Major benefits for George as Dark Fibre Africa invests R15m

In cooperation with George Municipality, Dark Fibre Africa (DFA) is currently deploying a fibre infrastructure to the value of R15m. This project will not only launch the city into the digital age, but it will also bring significant investment into the area.

Not only does DFA employ local labourers and contractors, but as part of its business strategy, most of the project materials and consumables are purchased from local businesses.

DFA has evolved into the largest open access fibre infrastructure provider in Southern Africa with an expenditure plan in excess of R3.5bn countrywide. Other nearby cities that will benefit from this roll-out include Knysna, East London and Mthatha with an investment value in excess of R80m.

George Municipality officials are confident that the new fibre infrastructure will be influential in attracting investment to the city. DFA has developed a sustainable business model whereby local labour is used to maintain the network.

Creating new business opportunities

Expansion of communications infrastructure brings about new business opportunities that are dependent on broadband like Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Internet cafes and banking services. Open Access broadband also stimulates competition within the telecommunications market, ultimately reducing Internet costs. Furthermore, the competitive advantage and productivity gains of broadband are enormous. Municipalities are able to provide electronic services, education levels improve with access to information and communities have access to eHealth and eLearning.

Dark Fibre Africa CEO Gustav Smit says they merely provide the open fibre infrastructure. "This enables licensed operators like Vodacom, MTN and Cell C to give communities access to the network, and it is now up to the ISPs to get fibre Internet connections to the homes. End users simply don't know what 20Mbps or 100Mbps to the home means. An opportunity needs to be created for users to test drive serious broadband."