

Iberbanda, Spain

WiMAX-ready Network Providing Broadband Where DSL is not Available

Despite the liberalization of the Spanish telecom market in 1998, by the end of December 2003 only 8.5 million people were connected to the Internet – much lower than the European average.

The Spanish government, like most around the world, recognises that a modern telecom infrastructure is key to the country's economic prosperity. With an ageing infrastructure and a mountainous terrain, many areas of Spain do not have broadband access.

About Iberbanda

- Alternative carrier whose main investors are El Corte Ingles and the Prisa Group
- Established in 2000 to compete with Spain's incumbent carrier

The Challenge

- To find a way to provide broadband to businesses and residential customers who are located in areas not covered by DSL
- To build a network which can provide broadband services to rural areas without relying on legacy existing telecom network
- To build a network as quickly and economically as possible

The Solution

- A broadband wireless access network built using a variety of equipment from Alvarion including BreezeMAX, Alvarion's WiMAX-ready platform

The Result

- The first network in Europe to be built using WiMAX-ready equipment
- Have made broadband widely available and improved Spain's ability to compete globally
- A model for all European communities to bridge the gap between rural and urban areas

In 2000, Iberbanda was established to provide broadband to areas underserved by the incumbent operator. From the beginning it has focused on deploying only one broadband technology - broadband wireless access. From the start, Carlos Morell - Iberbanda's CEO - knew that BWA was the only way to avoid reliance on the country's legacy infrastructure and to provide broadband to areas where there is no infrastructure.

BWA networks can be built quickly and relatively inexpensively. They are cheap to operate - costs are in proportion to the size of the customer base and their associated capacity needs. BWA can also reach areas not covered by the existing infrastructure - and the network can be easily expanded to where demand is strongest. Finally, once the BWA network is established, new customers can be connected very quickly. In 2000 Iberbanda was granted one of four nationwide licenses to build a 3.5GHz network. It decided to concentrate initially on providing high-speed data services to SMEs in large cities and suburban areas underserved by DSL.

Working with Alvarion

As for all operators, choosing the right equipment is a business-critical decision. After testing equipment from a variety of vendors, Iberbanda realized that no other company could match the experience, performance and reliability of Alvarion.

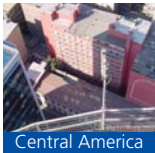
So Iberbanda decided to deploy Alvarion's WALKair 1000 product to provide high-quality, high-speed data and voice services to small-and medium-sized businesses.



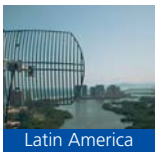
Iberbanda



North America



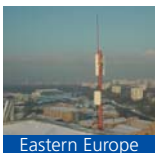
Central America



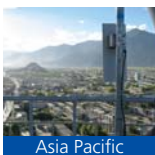
Latin America



Western Europe



Eastern Europe



Asia Pacific



Northern Africa



Southern Africa



Offshore



“Our business model is focused on providing broadband to rural and urban areas that are currently not reached and would be hard pressed to be served by DSL networks. With BreezeMAX, we can achieve the proper economics of WiMAX with smaller business customers and residential users. The BreezeMAX solution is the key element to rolling out broadband services to these types of users.”

Carlos Morrell,
CEO of
Iberbanda

With revenues generated as soon as the network went live in 2001, Iberbanda was able to expand rapidly and by the beginning of 2003, it was providing broadband services in Spain’s largest 72 cities.

The use of WALKair 1000 also enabled Iberbanda to resell its bandwidth to other carriers providing it with additional revenues at little extra cost further enhancing the business case.

Expansion with WiMAX

Then in October of 2003 Iberbanda was awarded a contract by the Andalusian regional government to provide broadband services to rural areas where wireline DSL was not available. A month later, the region of Catalonia also selected Iberbanda. Both regional governments were impressed with Iberbanda’s track record in providing affordable broadband in areas other operators could or would not.

