

An Interview with Bill Wallace, DigitalBridge Communications

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When Bill Wallace founded DigitalBridge Communications (DBC) with partners Kelley Dunne and Joe Kochan in late 2005, one of the first calls he made was to Deborah Monosson, president of Boston Financial & Equity Corporation. “That began a relationship that has been very powerful for us,” said Wallace. DBC leases WiMAX base station radios, consumer premise equipment (CPE) such as modems and USB adaptors, and other network-related equipment.

“We didn’t want to use our cash on equipment that we could otherwise be using to grow our subscriber base,” said Wallace, who prior to DBC was CEO of Verizon Avenue, which focused on providing bundled communications services to concentrated communities nationwide.

A leader in the emerging broadband wireless industry, DigitalBridge Communications provides wireless broadband services to small and medium-sized communities of up to 250,000 people nationwide, through the new WiMAX technology standard. The company is adding about 1400 subscribers every month in places like Idaho Falls, Idaho, Missoula, Montana and Sioux Falls, South Dakota, providing a wireless WiMAX signal with a 100-mile area at about 1/20th of the price of the larger cable and telco networks.

Extremely well positioned to take advantage of the economic stimulus money earmarked for broadband programs, and with a track record of 50 percent revenue growth per quarter, the company is growing at a record pace. And leasing is key to that growth.

“Sale and leaseback is an important part of our growth,” said Wallace. “Boston Financial has both leased directly for us and been willing to buy equipment from us when we’ve had to invest cash on our own.” Boston Financial, which he calls a “full-service leasing partner,” has helped the company with base stations as well as general office equipment.

What is it he looks for in a leasing partner? “We look for someone who takes the time to understand our business, our financial needs and our specific leasing requirements,” said Wallace. “Also what our financial growth plan is, and how leasing can accelerate it.” Also critical for him is a company’s willingness to do a combination of equipment leases, specifically both base stations and consumer modem equipment. Keeping up with an industry that is changing by the minute is another criteria.

The final part of the picture relates to the nuts and bolts of handling the leasing documents. “The blocking and tackling of getting the leasing documents done quickly and without errors and processing payments on a timely basis is critical to us,” said Wallace.

As to his future wish list, Wallace would love to see his partners continue to keep up with the ever-developing new technology in the broadband business. “We’re continually adding new types of devices,” he said. “There are a lot of new WiMAX manufacturers coming out of Taiwan, for example. We’d love a leasing partner who can keep in touch with alternative manufacturers and stay abreast of the industry.”