

ABB supplies Wi-Fi network for Venice

High-performance wireless broadband solution provides free Internet access in one of the world's most iconic cities

Zurich, Switzerland, Oct. 17, 2013 – ABB, the leading power and automation technology group, has commissioned a high-performance wireless broadband network for the city of Venice, Italy. The network provides free Internet access for residents and businesses and (for a small fee) the 22 million tourists who visit the city every year. The contract was awarded by the Municipality of Venice.

The Wi-Fi solution comprises a network of fixed and mobile nodes that can handle more than 200 gigabytes of data and 40,000 subscribers a day. It is equipped with 200 wireless mesh routers, that have been supplied by Tropos Networks, a company acquired by ABB in 2011, which now forms a part of ABB's comprehensive communications offering. The routers are deployed in discrete enclosures that blend aesthetically with the city's historical architecture.

Venice is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, famous for its majestic buildings and narrow winding streets. Built on a group of 118 small islands, the city is separated by canals and linked together by bridges. Venice enjoys an unrivalled reputation as a romantic and beautiful city, which also makes it one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world.

“Our solution provides reliable high-capacity Wi-Fi access and seamless Internet roaming in the challenging topography of this historic and beautiful city,” said Brice Koch, head of ABB's Power Systems division. “The technology offers fast and easy deployment and blends well with the environment.”

Among the features that differentiate the solution is its ability to switch automatically between two frequencies (2.4 and 5 gigahertz). This ensures maximum signal strength and continuous connectivity, even in narrow and winding alleys where there is no line of sight. The onboard routers that provide reliable and seamless roaming for users on water buses that traffic the Grand Canal and other waterways of the city are another distinguishing feature. As Venice residents typically travel 30 minutes a day by boat, the ability to access the network is a welcome convenience. Scalability and ease of installation are other benefits offered by the solution.

The Venice Wi-Fi project is part of the 'Free ItaliaWifi' initiative, started by Rome, Venice and the island of Sardinia. Its objective is to create a national network of free wireless broadband networks. The initiative currently embraces 41 networks, 2,130 Wi-Fi hotspots and 427,000 members in Italy.

ABB is a market leader in wireless broadband networks that provide reliable, secure and scalable wireless IP networks for field applications in a broad range of industries, including utilities, oil and gas, mining, smart grids and smart cities.

ABB (www.abb.com) is a leader in power and automation technologies that enable utility and industry customers to improve their performance while lowering environmental impact. The ABB Group of companies operates in around 100 countries and employs about 145,000 people.

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