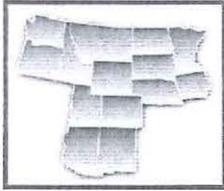


# **EXHIBIT 7**

## **Press Coverage and News Articles**



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## CenturyLink weighs more expansion of Prism TV service

**By Andy Vuong**  
*The Denver Post*  
May 6, 2011

CenturyLink chief executive Glen Post indicated during a first-quarter earnings call Thursday that the next market to receive CenturyLink's IPTV service will probably be in Qwest's local-phone service territory.

And the rollout could come as early as this year.

Post said the company expanded the service, called Prism TV, in the first quarter to three new markets: Tallahassee and Orlando, Fla., and Raleigh, N.C.

Prism TV, which offers video content over a dedicated Internet network, is available in eight Legacy CenturyLink/Embarq markets. CenturyLink purchased Embarq in 2009 and completed its acquisition of Denver-based Qwest on April 1.

Post said the company will continue to expand Prism TV in 2011, ultimately reaching 1 million homes with the service by year's end.

However, in response to a question from an analyst, Post said the company does not expect "any additional rollouts in the CenturyLink markets" this year.

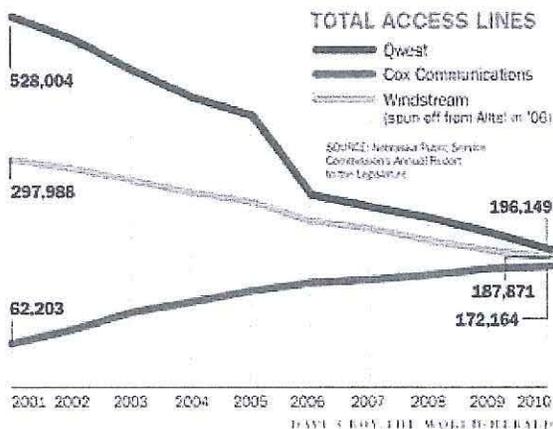
"We'll be evaluating the Qwest markets in the coming months," Post said. "We do think there could be some opportunity there. . . . We'll be making those decisions around midyear as far as any additional rollouts of IPTV in any of those markets."

*Andy Vuong*: 303-954-1209, [avuong@denverpost.com](mailto:avuong@denverpost.com) or [twitter.com/andyvuong](https://twitter.com/andyvuong)

Published Apr 1, 2011  
Published Friday April 1, 2011

## CenturyLink aims to win market

By Ross Boettcher  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER



CenturyLink's top executive in Nebraska has a lofty goal: "Win."

Qwest's merger with the Monroe, La.-based CenturyLink becomes official today. And Danny Pate, the company's vice president and general manager for Nebraska, is ready to get to work and win back a significant chunk of the market share that Qwest has lost to Cox Communications over the past decade.

"We are going to, without a doubt, increase our market share," Pate said. "My job is to win this market back. So we're going to leverage everything we have as a combined, new company to come back and win the market."

Qwest has less than half the number of Nebraska access lines it did in 2004, when it had nearly 3½ times as many lines as Cox.

Since that time, Cox has gradually added more and more customers and access lines each year at the expense of Qwest. Nearly all of Cox's gains have been in the Omaha area, the only part of the state where the company offers service.

Windstream Communications, which is the dominant phone company in Lincoln and a wide area of southeast Nebraska, also has seen declines since 2001, but not to the degree Qwest has, according to figures from the Nebraska Public Service Commission.

To remain the top telecommunications provider in Nebraska in terms of access lines, Pate said, CenturyLink will need to gain back the momentum Qwest has lost over the past half-decade. He said the company must do that by offering better products at lower prices and running a successful re-branding campaign.

In the coming weeks and months, he said, CenturyLink will offer consumers in Nebraska pricing promotions and incentives if they switch their land-line phone, television or high-speed Internet service.

"This is not about the embedded base," Pate said. "We're looking to increase our market share and win the market back."

Cox Communications declined to comment for this article.

Equally important in gaining and retaining customers is CenturyLink's image. The bayou-based telecom is mostly an unknown in Nebraska, and when the company's plans to rename the Qwest Center Omaha came to light, many people responded negatively.

"The only thing that will change is the name," Pate said. "The venue will remain. The quality of events will remain. Nothing will change, except for the name."

Initially, the company will use branding that incorporates the CenturyLink name and green sunburst logo along with Qwest's name and trademark "Q."

That strategy, the company hopes, will help consumers realize that the two companies are now one and that Qwest's operations are still there, just under CenturyLink's name.

By the end of August, though, Omaha's skyline will change as the signage on the Qwest Center and a downtown office building come down.

Under CenturyLink's new local operating model, Pate will have more authority to direct marketing, pricing and infrastructure initiatives, a responsibility that Qwest didn't give to executives at the local level.

Over the next five to seven years, CenturyLink is required by regulators to expand broadband speed and access to rural and low-income consumers, but Pate said the company plans to improve its broadband network beyond those commitments.

Additionally, he said, there's a "great possibility" Omaha could be one of the next markets to get CenturyLink's Internet-based television product, Prism. Currently, CenturyLink offers Prism in only eight cities and is evaluating what metropolitan areas would most benefit from the product, Pate said.

Pate and Joanna Hjelmeland, a CenturyLink spokeswoman, said consumers in the Midlands need to take notice of the company's new products and pricing offers.

"The Omaha market is about to get a lot more competitive," Hjelmeland said.

