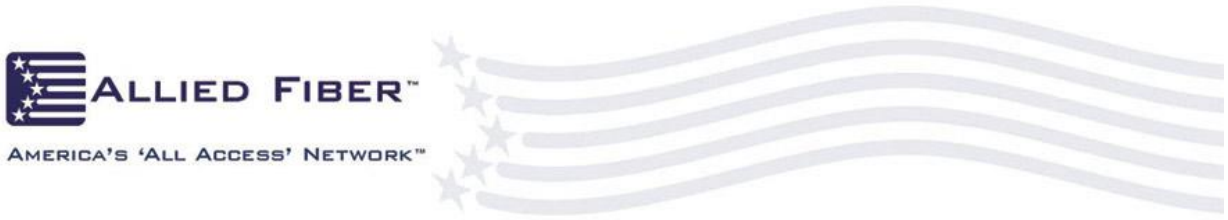

Middle Mile Facilities

Middle Mile facilities connect the last mile networks to the global Internet. Today, the scarcity of affordable middle mile facilities with sufficient bandwidth is particularly acute in rural areas where there are few alternatives to incumbent special access facilities and typical distances to a backbone network are lengthy.

Allied Fiber believes that the use of wireless middle mile technology should be encouraged and facilitated. However, in order to do so, it will require the deployment of additional wireless towers, which should be located as close to backbone fiber as possible.

Today, an estimated 55 percent of rural telephone company switches are more than 70 miles away from an Internet backbone connection point, and 10 percent are more than 200 miles away. Other studies indicate that the typical rural Internet Service Provider ("ISP") is located 91 miles from its primary backbone Internet connection. The farther the distance of transport, the more costly the service is to provide -- a problem that is exacerbated rather than alleviated as broadband traffic increases. Consequently, the high costs of constructing and deploying middle mile facilities is a formidable barrier to the widespread availability of affordable broadband services. Without access to adequate middle mile facilities sustainable broadband service to unserved and underserved areas, however defined, will not be possible. Addressing the middle mile is not merely a question of deploying additional capacity to local networks. The middle mile provider also needs affordable access to backbone fiber in order to provide backhaul to Internet connection and peering points.