

Swisscom leads the way in network expansion: first customer test for the new G.fast technology

New web applications and the increasing level of networking call for ever higher bandwidths, and Swisscom is continually expanding its broadband network to respond to this. Swisscom is now testing the new G.fast data transmission standard under real conditions for the first time and connecting the first test customers. The G.fast technology and a combination of fibre-optic and copper lines permit bandwidths of up to 500 Mbps. Swisscom is the first telecommunications company in Europe to allow customers to surf the web with the standardised G.fast chipset.

Wide-ranging streaming packages, HD quality videos and new cloud services are just a few of the reasons why both residential customers and companies need more and more data at ever higher speeds. Even today, the volume of fixed network data traffic already doubles every 16 months. With this in mind, Swisscom has been driving the expansion of ultra-fast broadband technologies for years. Over 1.4 million households and businesses benefit from bandwidths of at least 50 Mbps. In the future, the new G.fast transmission technology will allow customers with an FTTS or FTTB connection to surf at speeds of up to 500 Mbps. This is achieved by using a higher frequency spectrum on copper cables. In the case of FTTS, fibre-optic cables are laid up to a distance of around 200 metres from the building. Larger properties benefit from an FTTB connection, with fibre-optic cables laid right up to the building itself.

First field test and customers with active services on G.fast

Swisscom carried out a field test of the G.fast technology in April, enabling it to gather initial experiences under real conditions. As a result, the village of Bibern in the municipality of Buchegg, canton of Solothurn, is now one of the first places in Switzerland to benefit from the new transmission standard, and since the end of April 2015 the first customers have been able to surf at speeds of up to 500 Mbps even if they do not have an FTTH connection.

Swisscom is planning to expand G.fast for all FTTS and FTTB connections from 2016. Until then, G.fast will be optimised for the Swisscom network in cooperation with the company's technology partner Huawei.

High investment in broadband provision throughout Switzerland

Swisscom wants to connect more than 2.3 million homes and businesses to the ultra-fast broadband network by the end of the year, investing more than CHF 1.75 billion in the expansion of the IT and network infrastructure in 2015 alone. To supply locations outside the major conurbations, Swisscom relies on a mix of technologies that permit ultra-fast bandwidths: vectoring, Fibre to the Street (FTTS), Fibre to the Building (FTTB) and Fibre to the Home (FTTH). FTTS and FTTB currently permit bandwidths of up to 100 Mbps. Swisscom is thus making a key contribution to the ongoing digitisation of Switzerland and maintaining its position as global leader: according to Akamai, Switzerland is ranked first in Europe and third globally for high bandwidth coverage (>10Mbps).

Berne, 4 May 2015