Contact the writer: 402-444-1414, [ross.boettcher@owh.com](mailto:ross.boettcher@owh.com), [twitter.com/rossboettcher](https://twitter.com/rossboettcher)

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## CenturyLink Uses Omaha as 1Gig Test Bed

It's the third-largest US telco's first FTTP 1Gig network build, but it could set the stage for more to come

By Sarah Reedy, [Light Reading](#)

May 03, 2013

URL: <http://www.lightreading.com/fttx/centurylink-uses-omaha-as-1gig-test-bed/240154171>

Louisiana-based telco [CenturyLink Inc.](#) is following [Google's](#) lead in bringing 1Gbit/s broadband service to Omaha, Neb., in what it's calling a pilot using fiber-to-the-premises (FTTP) infrastructure.

This is CenturyLink's first foray into the world of Gig speeds and its first sizable FTTP build, but if the 48,000-subscriber deployment goes well, the carrier plans to replicate it in other cities across the U.S. The deployment begins next week, and the company expects to complete it by early October.

CenturyLink CTO Matt Beal says that its customers don't actually *need* gigabit speeds right now, but this deployment is a matter of getting the network ready for when they do. He admits that the appetites of its consumers are greater than their budgets, too, so part of the deployment will be finding a balance between return on investment and affordable service. CenturyLink will provide access to residential customers for US\$79.95 as part of a bundle or \$149.95 standalone.

"We ran a GPON replacement strategy, and with a lot of the furor around broadband, we had an opportunity to get into the gigabit business and test what user behaviors would look like and how to provide the service," Beal says.

Another part of the pilot is exploring whether that GPON fiber can reduce operating expenses relative to copper, according to [Jefferies & Co. Inc.](#) analyst George Notter, who believes the telco will also reduce its operating expenditures by moving to a VoIP-based infrastructure for voice rather than its traditional network. If CenturyLink can prove the ROI without hiking up its prices to consumers, it'll help the case for future buildouts.

But that's not yet certain. Omaha is a unique market for CenturyLink in that it had the benefit of having Qwest's old fiber-to-the-curb infrastructure already deployed within 1,000 feet of subscriber homes, making the FTTP upgrade easier and cheaper to implement.

Before announcing its next move, the telco plans to see whether the community supports the service and if it can make a good ROI on it. Beal is optimistic that CenturyLink will continue its drive towards 1Gbit/s networks, and he says he's already identified a couple of other potential markets.

— Sarah Reedy, Senior Editor, Light Reading

numbers of computers and mobile devices will find it faster and easier to do things like stream movies, download music and use video calling services to talk to grandma.

"We're all seeing increasing demand in these types of services," Pate said. With the fiber system, "You're no longer worried about bandwidth with your customers."

Nebraska Public Service Commissioner Anne Boyle of Omaha pointed out that some Nebraska households still have slow broadband speeds or even dial-up connections. She hopes to see higher speeds everywhere so more people can take advantage of the way technology connects people to opportunity.

The Federal Communications Commission in January announced its "Gigabit City Challenge," with the goal of having at least one city in each state with gigabit-speed Internet by 2015. It looks like Nebraska will meet that challenge.

"I think what CenturyLink is doing is a big plus for the city of Omaha," Boyle said. "If their pilot project is successful, it'll bring even better resources to everybody, with the world we live in today and tomorrow."

**Contact the writer:**

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**Where it's on the way**

**Austin, Texas**, is getting Google Fiber beginning in 2014.

**The Provo, Utah**, City Council recently approved having Google upgrade an existing network that serves 115,000 residents

**Seattle** announced a deal in December for a demonstration network of more than 50,000 households and businesses in 12 neighborhoods.

**Chicago** has nine neighborhoods that will be served by a network announced in 2012.

**Source:** pcmag.com

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PRESS RELEASE | May 1, 2013, 7:00 a.m. ET

## CenturyLink to make Omaha one of the fastest broadband cities in America

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Thousands are eligible for company's new high-speed fiber network pilot

OMAHA, Neb., May 1, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- CenturyLink, Inc. (NYSE: CTL) today announced it is connecting 48,000 Omaha homes and businesses with its new high-speed fiber network pilot that will deliver Internet speeds of up to one Gigabit per second (Gbps) -- 100 times faster than average broadband speeds.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20090602/DA26511LOGO>)

CenturyLink is upgrading its existing fiber architecture in west Omaha to create a more robust network that delivers fiber optic connections directly to homes and businesses. This upgraded fiber-to-the-premises (FTTP) technology will provide eligible customers with access to some of the fastest upload and download Internet speeds currently available in the U.S.

"CenturyLink is pleased to offer its Omaha customers ultra-fast broadband speeds up to 1 Gbps to help keep pace with growing broadband demands," said Karen Puckett, CenturyLink chief operating officer. "This demonstrates our commitment to deliver communications solutions that provide our customers with the technology they need to enhance their quality of life, now and into the future."

Using 1 Gbps, customers can download a high-definition movie in seconds and stream it from multiple devices, gain instant access to cloud services and applications on demand, and subscribe to the latest information and entertainment services available. Speeds are also symmetrical, allowing customers to upload videos and large files of information just as fast as they download. Customers utilizing CenturyLink's 1 Gbps service in Omaha will have a direct connection to the company's recently upgraded 100 Gbps global network, designed to accommodate the bandwidth demand driven by cloud computing, mobile traffic, big data and video streaming.

"After working on telecommunications issues for more than a decade now, I'm well aware of the many economic benefits that come from access to high-speed broadband," said U.S. Rep. Lee Terry (R-Neb.). "I'm proud that CenturyLink has chosen Omaha for its 1 Gig pilot and really believe that the sky is the limit for our local tech community now that they'll have access to the fastest Internet speeds in the country."

