



ARMSTRONG®

Armstrong Closing Connectivity Gap in Western New York

PARTNERS WITH GOVERNOR CUOMO'S BROADBAND PROGRAM OFFICE TO STRENGTHEN BUSINESS; BOOST RURAL COMMUNITIES

Family-owned and operated for three generations, Armstrong started as a small telephone service provider in the Northeast and continues its communications industry leadership seven decades later. From coaxial cable in 1963 to the addition of fiber optics today, Armstrong keeps pace with the technological advancements of an ever-changing industry.

The company values strong relationships with its employees, close ties to the communities it serves, and exceptional service for its customers. When the state of New York initiated a broadband subsidy program to extend Internet access to previously underserved portions of western New York, with the goal of ubiquitous coverage by 2018, Armstrong welcomed the opportunity to participate.

"The state was looking to accomplish a 100% statewide coverage, broadband solution," says Shawn Beqaj, VP of Regulatory and Interconnection at the Armstrong Group of Companies. "The way the program was developed made for a common-sense decision." Working closely with the State of New York's economic development agency and Governor Andrew Cuomo's Broadband Program Office, Armstrong worked to establish a set of fair, efficient and accountable rules for the grant funding to support projects that connect hometowns around the state to the world. "We participated in a program that made sense for everyone, as proven by the broad participation across many market segments including incumbents, competitive carriers and MSO's." adds Beqaj.

3,300 MILES OF NETWORK BUILDOUT WOULD STRETCH FROM NEW YORK TO ALASKA

The estimated \$70 million network construction project was granted in three phases where Armstrong will construct the new GPON Fiber network, build out by census blocks and expand the

footprint to hook up nearly 30,000 customers who at present have either no internet service or have DSL below 10Mbps.

Currently 26 individual construction crews are deployed in western New York, dedicated to the buildout. Armstrong is also in the process of permitting over 110,000 utility poles. The team expects network construction to be complete in 2019.

"The growth will be an exponential, five-time increase to the size of Armstrong's traditional New York footprint," estimates Beqaj. "The first phase was approximately 650 miles of network rebuild and is now on track to be 3,300 miles of the latest GPON architecture—enough to stretch from Addison, New York, to Anchorage, Alaska."

REACHING 30,000 NEW HOMES WITH 60-70% PENETRATION

Armstrong turned a system challenged by older technology and a very rural footprint into one of the largest and most advanced in the company thanks to this network expansion. "We're reaching 30,000 additional homes in rural areas of New York with broadband—something completely new for the majority of residents," states David Wittmann, VP of Cable Marketing at Armstrong Group of Companies. "The response from these communities has been overwhelmingly positive, with early indicators showing a high penetration of 60-70%."

Wittmann applauds the broadband program's collaborative efforts adding, "Other states are taking note of what's happening here."

"We never leave an Armstrong area behind; every community we serve receives the same level of service. Armstrong will continue to invest in the future of our communities."

— David Wittmann, VP of Cable Marketing
at Armstrong Group of Companies

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Access to broadband represents a fundamental foundation for economic development. A community's ability to access educational opportunities, healthcare and a speedy response from public safety officials is vitally important. Throughout the process, the Armstrong team felt strongly about giving priority to unserved areas, libraries, and educational opportunity centers. Wittmann says, "It's one of our basic tenets: Focus on those who need it most."

Armstrong's advanced broadband network will be locally operated, bringing jobs and a competitive edge to the communities in which it serves. "Our employees take pride in what we deliver to communities, and feel good knowing that families and businesses will be able to connect and operate in similar ways across our system," says Wittmann. "We have never left an Armstrong area behind; every community we serve receives the same level of service. Armstrong will continue to invest in the future of our communities." ■

BY THE NUMBERS:

- 3,300 miles of network buildout
- \$60-70M dollars invested
- 30,000 homes in rural areas of NY reached
- 60-70% initial community penetration
- 110,000 utility poles in process of being permitted
- 26 individual construction crews

ARMSTRONG®

SERVICES: Supports Business and Residential customers with Voice, Video and Data services

HEADQUARTERS: Butler, Pennsylvania

AREAS SERVED: Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Maryland, West Virginia and Kentucky

SUBSCRIBERS: 305,000

EMPLOYEES: 2,300 (Armstrong Group of Companies)

FOUNDED: 1946

MILESTONES: Armstrong has been in the telephone service industry for over 60 years, 50 years in cable television, and providing Internet for over 20 years.

AWARD: Armstrong is nationally recognized for customer service excellence.

ABOUT ARMSTRONG

Armstrong provides industry leading high-speed Internet, television and telephone service to residential and commercial customers in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, West Virginia, Maryland and Kentucky. As of Q2 2018, Armstrong is America's 11th largest cable television provider, according to SNL Kagan, an offering from S&P Global Market Intelligence.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CABLE TELEVISION COOPERATIVE

The National Cable Television Cooperative, Inc. (NCTC) is a Kansas-based, not-for-profit corporation that operates as a programming and hardware purchasing organization for its member companies who own and operate cable systems throughout the U.S. and its territories. NCTC seeks to maximize current and future opportunities to ensure the profitability, competitive stature and long-term sustainability of its member companies. NCTC represents more than 750 member companies in programming and technology acquisition. NCTC is actively engaged in helping network providers and suppliers evolve their business models to deploy new video/data solutions to match the changes in the media landscape. More: nctconline.org