

Fibre-optic expansion: Swisscom wins European innovation award

Swisscom has won the FTTH (Fibre to the Home) Council Europe Innovation Award in the Deployment & Operation Innovations category for developing a robot to enable simple and fast expansion of the fibre-optic network. Up to 50 per cent of the underground engineering work involved in laying the fibre-optic network can be avoided thanks to the robot. Swisscom's innovation is helping to speed up fibre-optic expansion in Switzerland and cut costs.

At the FTTH Conference in Lisbon, Swisscom was presented with the FTTH Council Europe Innovation Award in the "Deployment & Operation" category. The award was presented to Swisscom for the development of a cable entry robot, which was showcased for the first time at last year's ITU Telecom World in Geneva. The robot simplifies the laying of fibre-optic cables significantly. Depending on local conditions (state of the cable ducts, space available), the robot can cut the underground engineering work required during fibre-optic expansion by up to 50 per cent. This not only saves time and money, but reduces construction noise and disruption to traffic.

One robot is already being used to build the fibre-optic network. Five more will follow from April 2010. Both Swisscom and its cooperation partners stand to benefit from their use in expanding the fibre-optic network. The robot is to be used as often as possible in the future, not just to expand the fibre-optic network, but to repair the existing network too. Other network construction companies can also use the fibre-optic robots. Bex-based Plumettaz SA, an international specialist in cable-laying products, is set to take on the job of sales and marketing of the robot with immediate effect.

For information about the robot, visit www.plumettaz.com

For information about the FTTH Council Europe, visit www.ftthcouncil.eu

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