"Our ability to provide this service to Omaha residents is partly due to the good collaboration and partnership we have had with the City of Omaha and their support at the local level," said Danny Pate, CenturyLink vice president and general manager -- Nebraska. "CenturyLink is pleased to offer Omaha next generation broadband technology. With speeds up to 1 Gbps, we will provide eligible consumers and businesses the freedom to simultaneously use multiple integrated devices in their homes and businesses without bandwidth constraints."

CenturyLink begins rolling out its 1 Gbps service next week and expects to have its new fiber network available to all 48,000 customers by early October 2013. The company will evaluate its Omaha 1 Gbps offer before determining further deployment of this advanced technology, considering such factors as positive community support, competitive parity in the marketplace and the ability to earn a reasonable return on its investment.

About CenturyLink

CenturyLink is the third largest telecommunications company in the United States and is recognized as a leader in the network services market by technology industry analyst firms. The company is a global leader in cloud infrastructure and hosted IT solutions for enterprise customers. CenturyLink provides data, voice and managed services in local, national and select international markets through its high-quality advanced

fiber optic network and multiple data centers for businesses and consumers. The company also offers advanced entertainment services under the CenturyLink(TM) Prism(TM) TV and DIRECTV brands. Headquartered in Monroe, La., CenturyLink is an S&P 500 company and is included among the Fortune 500 list of America's largest corporations. For more information, visit www.centurylink.com.

SOURCE CenturyLink, Inc.

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/Web site: http://www.centurytel.com

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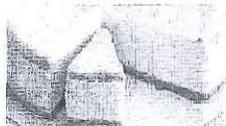
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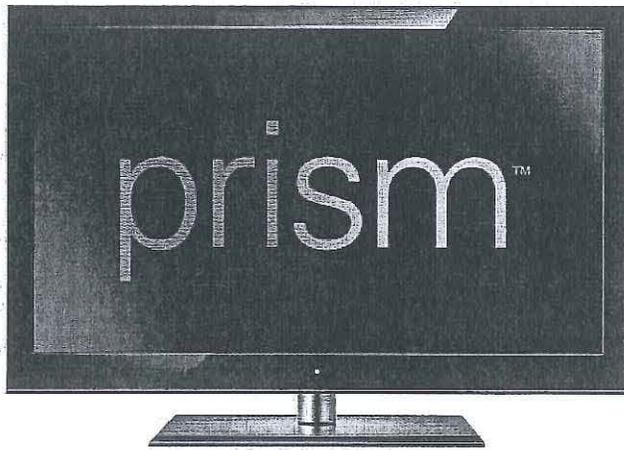


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Prism TV, offered by CenturyLink, is a service delivered via fiber-optic network. Omahans may see it by May.

## New CenturyLink cable TV service could ignite price war with Cox

By Barbara Soderlin  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

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CenturyLink is preparing to launch a new cable television service, Prism TV, throughout Douglas and Sarpy Counties, a move that will expand the geographic reach of its cable services and set up more intense competition with cable provider Cox Communications.

"We hope to have more price competition," said Omaha deputy city attorney Thomas Mumgaard.

Prism TV has negotiated cable franchise agreements with governments in Douglas and Sarpy Counties that will enable it to launch in the metro. Two local government officials said the hope is to start Prism TV by the end of the month.

A CenturyLink spokesman declined to discuss the company's plans.

A Cox spokeswoman, Gail Graeve, declined to comment on the competitor.

"The marketplace for video has evolved with an increased number of entities offering a product," Graeve said. "With the growth of online offerings, consumers have more viewing options than ever before. To be competitive, our overall business strategies are driven by innovation in technology, providing the products customers are seeking and delivering superior customer service."

Prism TV, already available in cities such as Orlando, Fla., Colorado Springs and Phoenix, is a digital cable service delivered through a fiber-optic network. It includes local, premium and high-definition channels.

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Its plans in other areas start at \$39.99 a month and allow customers to bundle Prism TV with phone and Internet service.

CenturyLink has called Prism "a feature-rich alternative to cable and satellite." Those features include an interactive, searchable Internet-based platform and the ability to program DVR recordings through a smartphone app.

CenturyLink already offers DirecTV, a satellite-delivered service, in the metropolitan area.

The company signed an agreement with the City of Omaha in December, expanding and extending until December 2022 a franchise originally awarded in 1996. Cable franchise agreements describe the terms under which cities let cable providers install a cable system in city rights of way. The agreements set fees and set the cable provider's responsibilities to provide educational and governmental programming.

Mumgaard said the latest agreement expands CenturyLink's cable footprint in Omaha, giving it citywide service rights. Before, CenturyLink had a smaller franchise territory west of Interstate 680, which dated to an experimental cable service that its corporate predecessor, U S West, started in 1996.

The new agreement sets phased requirements for CenturyLink to expand its cable service, based partly on its market success.

Within the first three years, CenturyLink must offer the service to 25 percent of living units in the city, which Mumgaard said would double its footprint.

After that, CenturyLink is obligated to expand its cable reach only if 27.5 percent or more of potential subscribers sign up. If so, the company must build out to an additional 15 percent of Omaha living units within two years. That cycle would continue when the company again meets the 27.5 percent subscriber threshold.

Mumgaard said federal law prevented the city from requiring CenturyLink to offer Prism TV citywide from the beginning, although that would have been his preference "so they don't cherry-pick and just take the areas where they can do well and ignore the areas where they don't do well."

Instead, he said, the agreement was a "negotiated compromise."

CenturyLink will pay the city a franchise fee of 5 percent of gross revenue, the maximum law allows.

