NEWS

Dark Fiber now ready for service in the Triangle

MCNC shares broadband opportunities on new optical fiber ring in North Carolina

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C. (Feb. 20, 2019) – MCNC, the technology nonprofit that builds, owns and operates the North Carolina Research and Education Network (NCREN), announced today that "dark fiber" is now available for lease, purchase, or through an Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU) on the new fiber-optic ring recently installed in the Triangle.

MCNC announced a partnership last year with Duke University and Health System to build a carrier grade underground fiber-optic network across the Triangle. This project was completed in the fall and now has 110 miles of new fiber-optic cable connected throughout the region. MCNC and Duke each installed about 55 miles, which together spans from Durham to Raleigh, Cary, Chapel Hill, and encompassing Research Triangle Park.

The new fiber connects directly to the NCREN backbone, which supports high-speed network connections to all of the North Carolina's public schools, community colleges and universities, as well as state and municipal sites. Within the newly-installed infrastructure are dark fiber assets, which cuts construction and installation costs significantly for carriers and telecommunications providers looking to expand into new markets.

NCREN now spans 3,700 miles in North Carolina and is one of the nation's first statewide education and research networks. Once connected to the network, traversing it to access major carrier points-of-presence (PoPs), key data centers, or interconnecting to multiple locations around the state can be provisioned along with additional connections possible through other carriers to cities like Atlanta, Ga., and Ashburn, Va.

The term "dark fiber" refers to unused optical fiber infrastructure (including fibers, cabling, and repeaters) that has been laid but is not active or lit. This infrastructure can be used by Internet service providers to expand and offer services in the Raleigh/Durham market, for connections to specific customers and verticals that require high-bandwidth services, to connect cellular towers to enable 5G, and to strengthen their existing fiber networks by adding diversity and redundancy. Some enterprise clients also can take advantage of the dark fiber network to securely connect multiple locations, connect to service providers at popular PoPs, improve latency, and give organizations the redundancy they need for disaster recovery and business continuity.

The Triangle continues to benefit from a booming tech industry and is a growing market for data centers, service providers and businesses looking for opportunity. The region is home to three Tier 1 universities as well as many of the largest technology companies in the world such as IBM, Red Hat, Cisco and SAS, to name a few. There are also many health care, pharmaceutical, financial institutions, and large enterprises in the region.

MCNC is working with ECC Technologies to find partners looking to utilize and leverage the commercial broadband opportunities now available on the new fiber ring.

"This particular dark fiber set in the Triangle is in a very desirable location," said Joe Starks, CEO and founder of ECC Technologies. "Nationwide carriers, enterprise clients, wireless carriers, and service providers may find this opportunity highly attractive."

Editorial Contact
Noah Garrett, NGC Communications, on behalf of MCNC: (252) 423.1277 or press@mcnc.org

---

ECC has a 25-year history of creating collaborative agreements that expand broadband services and has successfully worked with MCNC since 2011 to leverage the NCREN infrastructure to expand broadband service and technology options for businesses and consumers, especially in rural North Carolina.

"ECC has a proven track record of leveraging fiber assets to help expand service into rural and underserved areas," said MCNC President and CEO Jean Davis. "The ever-increasing demand for faster bandwidth is driving innovative thinking, and today it's possible to buy or lease dark fibers and use them in lieu of commercial Internet services. Dark fibers are cost-effective and can be extremely efficient. We encourage organizations to investigate whether it might be the right fit for their needs."

MCNC operates and manages NCREN to serve community anchor institutions in North Carolina in an open, non-discriminatory manner. In some areas, MCNC provides lit service and other middle-mile services to private providers or wholesalers within the MCNC service area at reasonable rates and terms. MCNC seeks to work with providers to expand commercial broadband to rural areas of North Carolina to serve residents and businesses alike so that all have equal access to premier broadband.

Market research including On-Net and Near-Net Building Analysis is available through ECC Technologies. ECC works for MCNC to find partnerships and commercialization opportunities for MCNC's dark fiber network including being the primary interface with potential customers, generating cost and timeline estimates for any additional fiber builds, and presenting a complete customer solution utilizing MCNC's dark fiber for both MCNC and the customer. Maps and related materials can be obtained via email at eccfiber@ecctec.com.

###

About MCNC
MCNC is a technology nonprofit that builds, owns and operates the North Carolina Research and Education Network (NCREN), which has successfully served research, education, non-profit health care, public safety, libraries, and other community institutions with Internet connectivity and services for 35 years. NCREN is the fundamental broadband infrastructure for 750 of these institutions including all K-20 education in North Carolina. As one of the nation's premier middle-mile fiber networks, MCNC leverages NCREN to customize Internet services and related applications for each customer while supporting private service providers in bringing cost-efficient connectivity to rural and underserved communities in North Carolina. Visit www.mcnc.org. MCNC Social: Facebook, Twitter @MCNC, YouTube, LinkedIn.

About ECC Technologies
ECC Technologies, is a full-service technology and communications consulting group, that has been involved in over $1 billion worth of project development worldwide. They are a leader in community-wide telecommunications planning and analysis and also specialize in project planning, design, engineering, implementation, and support services for educational, corporate, and community environments.

Keywords & Tags

MCNC, NCREN, ECC Technologies, Dark Fiber, North Carolina, networking, broadband, technology, news