

BROADBAND INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER CATERS TO RURAL BUSINESS

By Cleve Mortelliti

To compete, more and more businesses are switching to broadband Internet access. Yet if you run a business or live in an area that is located outside of the urban boundaries, away from the mainstream broadband infrastructure, you might think that the only solution available to you comes from a dial up modem that transfers data at a snails pace. But what if there was a broadband service that could reach you at your 100 acre farm out in rural King Township? Or your 30,000 square foot factory in rural Orangeville? Or your home in rural Schomberg or even Goodwood? What if there was a service that didn't require the use of a phone line or a cable, and provided a two-way broadband portal un-encumbered by the latency issues that plague satellite technology? What if you were told that such a service has been available to you for over two and half years now? If you thought your only choice was a 56k modem, or an expensive satellite system that still requires a phone line and a dial-up ISP – well then, read on. I have good news to report.

Zing Networks Inc. (<http://www.zing-net.ca>), owned and operated by Mr. Bob Cheeseman of King City, Ontario is probably one of the best kept secrets in King Township. His wireless Internet service radiates outward at 180,000 miles per second, from 13 transmitters covering 2000 square kilometers – and his coverage area is growing. Zing Networks Inc. is a broadband Internet "airwave pipeline" that is just waiting to be tapped at your rural address and it's a brilliant idea that was hatched by a man who has made a living at hatching brilliant ideas. And the concept of this one is so simple - I'm annoyed I didn't think of it myself! Think of it this way. You've got several computers in your home or business and you're tired of having to deal with wires to stitch your network together. So you go out and buy yourself a wireless router and create a wireless network freeing your workstations and laptops from the unaesthetic, physical restraints of wires and plugs. Nice and neat. Cheeseman took it one step further. He built his "router" in the basement of his house, and placed his transmitters and receivers in strategic locations throughout the countryside and built his wireless network on a scale that only a vivid imagination could conceive. He effectively took the indoor wireless networking model and scaled it up to cover a couple thousand square kilometres. So as you're reading this, or surfing the web waiting for your website to load, or

waiting for your email to trickle through your dial-up modem – or threatening to throw your satellite hardware out the window because your VPN (Virtual Private Network) just hiccupped on a latent signal from space...while you've been waiting, Zing Net's airwave has been bouncing off your office or kitchen window waiting for you to catch it.

This is indeed good news on several fronts. Not only does this mean that you now have a viable alternative to satellite Internet for broadband service in rural areas – but the Zing Networks alternative is clearly the superior one. Satellite Internet technology poses several challenges to the end user that ultimately result in frustration. Firstly, in order for the satellite system to work you must maintain a separate dial-up ISP account in order to log on to the system. Secondly, as this is the case it means that you only have broadband access moving in one direction – the download stream. Anything out going from your computer is restricted to your dial-up line speed, which caps out at 56k if your lucky. To boot, a fundamental issue that plagues this system is "latency". Latency refers to lag time. When you type your command and press "enter", or click on a web link, the time it takes for the command to be received by the internet server and returned to you is seriously affected by the slow transmit speed (through your modem) and the faster download speed flowing from the satellite in space to your dish antenna. And the fact that this signal is coming from space exacerbates the problem, because even though the signal travels at the speed of light (180,000 miles per second), the distance that it must traverse from the satellite in space – 23,000 miles directly above the equator - increases the lag time enough to seriously effect your network communications. So even if you could have a satellite link in both the up and downlink streams – latency would creep into the flow of communications, and crash, your VPN, or jumble your V.O.I or cause you to lose your timing in your favourite online game. Anyone who is running a Virtual Private Network to do business, or is trying to utilize V.O.I., (Voice Over Internet), or anyone who is an avid online gamer is well aware of the difficulties that latency presents.

Zing Networks' wireless Internet solution wrestles all of the above issues to the ground – literally. The latency issue does not exist with this system, because instead of the signal having to travel tens of thousands of miles from space, it only has to travel less than 12 miles from a ground based

transmitter to your place of business or home.



POPS (Points of Presence) such as this broadcast tower are located no more than 12 miles from you home or business – latency is a non-issue.

And because Zing Networks does not rely on a dial up connection, not only does it mean that you can cut the added expense of the dial-up ISP, but more importantly it means you can have broadband access up to 1 megabit per second in BOTH directions - 2.5 times faster than satellite on the downstream end and 18 times faster on the upstream end.

THIS TYPE OF BANDWIDTH IS AN EFFECTIVE T1 REPLACEMENT AT ONE THIRD OF THE PRICE.

To add to the good news, bandwidth isn't the only thing you're getting when you hook up with Zing Networks Inc. Aside from other offerings such as Web Hosting and Web Site Design Services, with this ISP you're also getting a unique brand of customer service. Maybe I'm just a cynic, but the sheer size of most other ISP's precludes the fact that an automated attendant handles your installation and tech support. Not so with Zing Networks. I mean, when was the last time the president of the company actually came to your house to perform the installation and also took the time to provide you with conscientious alternatives to hacking holes in your walls and leaving bare wires hanging about in your newly renovated study or office? Cheeseman installs, or supervises the installation himself. The same care that he has taken in his own house (which is substantial – the guy's a perfectionist) is the same care that he provides to his customers. Also, when was the last time you called your cable or phone company to resolve a problem with your connection and the president of the company answered the phone on the second or third ring, addressed you by your first name and then walked you through to resolution of the issue? Let me guess...never! As matter of fact, Cheeseman's constant monitoring of his customer's Internet service performance means that you will receive a level of service that is

unheard of in most industries. Bob has several monitoring applications running on his system, checking and cross checking the status of each account registered with Zing Networks. These applications provide him with alerts for individual customers if an issue arises with their connection performance. If performance drops below certain limits, Bob knows about it and will likely call you to resolve it before you call him.

Okay that's great. But if you're anything like me, the ever-present cynic in you is likely wondering how long this kind of service can be maintained. So with that, I thought I'd challenge Bob on the issue to see what his response would be.

"How well is Zing Networks prepared to deal with growth?" Cheeseman had the following response. "Our projections are being based on what's working for us now. Our long-term business plan has been carefully crafted based on 2 years of field experience and research to determine the level of support staff that will be required to maintain satisfied customers. Plus our goal isn't to just 'keep'em happy'. We've always aimed to impress. To that end, we are currently developing a strategic relationship with an existing, well established IT tech support group to ensure we maintain our existing levels of support as our client base grows. Obviously I won't be the guy people get every time they call for assistance, but I know that relationships, and conscientious behaviour are what has enabled us to gain and maintain customer loyalty. And I intend to keep it that way."

The fact of the matter is there is nothing out there right now that can compete with what Zing Networks has to offer. Unlike satellite signals that struggle to pass through tens of thousands of miles of thick atmosphere to reach your dish antenna, Zing Networks is a latency free service. Transmitting on microwave frequencies that cut, undisturbed, through the nastiest weather, this type of bandwidth is an effective T1 replacement at one third of the price.

So if you were thinking your business is compromised due to bandwidth limitations, or if you thought that because you have a rural address you'll never be able to kick you're buddy's butt in an online game of Diablo or Counter Strike - think again, Zing Networks Inc. has made a big splash in your back 40...all you need to do is catch the wave.