CenturyLink agreements also have been approved with Sarpy County, Douglas County, Papillion and Springfield. Agreements are in negotiation or pending approval in LaVista, Bellevue, Gretna and Ralston.

Springfield Mayor Mike Dill said his town was looking forward to having a second choice for high-speed Internet service as well as cable television. The city is now served by Charter.

"Any time the people of Springfield have options that they can make their choices from, the better off it is for everybody," Dill said.

Bellevue's city administrator, Dan Berlowitz, said he expected to have an agreement before the City Council there in the next few weeks, possibly at the first May meeting, but said some provisions were still being hammered out.

CenturyLink "had a desired time frame. But our position was we would take the time we needed in order to be able to arrive at an agreement that was in the best interest of the city," he said. "These agreements become pretty important once they're in place."

In Gretna, City Administrator Jeff Kooistra said a franchise agreement was still being negotiated.

"I think it's a great opportunity for the area and the community to have more competition," he said.

The Ralston City Council will vote on an agreement Tuesday.



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"What we hope is going to happen," said City Attorney Mark Klinker, "is that there's going to be competition between them and Cox, and prices would be driven down for the consumer."

LaVista spokesman Mitch Beaumont, too, said an agreement was in negotiation.

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Barbara Soderlin covers food safety, ConAgra, technology and employment/unemployment issues.

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PUBLISHED SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 2013 AT 4:17 AM / UPDATED AT 4:27 AM

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## CenturyLink launches cable-TV alternative

By [Barbara Soderlin](#) / World-Herald staff writer

News Alerts

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CenturyLink has started selling its new Prism TV service in the Omaha metro area, while the telecommunications provider is still in negotiations with at least one city, La Vista, to allow the cable television system there.

The company is conducting a "soft launch" of the service in the Omaha market during its second quarter, April through June, Chief Executive Officer Glen Post told analysts in May. Prism fliers have been left in doors in at least one Papillion area neighborhood referring residents to the website [seeprismtv.com](http://seeprismtv.com).

Not including Omaha, Post said that by the end of March, the company had a total of 120,000 Prism subscribers, with 13,400 of those added in the first quarter. He said CenturyLink has an average market penetration of around 10 percent in its markets where Prism is available, which include Las Vegas; Orlando, Fla.; Phoenix; and Raleigh, N.C.

The Internet-based television service is provided through fiber-to-the-premises technology. Post said the service "continues to perform well" and is an alternative to traditional cable television. More than half the Prism customers added in the first quarter were new to CenturyLink, he said.

Local government officials have said they expect CenturyLink to compete aggressively with Cox Communications, lowering prices.

CenturyLink has negotiated cable franchise agreements with Douglas and Sarpy Counties and the cities of Ralston, Gretna, Papillion, Springfield and Bellevue. An agreement will appear on a future council agenda in La Vista, a city spokesman said.

Cable franchise agreements describe the terms under which cities let cable providers install a cable system in city rights of way. The agreements set fees and set the cable provider's responsibilities to provide educational and governmental programming. The City of Gretna approved its cable franchise agreement Tuesday.

City administrator Jeff Kooistra said CenturyLink did not provide him details of how the service works or how the fiber system would be installed in city rights of way.

He thinks the service will be an advantage for residents and businesses in the metro area.

"People always like to have options, and this gives them another wired option," in addition to satellite TV service, he said. "I think it's a good economic development tool for our community."

Danny Pate, CenturyLink's top executive in Omaha, said he couldn't comment on the system.

A CenturyLink salesman said there are three Prism packages available for customers who want to bundle Internet and TV service. When paired with Internet service and placed on just one television in a home, the Prism Premium package costs \$128.95 a month; Prism

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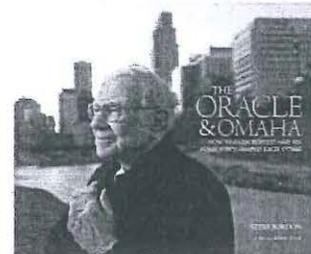
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Complete package, \$85.95 a month; and Prism TV package, \$69.95 a month. Packages differ in the number of channels included and in the length of time that certain amenities such as HD broadcasting and DVR services are included at no extra cost.

**Contact the writer:**

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Barbara Soderlin covers food safety, ConAgra, technology and employment/unemployment issues.

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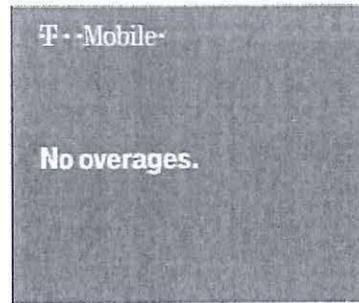


**Shawn Harstad** · Top Commenter · Bellevue, Nebraska  
 Its about time. Cox desperately needs some competition.  
 Reply · 3 · Like · June 8 at 5:46pm



**Wally Anderson** · Omaha, Nebraska  
 Talked to a contractor in the neighborhood (NW Omaha) and he said it was coming soon. He was testing cable pairs. Called Centurylink and they don't know anything about it haha. Maybe DSL will be faster than 1.5 at least.  
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MONEY TALKS

# CenturyLink to open first Nebraska store in west Omaha

By Janice Podsada

News Alerts

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CenturyLink will celebrate the opening of its first Nebraska store – near 156th Street and West Maple Road – with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 11 a.m. Thursday.

Danny Pate, vice president and general manager of CenturyLink's Nebraska market, will host the event.

"This is the first store in all of Nebraska," Pate said.

Customers can watch demonstrations, browse the selection of products and talk with store personnel about their communications needs. Devices that demonstrate how many of the company's products and services work are available throughout the store.

Store representatives also can provide customers with reviews of their accounts and assistance with their bills.

