VOS (ORCO AND SOANA VALLIES) PROJECT BROADBAND TO HIGH RISK DIGITAL DIVIDE (HDD) MOUNTAINOUS AREA

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OBJECTIVES

This public-driven project aims at transforming an isolated mountainous area into a "digital territory" by applying a new and innovative cooperative approach.

The area is currently a typically high-risk digital divide territory, and totally lacks an TLC infrastructure.

Luckily local authorities and stakeholders are expressing interest, commitment and sensitivity about becoming a "digital territory".

A trial area has been selected in order to maximize the model's transferability into other regional areas, even if they are of different sizes. The project has launched an open-air lab and is part of the WI-PIE initiative (www.wi-pie.org).
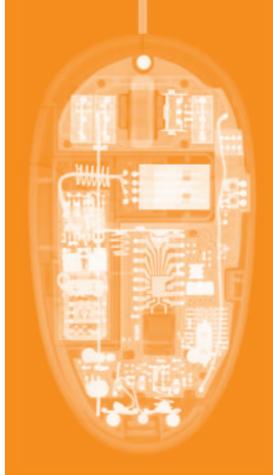
THE SOLUTION: PUTTING LOCAL PLAYERS TOGETHER

The heart of the VOS innovation model is a cooperation table set up between both public and private local players working together in network planning.

The project exploits the convergence of existing assets (dark fiber as well as TV trellis), owned by different local organisations, together with emerging technologies (Wi-FI, Wi-MAX, DVB-T and DVB-H), for the delivery of broadband services. The overall design also considers the technical and economical sustainability of the solution locally.

FEATURES OF THE ORCO AND SOANA VALLIES

The pilot project test bed is the area covered by the Mountain Community "Valli Orco e Soana". It is a totally Alpine area, in the North West of Piedmont, in the Province of Turin. The area is 616.06 Km^2 wide, has about 8,300 inhabitants and is very sparsely populated (population density is 13.5 inhab per Km^2, while Piedmont has about 170 inhab per Km^2. There are 11 small municipalities in the area.

- Specific objective

  The pilot project's specific objective is to cover the entire area with a pervasive broadband network available to local Public Authorities, schools, businesses, citizens. But it also serves for monitoring the local natural environment (landslides, dams…), with a standard connection speed: at least 512 Kb/s downstream and 256 Kb/s upstream.

- Financial context

  The pilot project has been developed within the framework of the Wi-PIE Programme. It aims at providing the whole regional area with a Broadband connection system within 2007. It will be able to reinforce:
  - productive system competitiveness
  - Public Authority efficiency and effectiveness
  - Social, cultural and local development.

- The solution

  The area has been identified and analyzed, in terms of needs, opportunities, potential and critical points. Relationships with local organisations, stakeholders, decision and policy makers have been established. The network has been designed that puts together different "technological assets" owned by:
  - the Mountain Community (trellis)
  - a national fixed and mobile telephone service provider (DVB-T/H)
  - a National Foundation for digital television (DVB-T/H)
  - a local energy provider (optic fibre).

- Governance innovation

  Close attention to economical sustainability and business plans.

- Methodological innovation

  Local government involvement, local providers and user community during trails of the model.

TRANSPARENT TECHNOLOGY

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