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#### For telecoms expanding services, wireless backhaul gives flexibility

By Michael Morisy, News Writer  
26 Feb 2009 | SearchTelecom.com

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As regional telecoms look to expand beyond their traditional fare, [wireless backhaul](#) provides one option for quickly expanding services while possibly avoiding deep physical infrastructure investments and the months of build-out delays that come with them.

Wireless backhaul, which utilizes microwave or other wireless media to move data between network nodes, has become a popular option for some providers as they upgrade networks to support not just basic voice or Internet connectivity but video and other advanced features.

The reason carriers are choosing wireless backhaul over traditional leased T1s is primarily economic: The costs of either buying right-of-way permits and installing a new line or leasing a T1 connection are prohibitive. Microwave backhaul installations are a fraction of this cost, and they still provide Gigabit connectivity.

Analyst John Celentano wrote recently that wireless backhaul could potentially [save wireline companies](#) by giving them a way to reduce their internal costs and by allowing them to sell backhaul services to mobile service providers.

Such wireless platforms also offer the carrier a greater degree of re-configurability once the system is deployed.

"Highly reliable and flexible networks like what wireless gigabit offers allow operators flexibility to move their towers and not have to re-wire their infrastructure to the back end," said Gerry Purdy, a vice president and chief analyst at Frost & Sullivan. "With today's need for some flexibility, this whole optimization thing comes about with, 'What can I put in place that will make [my network] work?'"

That flexibility could come in handy if, for example, a wireless signal that worked fine two years ago is now blocked by a high-rise -- a problem that wired backhaul does not have -- or if population centers shift unexpectedly, a problem that wired components have a tougher time adapting to.

These tweaks, while not quite trivial, still let a service provider be more adaptive to changing realities than it could otherwise be, particularly in seizing on sudden (compared with telecoms' traditionally glacial pace) opportunities.

That's exactly the state MST Holdings found itself in as it began rolling out services to multi-tenant, multi-dwelling units. The company, which delivers quad play services of voice, video, Internet and Wi-Fi, was aiming for aggressive expansion into these markets, and executives were concerned about the delays that right-of-way permits would cause in its New York City and San Francisco markets.

To meet its business objectives, MST decided to tap BridgeWave's microwave-based GigE solution.

"With BridgeWave's virtual fiber, MST can deploy state-of-the-art networking and offer robust services at affordable prices -- years ahead of what traditional carriers and cable operators can provide," MST CEO and founder Frank Matarazzo stated in a release.

And MST is not alone: A recent Heavy Reading report found that [25% of wireless carriers' expenditures were on backhaul costs](#), and much of that expenditure was on pricey leased lines. As more carriers need to provide more bandwidth, whether

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