The CenturyLink store will offer high-speed Internet, Prism TV — the company's interactive TV service — home and business telephone services, and wireless phone services from Verizon Wireless.

Visitors who stop in during Thursday's event can enter to win tickets to the Nebraska-Penn State football game and other prizes.

Contact the writer: Janice Podsada

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Janice is a retail reporter for The World-Herald's Money section.

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## CenturyLink's IPTV service could set off Nebraska price war

April 16, 2013 | By Jim Barthold

Local officials are hoping that CenturyLink's ([NYSE: CTL](#)) impending Prism TV service launch in Douglas and Sarpy Counties, Neb., along with metro Omaha, will ignite a price competition with incumbent cable providers Cox Communications and Charter Communications ([Nasdaq: CHTR](#)).

Prism TV should launch in the area by the end of the month, after CenturyLink negotiated franchise agreements with Douglas and Sarpy County governments and enhanced another agreement signed with Omaha in December. The carrier already offers DirecTV satellite service as part of its voice, video and data bundle in metro Omaha, but will now expand its terrestrial networks to offer Prism TV beyond what had originally been a small, somewhat restricted franchise territory. That expanded agreement runs through 2022.

Where it has rolled out CenturyLink offers Prism TV packages starting at \$39.99 a month and including bundles of phone and Internet service, prompting Omaha deputy city attorney Thomas Mumgaard to tell the *Omaha World-Herald*, "We hope to have more price competition."

The new franchise agreements require CenturyLink to offer service to 25 percent of living units in Omaha within the first three years, after which it is obligated to expand only if 27.5 percent or more of possible subscribers sign up. If that happens, the carrier must build out an additional 15 percent of Omaha living units within two years. If those goals are again exceeded, the cycle begins again.

The city would have liked to push CenturyLink harder but, Mumgaard said, federal law prevented the city from requiring a metro-wide rollout from the beginning.

Cox isn't the only carrier expected to feel the competitive heat. Charter Communications serves nearby Springfield where Mayor Mike Dill told the newspaper that elected officials and residents welcome the competition.

"Any time the people of Springfield have options that they can make their final choices from, the better off it is for everybody," Dill said.

Cox, though, is expected to take the biggest competitive hit, as CenturyLink moves into its franchise areas in Bellvue, Gretna, Ralston City and LaVista.

While a CenturyLink spokeswoman wouldn't talk about the rollouts with the newspaper, Gail Graeve, a Cox spokeswoman dodged the competitive issue and focused on Cox's overall business strategies which, she said, "are driven by innovation in technology (and) providing the products customers are seeking and delivering superior customer service."

For more:

- the *Omaha World-Herald* carried this [story](#)

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[CenturyLink hiring for IPTV service in Phoenix](#)

[CenturyLink adds 10,000 IPTV subscribers in fourth quarter](#)

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## CenturyLink lights up FTTP-based IPTV service in Omaha

June 10, 2013 | By Sean Buckley

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CenturyLink (NYSE: CTL) is now offering customers its new Prism TV service in the Omaha, Neb. metro area over a new pilot fiber to the premises (FTTP) network that replaces a legacy HFC system serving 48,000 homes and business its predecessor US West built.

Similar to the legacy Qwest Phoenix market, the service provider is conducting a "soft launch" of the Prism TV service in Omaha this quarter.

Thus far, reports *Omaha.com*, it has struck cable franchise agreements with Douglas and Sarpy Counties and the cities of Ralston, Gretna, Papillion, Springfield and Bellevue. In addition, it is pursuing a cable franchise agreement in La Vista.



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Similar to other markets where it offers Prism TV, the telco will offer three main prices for a dual-play bundle of data and TV: Prism Premium for \$128.95 a month; Prism Complete for \$85.95 a month; and Prism TV package at \$69.95 a month.

Besides not using the hybrid copper/fiber to the node (FTTN) last mile architecture using a mixture of ADSL2+ and VDSL2, what's different about the deployment in Omaha is it's a Brownfield environment.

"We obviously run a small smattering of GPON properties already, but this is the first time we are doing a large-scale Brownfield conversion and all of the customer migrations," said Matt Beal, CTO of CenturyLink, in a previous interview with *FierceTelecom*. "That's probably one key difference is that we're looking at it not just from a new capture like everyone else, but also from a Brownfield conversion perspective."

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What makes this FTTP network less capital intensive is that fiber had been already deployed within every eight homes in the entire footprint.

While CenturyLink came later to the IPTV game than larger ILEC AT&T (NYSE: T), the subscriber base has been growing every quarter. The telco reported that as of the end of March it had a total 120,000 Prism subscribers, with 13,400 of those added in Q1.

Glen Post, president and CEO of CenturyLink, said during the Q1 earnings call that it has almost 10 percent penetration of Prism TV "across the market where service is available" and that over 50 percent of the customers added were new customers to CenturyLink."

For more:

- [FierceIPTV](#) has this coverage
- [Omaha World-Herald](#) has this article

On the Hot Seat: CenturyLink's Beal sees value in 1 Gbps fiber

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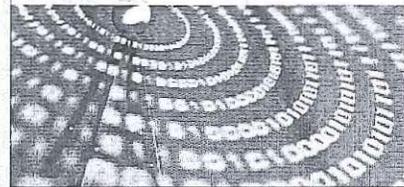
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## Tech Analyst Jeff Kagan on CenturyLink Prism TV Rollout

Prism TV competes with cable television service. Technology Industry Analyst Jeff Kagan is available to speak with reporters, or may be quoted through this release.

