



FITCE.BE

newsletter

Issue 17, October 2003

Editorial



When geologists speak about hotspots, they mean places where lava wells up from deep in the earth's mantle like on the island of Hawaii. Mount Etna, closer to home, according to this photo certainly qualifies as a hot spot. But are telecommunications engineers' hotspots also such weird places? I do not know and therefore I intend - as I hope you will - to attend the next series of lunch sessions which starts within a few weeks, on November 12. You can read about it in this newsletter and go straight from there to the website to get registered. Professor Dr. ir. Leo Van Biesen who will moderate the new series of lunch sessions finished the synthesis of the previous series on navigation as building block for telecom services. The report is on the web.

Berlin was another hot spot for FITCE in early September. The congress was again of high quality and sets a standard for our own congress next year in Ghent. This newsletter has an extensive item on the congress and announces a special evening session where you will be able to hear the excellent Belgian speakers at the congress deliver their presentations for the benefit of those who stayed in Belgium.

Marc Lambert

Ghent 43rd Congress

European Telecommunications



Three people watched the congress in Berlin with more than usual attention to learn do's and don'ts for our own congress next year. From left to right they are Luc Niville, executive director of Semico our professional partner for the congress organisation, Gérard De Catelle, on the board of FITCE Belgium and project manager for the congress, and José Van Ooteghem, our president.

Telenet and the rise of Broadband in Belgium

Evening Lecture

On September 30, Telenet hosted FITCE Belgium at the occasion of an evening session which featured Mr Duco Sickinghe, CEO of Telenet in the lecture "Telenet and the rise of Broadband in Belgium: from early stages to mass market".

Telenet has been the main European pioneer on the Broadband front. Starting as early as 1997, Telenet has achieved a sustained growth ever since, which transformed the company into one of the best performing cable operators of Europe.



At the same time, Flanders has seen the penetration of Broadband grow to levels nobody dared to hope for just a few years ago. Flanders is today Europe's most developed Broadband region and Broadband has become the standard for Internet connectivity. The numbers speak for themselves. With 9,4% of the population having access to broadband, Flanders is nr 1 in Europe and nr 4 in the world behind Korea, Hong Kong and Canada.

Another remarkable aspect is that the Flemish market adopted broadband three times faster than the PC. After only 6 years, 25% of the homes were equipped with broadband while it took the PC 18 years to reach the same penetration.

The explanation for this exceptional success of broadband is likely the presence of competitive infrastructures. No other incumbent in Europe than Belgacom faces competition on such a large part of its territory. Belgacom encounters effective competition from cable operators on 70% of its market. Other incumbents typically face such competition on only 10 to 30% of their geographical market (foot print).

Mr Jan Vorstermans of Telenet concluded the lecture with some comments on ExpressNet. Telenet has had a dense fiber network in place close to the customer for some time. Through upstream upgrades and use of the new protocol Eurodocsis 2.0, transmission speeds of up to 1500 times faster than on traditional dial-up connections will be available, making new and symmetrical services possible such as videosecurity and homeworking at high speed.

The evening closed with a splendid reception, graciously offered by Telenet.

Lunch Sessions on Hotspots

Lunch sessions

We are fortunate to have Professor Dr. ir. Leo Van Biesen again moderate this season's series of lunch sessions. We have chosen for a subject which is drawing a lot of attention: Hotspots.

Until recently the WLAN market has been vertically focused by industry. Early adoption was limited to those companies where workers were not bound to their desktops like retail, warehousing, logistics, hotels,... Meanwhile, the increasing take-up of WLAN equipment and the availability of wireless-enabled laptops has created a user base for public wireless hot spots but unfortunately there is only a thin line between reality and wishful thinking.

The FITCE lunch sessions on HOTSPOTS offer you a unique opportunity to explore the possibilities and pitfalls of public wireless LAN applications straight from industry professionals and pioneer users.

Three lunch sessions are foreseen as follows:

session 1: Hotspots: Hype or business need ? (12/11/2003)

Mr Brendon Grunewald, CEO Sinfilo

session 2: Hotspots and a mobile operator: a happy marriage?

