



Leading fiber deployment

As member company of FTTH Council MENA and its board since 2011, Alcatel-Lucent powers some of the largest and most advanced fiber networks and municipal Gigabit projects worldwide and has been at the forefront of innovation for more than 20 years.

Pierre Chaume, vice president, drives business development, sales and strategy at Alcatel-Lucent MENA since 2001, discusses our questions with regards to their role in the council and the fiber industry.

How do FTTH MENA council activities contribute to the promotion of FTTH in MENA?

We're closely involved and in our view, the council plays a crucial role by creating an ecosystem including FTTH service providers, telecom equipment



suppliers, system integrators and contractors, and bringing together the know-how and expertise necessary for successful FTTH deployments.

The FTTH council also does complex things like liaising with regulators and policymakers on regional and national broadband strategy, unbundling and infrastructure sharing.

What are the most important trends in fiber deployments as seen through the annual study conducted by the council?

Firstly, it's clear that fiber to the building (FTTB) is becoming the norm for dense multi-dwelling environments. G.fast will enable other FTTdp deployment models that will complement these and accelerate FTTH deployments overall. At the same time, the world is going wireless, and wireless is going fixed. With wireless becoming ever more pervasive, fiber is also crucial for mobile backhaul.

We're also seeing the demand for 10Gbps PON technologies emerging, fueled by 1Gbps business and residential services. This is driving interest in TWDM-PON.

Being a member of the FTTH Council Global Alliance (FCGA), what is happening in other regions that will influence us in the GCC?

Around the world, utilities and municipalities are increasingly embracing FTTH and building their own fiber networks. That's clear to us. We are also seeing that the 'speed wars' are not over. There is an emergence of gigabit service offers (and even 10Gbps residential service offers) that are driving competition and investment.

We are seeing the rise of smart cities, but alongside the many aspects of them, there is a need for ubiquitous ultra-broadband connectivity throughout. Finally, we're seeing fixed and mobile are converging everywhere.



What are the trends in the region leading decision-makers to opt for fiber national broadband deployment?

We're seeing a few things. Firstly, ultra-broadband brings socio-economic benefits to everyone. People get access to eHealth and eLearning while companies are attracted to invest – creating jobs and providing economic benefits.

The shift to the cloud requires not just the good things like ultra-broadband connectivity for everyone, but also very fast response times and low latency that aren't discussed as much.

Higher backhaul capacity is clearly needed for 4G, LTE-Advanced and small cells, but the good news is that this can help justify fiber investments.

Overall, fiber is the most future-proof technology, which means that fiber investments can be safer and will last for decades to come.

What are some of the more interesting things that you have seen across our industry globally?

The next few years will see fiber to the home take the leap from 1G to 10G. Increasing demand and adaption is driving the need for next generation fiber technologies. TWDM-PON will play a critical role; it offers increased capacity (to meet the bandwidth demand) and flexibility (multiple wavelengths can support multiple services or service providers). TWDM-PON provides a very smooth evolution path because it runs on existing GPON infrastructure.

What is helping you to be successful in the market at present?

Our success is based on our commitment and innovation. We focus on helping operators bring Ultra-Broadband to every user with a proven end-to-end solution that combines a market leading business consulting and services portfolios. We also focus on the creation of new revenue streams through new fiber technologies and business case. **TR**