Atlanta, GA (PRWEB) June 09, 2013

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CenturyLink is a major local phone company, which is rolling out a new television service called Prism TV in competition with the cable television industry. Omaha.com reported on the service introduction to the Omaha metro area on June 8.

Telecom analyst Jeff Kagan offers comment on this story.

CenturyLink Chief Executive Officer Glen Post told analysts they have started selling their new Prism TV service in the Omaha area. Post said that CenturyLink had a total of 120,000 Prism TV subscribers. 13,400 were added in the first quarter.

"CenturyLink, is like AT&T and Verizon. They are a local phone company. They acquired Qwest, the third largest local phone company. Now CenturyLink is the third largest local phone company. They have not been innovating as aggressively as AT&T and Verizon, but they are innovating. They are not moving into television and competing with the cable TV industry as rapidly as AT&T and Verizon, but they are moving into this space." Says Principal analyst Jeff Kagan.

Glen Post says CenturyLink has an average market penetration of roughly 10 percent in the markets where Prism is available today, including Las Vegas, Orlando, Phoenix and Raleigh. He said their Prism TV service continues to perform well. He said more than half of Prism TV customers added in the first quarter were new to CenturyLink.

"Over the years, I have worked with most major local phone companies. I was initially disappointed with CenturyLink progress. However this is a very good start for them in the television side of the business. CenturyLink uses Internet technology to deliver television over IPTV. The industry continues to change and to innovate. Companies who don't innovate along with the changing industry risk falling behind. CenturyLink is moving in the right direction." Says analyst Kagan.

"The hope is as CenturyLink competes with Cox Communications, Comcast and Time Warner, that prices could come down. I won't say this won't happen, but it has not happened in other areas around the country where AT&T and Verizon compete with cable TV either. So pricing may not come down, but competition does lead to more innovation and better quality and reliability of service. Companies never want to give customers a reason to unplug and go to a competitor." Says Kagan.

### About Jeff Kagan

Jeff Kagan is a Technology Industry Analyst and consultant who is regularly quoted by the media over 25 years. He offers comment on wireless, telecom and tech news stories to reporters and journalists.

He is also known as a Tech Analyst, Wireless Analyst, Telecom Analyst and Principal Analyst depending on the focus of the story.

He follows wireless, telecom, Internet, cable television and IPTV. He also follows the wide consumer electronics and technology space.

Reporters: Jeff Kagan sends comments by email to reporters and the media. If you would like to be added to this email list please send request by email.

Clients: Call or email Jeff Kagan to discuss becoming a client. Kagan has worked with many companies over 25 years as consulting clients.

Contact: Jeff Kagan by email at [jeff@jeffKAGAN.com](mailto:jeff@jeffKAGAN.com) or by phone at 770-579-5810.

Visit his website: at [jeffKAGAN.com](http://jeffKAGAN.com) to learn more and for disclosures.

Kagan is an analyst, consultant, columnist and speaker.

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Jeff KAGAN, Industry Analyst

“ Technology Industry Analyst Jeff Kagan is available to speak with reporters, or may be quoted through this release. ”

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## CenturyLink Tees Up 1 Gig Test in Omaha

**UPDATED: Telco to Connect 48,000 Homes to Fiber Network in Cox Country by Early October**

By: Jeff Baumgartner May 01 2013 - 04:09am



CenturyLink will join the nation's 1 Gig club this fall when the telco lights up fiber upgrades connecting a pocket of 48,000 homes in Omaha, Neb., a move that will apply speed pressure on incumbent cable operator Cox Communications.

CenturyLink said its coming fiber-to-the-premises test network will hook into its recently upgraded 100 Gigabit per second backbone. The telco will begin to connect eligible customers to its 1 Gigabit per second service on Monday, May 6, and expects to expand it to all 48,000 customers by early October, a CenturyLink spokeswoman said.

It was not immediately known how area homes will become eligible for the telco's 1 Gig test. But homes that are will pay \$79.95 per month for the 1 Gbps offer when bundled with other CenturyLink services, or \$149.95 per month as a stand-alone. Business customers will need to call the telco to obtain pricing information, the CenturyLink official added.

CenturyLink said it will evaluate the deployment before determining where else it might implement similar upgrades, but noted that determining factors will include "positive community support, competitive parity in the marketplace and the ability to earn a reasonable return on its investment."

"This demonstrates our commitment to deliver communications solutions that provide our customers with the technology they need to enhance their quality of life, now and into the future," said CenturyLink chief operating officer Karen Puckett, in a statement.

CenturyLink's plan is already having a political effect. "I'm proud that CenturyLink has chosen Omaha for its 1 Gig pilot and really believe that the sky is the limit for our local tech community now that they'll have access to the fastest Internet speeds in the country," added U.S. Rep. Lee Terry (R-Neb.)

Cox, CenturyLink's primary competitor in the market, offers a handful of residential broadband packages in Omaha, including the top-end, DOCSIS 3.0-powered Ultimate tier, which delivers downstream speeds up to 150 Mbps and 20 Mbps upstream for \$99.99 per month, or \$82.99 for the first three months if customers sign up online. Depending on the area, CenturyLink's current high-end residential Internet service offers speeds up to 40 Mbps.

Cox has upgraded its Ultimate residential high-speed Internet package to 150 Mbps in several markets, including Omaha, and expects to deploy similar upgrades nationally this year, a Cox spokesman said Wednesday. "This upgrade is available to all Cox customers within our footprint and isn't limited to a specific geographic region."

Cox's 25 Mbps tier is the MSO's most popular and "meets the needs of the majority of customers," he added. Cox has not announced plans to launch a residential 1 Gig service, but the spokesman noted that the MSO already delivers speeds up to 10 Gbps to businesses via fiber. "We will continue to talk with our customers and invest in product enhancements to provide an optimal broadband experience," he added.

