Nokia.

Register: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8534294175759234306>



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