



Editor's Desk

Innovation is alive and well

By Paul Barker

In his View From The Board Column on p. 26, Bob Kostash questions those who feel the structured cabling industry is not innovative, but simply a commodity.

"I have never viewed what I do for a living as a being equivalent to selling hog futures, precious metals, West Texas crude, or Saskatchewan wheat," he writes.

"One needs to look no further back in time than this past December and January to see that, thankfully, innovation is not dead in our industry."

He is referring of course to the announcements by several key vendors of systems capable of supporting 10 Gigabit per second Ethernet transmissions over 100 metres of copper cable. That innovation is alive and well is obvious in our copper and fiber update, which appears over six pages of this issue. There are exciting developments occurring in both camps.

Ian Miles, president of Toronto Hydro Telecom, points out in the story that while the fiber itself has not changed much for years, the supporting electronics are becoming more sophisticated and supporting a wider range of protocols at lower and lower cost.

"We're able to deploy a private OC-48 system for a customer at a price that would have been unheard of even five or six years ago."

And then there is the 10-gigabit revolution, an initiative that has been spearheaded by a number of vendors including ADC Telecommunications Inc. and Systimax Solutions, a unit of CommScope Inc.

ADC's CopperTen, for example, costs more than conventional copper cabling, but Bob Kenney, the company's vice president of enterprise product lines, feels that organizations will pay a premium for something they believe will last longer.

The technology will certainly be mainstream in five years time when the Vancouver welcomes the world as host of the 2010 Winter Olympics and Winter Paralympics.

Copper and fiber, will both play a significant role in the event, according to the first of what will be many articles on the event that will appear in CNS in the lead up to the Games themselves.

"Clearly both are critical," says Justin Webb, vice president of technology for Bell in Western Canada.

Bell Canada is forking over \$200 million in cash and equipment to the Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) for the right to be both Premier National Partner and the principal communications service provider at the Games. The strategy calls for a mix of traditional and new technologies to be used. What the company wants to avoid is another Atlanta when "cutting-edge" technology from IBM Corp. may not have burned, but it certainly crashed frequently during the 1996 Summer Olympics.

The 2010 Winter Olympics will no doubt be referenced now and again in upcoming columns from our two newest members of the CNS editorial advisory board --Brantz Myers and Henry Franc.

Myers is the director of enterprise marketing for Cisco Systems Canada where he is responsible for driving awareness, understanding and demand for network-

based technologies in the Canadian market. His focus is on IP communications and a series of vertical industries including healthcare, retail, financial services and government.

Franc is a marketing manager of Bell's Cabling & Power Solutions group, responsible for technical support and business development. The 15-year telecommunications veteran is involved with a number of organizations including TIA, BICSI, Construction Specifications Canada and the Standards Council of Canada.

Both will be welcome additions to the board.