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NETWORKING

Nextgen to wire sports stadiums with fibre network

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Jul 28, 2009 1:06 PM

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Signs deal with FOX SPORTS owner, Premier Media Group.

Leighton-owned Nextgen Networks has signed a deal with Premier Media Group, owner of FOX SPORTS, which will connect several key sports facilities around the nation to Nextgen's fibre network.

Under the deal, Nextgen will provide a 1Gbps link into the Melbourne Cricket Ground, Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium, Adelaide's AAMI Stadium, Perth's Subiaco Oval, Canberra's Bruce Stadium, Newcastle's Energy Australia Stadium, Gosford's Bluetongue Stadium, and Skilled Park on the Gold Coast to enable high definition digital delivery of FOX SPORTS broadcasts.

These 1Gbps links will connect to Nextgen's inter-capital long-haul fibre network. Using Layer 2 Ethernet switching, Nextgen will also provide a 10Gbps connection into the broadcaster's video production facility at Pymont, Sydney.

Phil Sykes, managing director of Nextgen Networks told *iNews* the network being configured for Premier Media Group was essentially an optimised version of Nextgen's VPLS private network service, tailored with "additional network resiliency measures."

"It's essentially a collector network, taking the video content and bringing it to Pymont," Sykes said.

Winning the deal meant "demonstrating low latency and low jitter, with virtually no packet loss throughout the whole network," Sykes said.

Nextgen refused to disclose the duration or dollar value of the deal - with Sykes only confirming it was "one of the bigger deals" the network provider had ever closed.

"This is a new customer to us and a major step for us," Sykes told *iNews*. "We are moving into the high definition video network business, with Premier Media Group as our anchor customer. Hopefully we'll be able to take on more deals as we go."

Nextgen operates Australia's third largest fibre network.

Sykes said Australian business has a healthy appetite for fibre connectivity, regardless of the Federal Government's investment in a national broadband network (NBN).

"Our inter-capital network will have a long life regardless of any NBN," he said. "We already have our own NBN, so to speak, which is focused on connecting business, government and carrier customers. It is sharply targeted to data centres rather than homes, and in this case, to sporting venues. We will continue to take fibre out to customers who want to own and control their own network."

Sykes said a 1 Gbps link is "increasingly sought after" by Australian businesses as an upgrade from 100 Mbps.



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