CenturyLink is just one of a growing number of ISPs that are rolling out or testing 1 Gig speeds following the emergence of Google Fiber, which offers services in Kansas City and is positioned to do the same in Provo, Utah, later this year once it completes its acquisition of the city's iProvo fiber network. Google Fiber also plans to offer its bundle of broadband and IPTV services in Austin, Texas, starting in mid-2014.

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FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski praised the move, pointing out that last January he called for the creation of gigabit communities nationwide.

"Ultra-fast broadband speeds will unleash next-generation apps and services nationwide that will fuel innovation, U.S. economic growth, and our global competitiveness," he said in a statement. "Today's announcement that CenturyLink will bring gigabit service to Omaha makes it the latest in a series of communities, including Austin, Chattanooga, Kansas City, Lafayette and Provo, to move us closer to meeting that challenge."

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It would be responsible reporting to have detailed facts to make a decision between Cox and Centurylink. The reporting is insufficient to make an informed desion. "It was not immediately known how area homes will become eligible for the telco's 1 Gig test." Reporting is sloppy and uninformative.

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# FierceTelecom

Published on FierceTelecom (<http://www.fiercetelecom.com>)

## CenturyLink launches 1 Gbps fiber pilot in Omaha

May 1, 2013 | By Sean Buckley

CenturyLink ([NYSE: CTL](#)) is providing its own answer to Google Fiber's ([Nasdaq: GOOG](#)) last-mile fiber vision by launching a 1 Gbps-capable fiber to the premises (FTTP) pilot deployment that will serve 48,000 homes and businesses in Omaha, Neb. The service will begin rolling out next week.

Offering a new symmetrical connection, CenturyLink said in a press release that it will upgrade its existing fiber architecture with new FTTP technology. However, it did not reveal what vendor it is using for the deployment.

Eligible customers will be able to get a direct connection to its recently upgraded 100G global backbone network, which was built to deal with the deluge of new consumer and business traffic such as Ethernet and video streaming.

Customers utilizing CenturyLink's 1 Gbps service in Omaha will have a direct connection to the company's recently upgraded 100 Gbps global network, designed to accommodate the bandwidth demand driven by cloud computing, mobile traffic, big data and video streaming.

The service provider said that it will begin rolling out the 1 Gbps service next week and expects to have its new FTTP network available to all 48,000 customers by early October.

Having a 1 Gbps service will enhance the telco's competitive footing, especially against local cable operator competitor Cox Communications, which currently offers 50-100 Mbps over its existing DOCSIS 3.0 cable systems. It also will surpass offerings from fellow telcos AT&T ([NYSE: T](#)) and Verizon ([NYSE: VZ](#)) that offer speeds of up to 6 and 25 Mbps, respectively.

The question that this deployment will prompt is whether CenturyLink will replicate the 1 Gbps service in other markets.

Stopping short of revealing any future plans, it said that would "evaluate its Omaha 1 Gbps offer before determining further deployment of this advanced technology, considering such factors as positive community support, competitive parity in the marketplace and the ability to earn a reasonable return on its investment."

What's interesting about CenturyLink's 1 Gbps plan is that it comes on the heels of Google Fiber's recent move to deliver 1 Gbps service in Provo, Utah, a market the telco entered into when it purchased Qwest in

2011.

Building a FTTP network is a big shift in CenturyLink's last-mile strategy. Similar to its fellow incumbent AT&T, CenturyLink has been dedicated to using a hybrid copper/fiber to the node (FTTN) last mile architecture using a mixture of ADSL2+ and VDSL2. Over the VDSL2-enabled architecture, CenturyLink can deliver up to 40 Mbps in various legacy Qwest and CenturyLink markets.

For more:

- see the [release](#)

**On the Hot Seat:** [CenturyLink's Poll: We're ready to put 100G at the edge](#)

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Published May 1, 2013

Published Wednesday May 1, 2013

## CenturyLink bringing 1 gigabit-per-second Internet service to Omaha

By Barbara Soderlin

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Omaha will join a short list of cities with ultra-fast Internet service when CenturyLink launches a pilot project that will bring speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second to 48,000 homes and businesses.

That's as fast as the Google Fiber service that came to the Kansas City metro area after that market was chosen in a nationwide competition that Omahans were disappointed to lose.

CenturyLink said it will evaluate the pilot's profitability before deciding whether to expand it elsewhere in the Omaha metro area or in other cities. But individual businesses outside of the west Omaha zone will be able to sign up for the service over the next two years, as CenturyLink expands its fiber-optic network throughout the metro area.

The CenturyLink project is expected to draw national attention and be a selling point as the metro area competes to attract talented workers, high-tech startups and established businesses looking to grow and relocate, said David Brown, president and CEO of the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce.

"A significant portion of our high-growth companies are high-tech or Web-enabled technology companies," he said. "This is a distinguishing quality-of-life factor for locating here."

Brown already is planning out how to share the information with companies he is working to lure here and with site selection consultants who work on behalf of relocating businesses.

Danny Pate, CenturyLink's vice president and general manager for Nebraska, said high-speed Internet, like low-cost power and relative protection from natural disaster, is another selling point for Omaha among high-tech companies.

"We're trying to create entrepreneurs," he said. "We are really helping to raise the visibility of the technical capabilities of Omaha, and how much it can drive new business here."

CenturyLink would not share the cost of its investment, saying only it was "multiple millions of dollars" to run the trial project. The project itself will add more than 50 skilled jobs to the metro area, with CenturyLink hiring people to handle installations and repairs.

