

Fibre optic broadband access expansion in South Africa

By [Jonathan Mason](#)

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Complete virtualisation is at the top of the agenda for many CIOs and IT executives in 2013. Cloud computing is set to quadruple from 2011 to 2016, according to a Global Cloud Index by Cisco and will no longer even need a name, it will be so integral to the way business is done.

The "cloud readiness" of different countries and regions is part of the index projections and FTTP services are becoming critical to the sustainability of the virtualisation of business.

Fibre broadband access in South Africa is expected to grow at an unprecedented rate in South Africa over 2013. CipherWave, a niche specialist IT company based in Midrand is introducing fibre broadband connectivity to the premises (FTTP) with the lowest contentions and prices currently available on the local market. The offering provides high value to businesses at a time when cloud computing is putting an ever-growing strain on internal networks and Internet access in the country.

A huge need for ultra-fast, stable connectivity

Companies are increasingly reliant on data sharing, bandwidth-intensive applications, surfing, cloud access, downloads and uploads, VOIP, videoconferencing and even unified communications with three or more of these capabilities being used simultaneously. There is a huge need for ultra-fast, stable connectivity and fibre can deliver broadband to a business better than any other medium.

Not all fibre broadband is made equal, and FTTP is the most attractive of all the possible infrastructure set-ups. Fibre optic technology differs from wireless or DSL (copper-wired) broadband in that tiny fibre optic glass cables convert data carried by electrical signals into light and transport this fibre data at accelerated speeds. The ultimate capability of the technology far outweighs what copper or wireless cables could achieve.

High-speed broadband is already a necessity and as businesses can only upgrade their DSL lines or networks a finite number of times, it's become an IT risk. I maintain that fibre broadband is essential infrastructure for any business.

The cost of fibre broadband fell dramatically last year so providers in South Africa will be coming onto the scene in 2013 with various offerings. Watch out for high contentions and relatively low speeds due to fibre-with-copper offerings as well as "fibre broadband" that does not actually offer Internet services. The term "broadband" has been loosely adopted to mean Internet, but if it doesn't say Internet, it isn't.

An uncapped fibre broadband service

Depending on your business needs, CipherWave offers an uncapped fibre broadband service with the lowest contention ratios on the market, as well as a soft-capped service with no contention, dedicated Internet access.

We are focused on innovation and this is an aggressive move, but we intend to make a statement with our fibre broadband service. We are offering 99.9% uptime, higher than any other provider.

Although these kind of services are still relatively new to the South African market, a little competition has proven to be a good thing, with CipherWave offering the fastest fibre broadband lines around (it has a limit of up to 600Mbps on request, but standard packages on offer include a 20Mbps line). Consider also the investment cost of installation, which is currently being offered free by the organisation as a special, limited offer up to the end of March.

There is no doubt that fibre broadband is the best you can get so if you can, take advantage of the specials available and invest with a decent provider who will give you a fully managed service and a financially backed SLA, with 99.5% uptime.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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