Faster Internet for the home: Swisscom testing combination of its fixed-line and mobile networks

New Internet applications and an increasing number of networked devices call for ever higher bandwidths. Swisscom is therefore using a wide range of technologies to expand its broadband network on an ongoing basis. Thanks to DSL+LTE bonding, Swisscom is now able to use the fixed-line and mobile networks together. The telecoms company hopes to gain experience with this technology by launching a pilot project involving selected residential customers.

Wide-ranging streaming packages, HD-quality videos and new cloud services are just a few of the reasons why customers are requesting ever higher bandwidths. Even today, the volume of fixed network data is already doubling every 16 months. To keep pace with this trend, Swisscom is rapidly expanding its network and developing innovative network technologies such as DSL+LTE bonding. This technology combines the bandwidths of fixed-line and mobile networks, thereby allowing customers to benefit from a higher speed. In addition, Swisscom has developed an innovative LTE receiver that picks up the mobile data stream and passes it on via WLAN to the DSL router. The router is equipped with intelligent software that combines the mobile and fixed-line data streams, thereby providing customers with additional speed.

Pilot test with selected residential customers

After successful tests in the laboratory and with Swisscom employees, a pilot trial has been scheduled to be held in January 2016 in which selected residential customers will be provided with DSL+LTE bonding. The technology allows for bandwidths of up to 20 Mbps in its initial phase. Higher bandwidths will also be tested in later phases. The availability of DSL+LTE bonding and the actual bandwidth are determined by the length of the copper fixed line and the 3G or 4G mobile coverage at the customer's home. Swisscom aims to use the pilot test to determine whether a market launch is

feasible. The rollout of DSL+LTE bonding establishes Swisscom's position as one of Europe's leading telecom providers.

Major investment in broadband provision throughout Switzerland

Swisscom aims to provide around 85% of all homes and businesses with ultra-fast broadband by the end of 2020, and invested over CHF 1.75 billion in expanding its IT and network infrastructure in 2015 alone. This equates to the company upgrading the fixed-line network infrastructure in approximately 300 municipalities every year. Swisscom is using a mix of technologies that permit ultra-fast bandwidths in order to supply locations outside the major urban areas, including 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 – with speeds of up to 500 Mbps even possible from the end of 2016 with the introduction of the new G.fast transmission standard. Swisscom is thus making a key contribution to the ongoing digitisation of Switzerland and maintaining its position as global leader: according to Akamai[1], Switzerland is ranked first in Europe and third globally for high bandwidth coverage (>10 Mbps).

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[1] 1 *The State of the Internet* (2nd quarter 2015): http://www.akamai.com/stateoftheinternet/