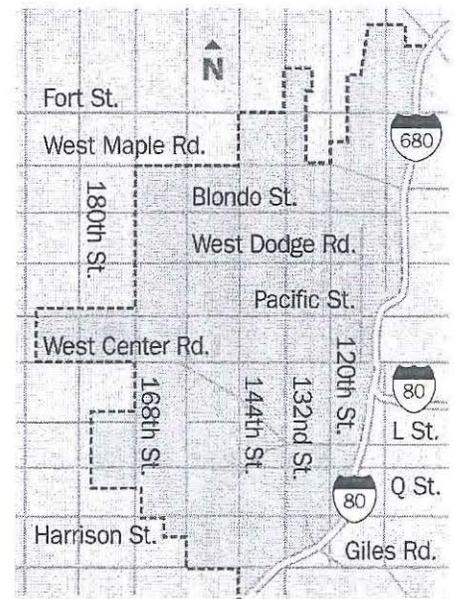
Omaha will be one of just a few in the United States to boast "1 gig." available on a fiber-optic network connected directly to the home or business premises.

Google Fiber launched last summer in neighborhoods in the Kansas City metro area, and Google has announced that it will expand to Austin, Texas, and Provo, Utah.

CenturyLink's service will go live Monday and be available at first for 9,800 potential customers in west Omaha in a territory formerly served by CenturyLink predecessor Qwest's Choice TV product. The new service, called Lightspeed Broadband, will be available to all of the 48,000 households and businesses in that territory by October.

People who live and work in that area already may have noticed CenturyLink

### INITIAL CENTURYLINK FIBER OPTIC INTERNET AREA



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### Some of the expected effects of the new super-fast Internet service

CenturyLink's proposed 1-gigabit per second Internet service would be more than six times faster than Cox Communication's fastest connection right now. The boost in service speed could be an attractive lure for both businesses and home users.

**Businesses will find it easier to communicate** with workers in other locations or at home and with clients when exchanging large data files, participating in video conferences or making more use of complex Web designs.

crews taking the existing fiber-optic network right to their property. CenturyLink has sent mailings to those property owners saying the “fastest speed in Omaha” is on its way. (A gigabit is more than six times as fast as Cox's fastest speeds in Omaha. Cox offers a max of 150 megabits per second for downloading, 20 megabits per second for uploading.)

The CenturyLink residential service will sell for \$79.95 a month when bundled with other CenturyLink services, or for \$149.95 a month a la carte. The company is not disclosing business prices.

The first and only business customer so far is the Highline, a downtown high-rise being redeveloped into upscale apartments by NuStyle Development.

NuStyle co-owner Todd Heistand was excited when he first heard from CenturyLink that the Highline would have Internet speeds of 50 megabits per second. When he found out just a few days ago he'd be a pioneer with a whole gigabit — 1,000 megabits — his reaction was “off the charts.”

It's so fast, he said, “I just can't hardly picture even what this gigabit service is about.”

He expects that it will save “a ton of time” for his employees working out of the Highline, because they won't have to wait for large architectural and marketing images to upload. And it will be a selling point for the several dozen apartments he still needs to lease.

Other Omaha businesses said they would be interested in the service.

Phenomblue, an advertising agency with an office in Aksarben Village, could benefit, technology director Ryan Phelan said.

He said staff members now have to spend too much time waiting for video and image files to upload and can't take full advantage of the video conferencing system they use to talk to colleagues in their Los Angeles office.

“The speeds we've been able to get up until now in Omaha have been kind of a bottleneck for us,” he said.

Relatively slow speeds also limit the type of interactive creative work the agency can produce, said Brandon Bone, associate director for software design and development. As more consumers have access to faster Internet speeds, “There are a lot of possibilities for really cool experiences we could create.”

The 1-gigabit speed will be a boon to businesses that want to establish a data center on site, said Brown and Ken Moreano, president of the Scott Data Center.

While Scott Data Center may not benefit — it's connected directly to the Internet “backbone” — Moreano said the service could boost Omaha's stature among startups and venture capitalists and could help the city attract future data centers.

“The impact that Google has had on Kansas City has been high visibility,” Moreano said.

Another benefit to companies is that “enterprise-level” Internet speeds would allow more people to work from home, he said. “That could be a dramatic impact to their production and performance capabilities.”

Other businesses and institutions that could benefit are those in the health care, education, manufacturing and banking sectors.

And while it might not have an economic impact, households with a growing

**More consumers will have access** to the higher speeds as the service reaches more neighborhoods. One Google Fiber user, the Kansas City Star reported, uploaded 20,000 to 30,000 photos and some videos in an hour, a job that would have taken a week with his prior Internet service.

**Economic developers will advertise** the new and growing capacity, setting the Omaha metro area apart from competitors for projects. Even companies that don't need the speed may think it enhances Omaha's tech image.

**Sources:** Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, Century Link and Silicon Prairie News, Kansas City Star, Ken Moreano

### Where it is

Only a select group of cities already have 1 gigabit-per-second Internet speed:

**Kansas City in Missouri and Kansas**, the first selected by Google and now in two neighborhoods

**Chattanooga, Tenn.**, which in 2010 got a network to serve every home and business in a nine-county service area.

**Bristol, Va.**, in 2003 became the first municipal electric company to connect city buildings, electrical substations and schools with a fiber network.

**Kansas City in Missouri and Kansas**, the first selected by Google and now in two neighborhoods.

**Burlington, Vt.**, has 600 homes subscribing to 1 gigabit service.

**Lafayette, La.**, has a citywide network.

**Santa Monica, Calif.**, has a system that currently serves only businesses.