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Telecommunication Newsletter Switzerland

Consortium of Energy Suppliers Formed to Offer Broadband Access to the Public

On April 7, 2008, seven Swiss power suppliers have announced their cooperation in supporting the construction and operation of a broad band fibre network in Switzerland.

The consortium's goal is to support an open fibre optical telecommunication infrastructure. Such networks are to provide to both service providers and customers non discriminatory access to such networks. According to the consortium, the public at large, the business community as well as public services will benefit from such fiber optical networks. Contrary to the networks of the dominant carriers, the customers will have the full choice of the service providers. The consortium was founded by Aziende Municipalizzate Bellinzona, Elektra Baselland, Elektrizitätswerk des Kantons Thurgau, Fribourger Group e, Industrielle Werke Basel, St. Galler Stadtwerke as well as Stadtwerke Winterthur.

In the past years, several utilities have built fibre optical networks, using the synergy in connection with the build out and rejuvenation of the power supply infrastructure. According to the consortium's press release, other public utilities have already expressed their interest in joining the consortium.

For a discussion on the competitive effect of public utilities entering the telecommunication sector, see our Telecommunication Newsletter of November 29, 2007, Public Utilities Join the Race for Bandwidth: The End of Infrastructure Competition? (see: http://www.thouvenin.com/pages_e/frame/05aktuell.html, Telecommunication and New Technologies > Archive).

April 8, 2008

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