(03/12/2003) Mr Philippe Ribonnet, Director Strategy Proximus

session 3: Campus community Hotspot: a case study (11/02/2004)

Mr Robert Lavigne, Director Provinciale Limburgse Hogeschool

For full details and registration visit :

http://www.fitce.be/lunch_sessions_hotspots

Brussels - Berlin and Back

Evening Lecture



On December 9, a special evening session will be devoted to the presentations given by Belgians at the Berlin congress. This gives you as yet an opportunity to get a flavour of the quality to be found at FITCE congresses. The session will start at 19:00 in Het Pand of the University Ghent. A pamphlet with full details for registration will be available in due course.

As a reminder, these are the topics/presenters:

Broadband Wireless Communication in Vehicles

Ingrid Moerman, Ghent University

Evaluation of a DWDM-Upgraded Passive Optical Network (PON) for FTTBusiness

Caroline Dessauvages, Alcatel Research & Innovation

Evolution or Revolution—Which Flavour of IP Telephony is good for You?

Bart Frison, Damovo Belgium NV/SA

Marc Verbruggen, member of the FITCE Belgium board, and chairman of the session on **Business Opportunities with Wireless LANs** (photo) at the Berlin congress organises the evening. He also chairs the paper selection committee for next year's congress in Ghent.

Professor Paul Lagasse, Head of Department of INTEC, will host the meeting and will give us a brief introduction on the activities of INTEC.

Lunch Sessions on Navigation, building block for new communication services

Report

Professor Dr. ir. Leo Van Biesen wrote a very informative synthesis of the lunch sessions on "**Navigation, building block for new telecom services**". You can find the report on

http://www.fitce.be/lunch_sessions_2002-3.pdf

Berlin 42nd Congress

European Telecommunications



Berlin was another milestone on the FITCE road to European community. This was the second FITCE congress in a capital which is still full of remembrances of tragically historic events but which has clearly chosen for the future as manifested by glorious new architecture and intense restoration activity.

The quality of the congress was again outstanding both regarding the technical presentations and the social/cultural activities.

The setting, currently the "representative office" of Deutsche Telekom in Berlin, is a previous technical building that used to house telegraph and telephony switching equipment in stylish rooms now converted to large halls and meeting rooms. A modern glass construction has been built to the front of the old brick building creating a spacious income hall serving as auditorium and equipped with a giant video screen. The pictures on the left show the hall during the opening ceremony while the orchestra is playing, an outside view and our president José Van Ooteghem delivering his opening speech.



All technical sessions were held in the same auditorium. Breaks and luncheons were served in one of the old technical rooms. The picture below shows two of our Belgian speakers, Ms Ingrid Moerman (left) from Ghent University and Ms Caroline Dessauvages (right) from Alcatel Research and Innovation during the luncheon after the opening ceremony.



Both our lady speakers and Mr Bart Frison from Damovo (below) made excellent presentations. Ms Caroline Dessauvages did so well that she was honoured with the prize for "Best Young Presenter". FITCE Belgium likes to warmly congratulate her with this performance.





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As usual, all members will receive the proceedings from the congress in the mail.

FITCE congresses are very serious business but time is made for other vital matters as witnessed by these pictures that prove that gemütlichkeit is not a German monopoly.



The pictures give an impression of some of the social activities like the Belgian evening (above), the boat trip on the Spree for accompanying persons (left above) and the grand finale, the gala dinner on a boat in the Wannsee. The smiling faces speak for themselves.

If cost (although very modest compared to other congresses) was your reason for not attending FITCE congresses so far, rejoice as next year's congress will be in your backyard. A cheaper occasion for both wit and fun will not be found.

The electronic communication market in Belgium state of play

Evening Lecture



On June 5, Mr Eric Van Heesvelde spoke about "The electronic communication market in Belgium - state of play", an event jointly organised by FITCE Belgium and Agoria. For an audience of about 60 highly motivated listeners, Mr Van Heesvelde sketched the market evolution over the last several years and into the future, giving his personal view about some of the hot issues. He then addressed the four new European directives regarding access, licences, universal service & customer protection and data protection as well as the new recommendation on frequencies. He finally sketched an image of the new regulator as BIPT-IBPT gets more independence and evolves towards more policy making and less regulation.

A few statements:

- ◆ Europe started too early with third generation mobile.
- ◆ Both Proximus and Mobistar should be considered Significant Market Players, not just Belgacom.
- ◆ High roaming costs should be combated by harmonised regulation at the European level.
- ◆ Universal Service costs €100M and must be spread over all operators.