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## Motorola to spread Canopy tech following Irish success

30.01.2004 - US communications giant Motorola is to extend its Canopy wireless broadband technology to other European countries following a successful year-long trial in the Irish market.

Canopy is a technology that allows wireless internet service providers (WISPs) to offer broadband to residential and business customers in areas not covered by DSL services.

A Motorola spokesman said the company planned to establish channel partners in a number of European countries in late Q2 or early Q3 and would particularly look to target the buoyant UK broadband market.

Speaking to *siliconrepublic.com* from Chicago, Tom Hulsebosch, worldwide director of sales and marketing for Canopy, said valuable lessons had been learned in Ireland, where the technology is deployed by Amocom, a Cork-based service provider.

"It has helped show the rest of the EU the advantages of wireless broadband. It has also shown how flexibility the technology is – it can be used equally to bridge the digital divide [in areas that don't have DSL] and for e-initiatives in schools," he said.

According to Hulsebosch Canopy's main benefit is that it can bring wireless broadband to remote and sparsely populated areas and so can help heal the town versus country digital divide which has characterised the early broadband experience in many countries. "The digital divide is a challenge not just for Ireland but for every developed nation we've come across," said Hulsebosch, who added that even densely populated Japan is trialling the technology as a means of bringing broadband to the mountainous spine running down the middle of the country.

While Canopy can 'fill in the gaps' left by patchy DSL coverage, it can also go head to head with DSL in urban areas, stressed Hulsebosch. Where most DSL services offer a maximum downstream/upstream speed of 1mbit/512k per second, Canopy can in theory achieve speeds of up to 8Mb in both directions, the equivalent of office Ethernet capacity. This would also make it attractive to operators of the many WiFi hotspots that are springing up across the country. Most of these operators connect to the internet through DSL or expensive leased lines.

Canopy's wireless technology comes under the emerging Wimax 802.16 standard, rather than the 802.11 family which defines wireless LAN. According to Hulsebosch Canopy is "fundamentally different" to wireless LAN in that the quality of service is much higher and free from the interference which can happen when WiFi hotspots overlap.

Here in Ireland Canopy is one of the technologies being used as part of a clutch of Government-funded wireless broadband trials. The technology operates in the unlicensed 5.7-5.8GHz radio spectrum. Amocom, a Cork-based telecoms provider, began the trial last February, since when it has signed up over 140 customers in the Cork region to the system.

By Brian Skelly

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