

Submarine cable to connect Tunisia to Europe

Tunisiana and Orange Tunisia have announced the signing of a partnership agreement with Interoute, the owner operator of Europe's next generation network, for the commissioning of a submarine cable, called Didon, connecting the city of Kélibia, Tunisia to Interoute's pan European fiber optic network, via its landing station in Mazara del Vallo, Sicily, Italy.

Didon, reportedly Tunisia's first private submarine cable will cover nearly 170km of optical fiber and be a real force for social development and economic growth for the country. The commissioning of the Didon cable is planned for April 2014 and its capacity will reach eight Terabit per second and per operator.

Strengthening Tunisia's ICT sector

The signing of this agreement is part of the national initiative to support and strengthen the ICT sector and offer Tunisians additional access to international broadband networks and at reduced rates.

The new cable connection will use Alcatel-Lucent's submarine technology and will be capable of handling data speeds of 100 gigabits-per-second, and will help address the fast-growing demand for fixed and mobile broadband services in Tunisia and throughout the region, and increase the reliability of the system dramatically. The submarine cable will provide the highest quality of service to subscribers of the two Tunisian operators by improving the capabilities of their existing international networks and providing better throughput to support continued growth in data traffic. The aim is also to provide more capacity and security for Internet users.

Tunisia has one of the most modern broadband infrastructures in the Mediterranean basin with high-speed terrestrial and undersea links providing a fully digitalised network that provides an international gateway to broader global networks. Tunisiana and Orange Tunisia offer a wide range of mobile and fixed applications ranging from Internet-on-the-go to information and entertainment services for more than 9 million subscribers.

With this investment partnership Tunisiana and Orange Tunisia once again demonstrate their willingness to provide their consumers and business customers services in accordance with international quality standards. All this with controlled costs, allowing them to have substantial capacity voice and data and expanding opportunities in terms of connectivity, sharing data and information with the world.

Introducing the Didon cable

Ken Campbell, CEO of Tunisiana commented, "We are pleased to announce this important partnership. The Didon cable will provide increased capacity and better service to the 7 million consumers and businesses that rely on Tunisiana. This investment is also a testament to our belief in the potential for growth in Tunisia as a hub for the region.

Didier Charvet, CEO of Orange Tunisie commented, "Orange Tunisie is delighted to announce the launch of this historic project. The Didon cable will enable Tunisian citizen to benefit from an increased capacity and a higher secured network connectivity. This investment is also a proof that Orange Tunisie believes in the development of the ICT sector and e-services in Tunisia

Philippe Dumont, president of Alcatel-Lucent Submarine Networks, said: "Good broadband communication infrastructure can energise economic growth, opening up new opportunities and increasing the reliability for e-commerce and e-government applications. The deployment of this new network will give a further boost to capacity and traffic protection in the Mediterranean hub

Gareth Williams, CEO of Interoute commented "Interoute is proud to be involved in this exciting new project that aims to strengthen the ICT sector in Tunisia. Providing ultra-fast high capacity connectivity to European businesses and the Internet, should create new opportunities for commerce and innovation to help this dynamic sector expand.

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