



FTTH, the edge of a brighter tomorrow

This year and for the seventh time, Fiber to the Home (FTTH) Council MENA conference took place in Grand Hyatt Muscat on November 9.

The conference was hosted by Oman Broadband Company and organized by the Mena FTTH Council under the auspices of H.E. Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed bin Salim al Futaisi, Minister of Transport and Communications.

Held under the theme of 'FTTH, The Edge of a Brighter Tomorrow', the conference witnessed the participation of senior representatives of major companies operating in information technology and communication (IT&C) in the Sultanate and the region. It provided an ideal opportunity to share experience and knowledge on the challenges and opportunities related to FTTH in the MENA region.

Taking place over two days, the conference held key discussions about developing the national broadband strategies. Dignitaries like Sheikh Talal bin Said al Maamari, CEO of Omantel and Eng. Said bin Abdullah Al Mantheri, CEO of Oman Broadband Company attended the event.

Eng. Said bin Abdullah Al Mantheri said: "The organization of this event in the Sultanate comes at a time Oman

has activated its new trends, which aim at promoting the use of broadband internet in all governorates through the activation of its national broadband strategy."

The keynote speeches were delivered by Dr. Salim Sultan al Ruzaiqi, CEO, Information Technology Authority Oman (ITA), Ibrahim Al Haddad, regional director, ITU Regional Office for the Arab States and Dr. Sulaiman Al Hedaithy, chairman, FTTH Council MENA.

On the sidelines of the event, a promotional demonstration on exploring the infrastructure for optic fiber infrastructure took place.

Due to the growing demand for communications and technology service, the conference, included an area dedicated to the 'World of Applications' to highlight the ways in which fiber to the home, and the increased speeds it can deliver, enable new services for both residential and business subscribers.

On the first day, the conference hosted a session in the dedicated area for application demonstrations and discussions to showcase the latest applications and e-services by

various companies. The aim of this demonstration was to describe and highlight applications supported by the fiber optic 'nervous system' of a telecom network and the applications that could cover any area from the government. It also explored the future of fiber, the role of FTTH and FTTx in transforming countries to smart cities, the global experience of FTTH services with special focus on delivering Gigabit services.

Moreover, new opportunities for FTTH deployment in the MENA region and innovative FTTH solutions for operators, networks and customers were discussed. The pre-conference special road show provided participants the opportunity to explore the fiber infrastructure of Muscat. The guided-tour also helped participants meet representatives of local companies and discover fiber projects in the country.

Additionally, the FTTH conference opened the floor for discussion about Oman's national broadband strategy, the new opportunities, challenges and effective strategies associated with promoting high speed broadband for homes and the business opportunities in the Middle East and North African region. **TR**

