

Mobily goes point-to-multipoint to backhaul its rapidly expanding 3.75G HSPA network

Cambridge Broadband Networks wins key high-growth strategic customer in Middle East.

Cambridge, UK, 4 October 2009: Saudi Arabian operator Mobily, partially owned by UAE operator Etisalat, has awarded Cambridge Broadband Networks a significant contract for the provision of its VectaStar, point-to-multipoint, microwave backhaul platform.

Mobily is using VectaStar in the licensed 26GHz spectrum band to backhaul its 3G high speed packet access (HSPA) network. The initial deployment was in Saudi Arabia's capital city, Riyadh, in 2008, with installations also underway in the Western Region (Jeddah , Mekah and Medinah), the Eastern Province (Al-Khobar , Dammam and Dhahran) as part of its plans to expand its VectaStar network nationwide.

After a thorough benchmarking against legacy point-to-point technologies, Mobily selected VectaStar because it provides significantly greater capacity within the same spectrum allocation. Its future-proof architecture gives Mobily the confidence to invest in an infrastructure perfectly in line with its plans for rapid growth in data services. VectaStar has also proven to be flexible and fast to deploy in other installations in the region.

“Our HSPA network continues to grow quickly, and our backhaul network needs to be able to cope with rapidly increasing data traffic,” said Nasser Al-Nasser, Mobily's CTO-MRN. “VectaStar provides us with the capacity and scalability we need to get new services to our customers before our competitors. It is unique in its ability to optimise and statistically-multiplex mobile broadband data traffic from our 3.75G base stations. Furthermore, its support for a wide variety of traffic protocols gives us great confidence in its ability to support our current and future ventures.”

Kamel Kaddoumi , Regional Manager – Middle East of Cambridge Broadband Networks, said “Mobily has been offering third generation services for more than two years now

and as one of the Middle East's fastest-moving operators it needs a backhaul network that can grow to satisfy the increasing demand for advanced services.”

“This latest agreement further validates the VectaStar point-to-multipoint platform's ability to meet mobile operators' needs for flexible and scalable backhaul infrastructure.”

Mobily's mobile data network is the busiest in the world, with 800,000 HSPA subscribers signing up in 18 months and 3.75G HSPA service coverage reaching 326 cities, regions and areas in the Kingdom, covering 75% of the population.. In 2005, Mobily became the first Saudi 3G mobile operator. By 2006 Mobily subscribers had soared to 6 million and was described by the GSM World Association as the fastest growing operator in the MENA region. Today it has in excess of 11 million subscribers.

Cambridge Broadband Networks' value added reseller, WiConnect, is responsible for the systems integration of Mobily's VectaStar network.

Mohammed Ramadan, Director at WiConnect said “the deployment of VectaStar in Saudi for Mobily has clearly demonstrated the true beneficial impact that a point-to-multipoint architecture and traffic optimization can have on 3G backhaul in comparison with the traditional point-to-point solutions.”

“We are pleased to be combining our industry-leading system integration knowledge with Cambridge Broadband Networks' market-leading technology to serve Mobily by contributing in its tremendous OpEx & CapEx reduction facilitated via VectaStar,” Ramadan said.

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About Cambridge Broadband Networks

Cambridge Broadband Networks (www.cbnl.com), a member of the Next Generation Mobile Network (NGMN), provides telecommunications operators with carrier-class wireless point-to-multipoint transmission equipment. The company's unique approach to backhaul means that its technology provides operators with a highly compelling business case, reducing backhaul costs by up to 60%. To date, Cambridge Broadband Networks products have been commercially deployed and technically proven in more than 30 countries, and the company continues to expand into new geographical markets as wireless networks become more widespread throughout the world. Privately-held, Cambridge Broadband Networks has headquarters in Cambridge, UK, with offices in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and South Africa and manufacturing facilities in China.

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