Iberbanda started to explore the possibility of using WiMAX and turned to Intel and Alvarion for more information. As leaders of the WiMAX Forum™, both Intel and Alvarion demonstrated to Iberbanda the many advantages of building a WiMAX-ready network and as a result, it decided to use BreezeMAX in the next stage of its expansion.

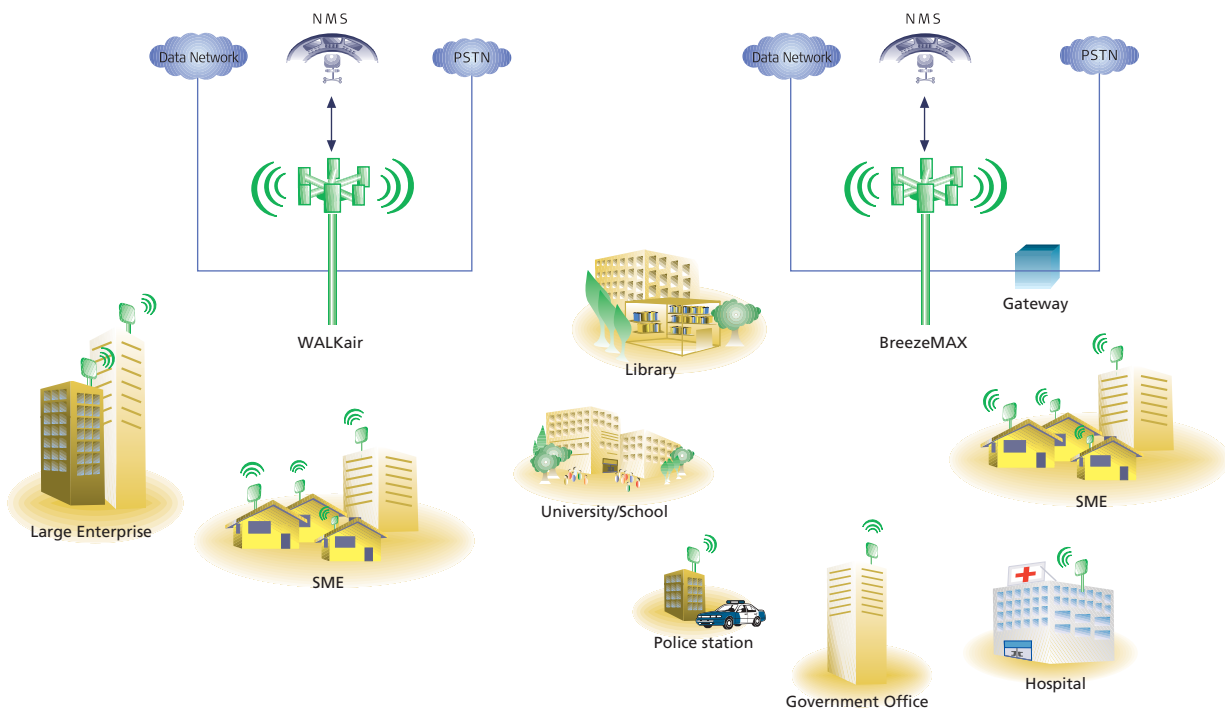
BreezeMAX offers operators the ability to build economically compelling broadband networks. The initial release of the WiMAX platform, BreezeMAX 3500, operates in the 3.5GHz frequency band.

BreezeMAX is designed to take BWA to widespread deployment by both small and large carriers serving residential, business, MDU/MTU, hotspot, backhauls, and wireless home networking applications.

So, in September 2004, Iberbanda started deploying BreezeMAX to provide a host of high bandwidth applications to business and residential customers across several regions including Andalusia, Catalonia, La Rioja and Murcia. In addition, the network in Andalusia also provides broadband services to public agencies including universities / schools, government offices and hospitals. Iberbanda’s BreezeMAX network operates in parallel to the WALKair network.

The Result

Broadband wireless access has enabled Iberbanda to become a healthy and profitable telecom operator within the space of four years. It has a strong business with two revenue streams – direct customers and reselling broadband to ISPs.



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