

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

Expanding fiber on the coast

BY STEVE CARD
Of the News-Times

In early September, Wave (www.wavebroadband.com), a gigabit fiber and broadband services company, finalized the acquisition of CoastCom, a fiber-optic broadband company based in Newport. Officials say this change is good for both companies, and what's more, it will serve to provide even better, more reliable Internet connectivity along the Oregon coast.

CoastCom was started in 2000 by business partners Greg Palser and Doug Updenkelder. "We'd been business partners in a company called Action Networks from 1986 forward, so we've been business partners for a long time," Palser said. Eventually, their business focused primarily on constructing fiber optic lines. "It just started expanding pretty quickly," he said. "We were building distribution networks in communities up and down the coast, from Astoria to Reedsport."

And Palser said CoastCom now supplies a lot of Internet service providers in those communities. "Our key customers are government, education and health care and business," he said.

Palser will remain with the company under the ownership of Wave. "I'm staying on," he said. "I'm the new vice president of business development. My business partner, Doug, is staying on. He's vice president of Oregon construction. And all our employees stayed on. That was something that was very important to us. It was important to us to find a company that could take all of our employees."

Patrick Knorr, the executive vice president of business solutions for Wave, said the company's business strategy is to enhance and support the companies they acquire. Wave will be making a significant investment to expand CoastCom's network, and as a result of joining forces, "I think we also provide a larger connectivity



A crew from CoastCom is pictured while on a job laying fiber optic cable. The Newport-based company was recently acquired by Wave Broadband, which company officials say will serve to provide even better, more reliable Internet connectivity along the Oregon coast. (Courtesy photos)

footprint," Knorr said.

"CoastCom has built a fantastic reputation," added Knorr, "so in the short term, we absolutely want to maintain that brand. We don't want to move quickly away from that because the reason we wanted to do this partnership with CoastCom is because they're offering great service and have built a great reputation there on the coast."

"And we're committed to them," said Palser. "We're into our second month since they acquired us, and we've got just tons of opportunities that we're working on, and we're excited because Wave has the resources that CoastCom never had. We're looking to be able to do some pretty exciting stuff."

"It helps to have big companies like that that are willing to fund those kinds of ... building 100 miles of fiber is very expensive, and just having that asset in place is going to make life better," added Palser. "It's good for everybody. We may not sell directly to a lot of consum-

ers, but just the infrastructure that we build is going to have an impact."

Knorr said that from Wave's perspective, "really our core business and commercial side is being a carrier-grade fiber provider. We provide service to cell towers, we provide service to other carriers, and really fiber is the most reliable infrastructure that one can provide for the Internet and communications. That's really our core business."

CoastCom has laid fiber cable to probably 60 different cell towers, Palser said. "That has been a big part of our business, and Wave is very good at that, so I know that combined, that's something that's going to help with the cell carriers. You can see what's happening with smartphones and video content delivery. Everybody wants video delivery on their smartphone or their tablet whenever and wherever they are. It just requires more and more bandwidth, and the only way you're going to satisfy that, is getting fiber to all the towers. And on the coast, that's been a challenge in the past."

Knorr summed it up by saying, "The over 6,000 miles of fiber distribution footprint that we have just provides more connectivity options for customers. So you have businesses along



CoastCom employees bury fiber optic cable to the Yaquina Head Lighthouse in north Newport.

the coast that also have businesses in Portland that might have another location

in Seattle, and combined, we can connect all those locations together."

FINANCIAL FREEDOM

Pros and cons of living trusts

A revocable living trust is an agreement stating how an individual's property will be distributed and managed during their lifetime and after their death.

One major benefit of a revocable living trust is that it allows your estate to avoid probate. Probate is a complex and time-consuming legal process by which a court decides how to distribute a person's assets after death. Another advantage of revocable living trusts is that they help protect your privacy. A will that's filed with a probate court becomes public record, whereas a living trust remains private. Furthermore, if you become incapacitated while your trust is in effect, your successor trustee can simply take over the management of your assets.



Julia Carlson

While there are plenty of good reasons to establish a revocable living trust, there are also some disadvantages to consider. First, revocable living trusts will cost more than you'd typically spend on a will. That said, you might actually save money in the long run by avoiding the expense of probate, which can cost up to 5 percent of the value of your estate. Another downside of living trusts is that transferring assets can be both time-consuming and often forgotten. You'll need to move assets into the name of the trust, a process that could involve a fair amount of paperwork. Additionally, a living trust doesn't negate the need for a will. If you have assets not covered by your trust, you'll need a will to dictate how those assets are distributed after your death. Furthermore, you must use a will to appoint guardians for your minor children.

A revocable living trust can be a useful estate-planning tool, so take the time to investigate whether it pays to set one up.

Julia Carlson is a registered principal with, and securities are offered through LPL Financial, member FINRA/SIPC. Content in this column is for general information only and is not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations. Email questions to financial.freedom@lpl.com, call 541-574-6464, or go on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FinancialFreedomWealthManagementGroup>