

1.3 LOCALISED OR WORLD-WIDE PHENOMENON?

This move towards open access local public infrastructure, although at a very early stage of development is, without question, proving to be a world wide phenomenon. The underlying reasons for this are, we believe, embedded in the very technology itself. The immediate global relevance of this open access network development comes from the fact that the core technologies (both wireless and fiber) are disruptive technologies and do not fit easily into any progressive 'upgrade' of or 'evolution' from existing local telecom or cable access infrastructure and the business models underpinning them.

The business model underpinning the deployment of these networks completely side-steps existing industry models. They do not simply represent the next migratory step in the old journey. Rather, it represents a new deployment of the digital disruptive technologies in a radical new model. From a technological standpoint, any point on the earth is as good as any other for such a deployment – there is no implicit disadvantage to one location over another; to the developed world over emerging markets.

It is important to appreciate from this analysis is that, unlike the development of the telecoms sector over the past fifty years, the emergence of these networks is not happening as a result of either industry-wide organisation or orchestration through its various institutions such as the ITU nor is it happening as a result of central government public policies expressly directed at promoting and supporting their development. Rather, the driving impetus for this phenomenon is a growing end-user awareness of the potential power of these relatively low cost digital technologies of abundance and the ever increasing 'gap' between this and what is on offer from the incumbent operator and any competitors in the current telco sector.

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