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SOUTHLAND BUSINESS GET NEW OPTION FOR HIGHSPEED INTERNET

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Los Angeles-based Wilcon has acquired fellow fiber-optic connection provider Freedom Dark Fiber Networks, giving many Southern California businesses a way to get high-capacity Internet service with high-speed links to Asia.

The deal – terms of which were not disclosed – expands Wilcon’s network by 3,000 miles and links a key downtown Los Angeles Internet hub to an additional 30 data centers in the region.

Large institutions such as banks, colleges, movie studios, defense contractors and dot-com companies often lease dark fiber to build their own super-fast connections to the Internet because it can provide better value than going through a typical Internet service provider.

Wireless carriers and other telecommunications firms also turn to dark fiber to reach far-flung outposts where they don’t own any cables. Dark fiber is unused portion of a fiber-optic line, which lights up when used.

The acquisition follows a trend of consolidation in the dark fiber industry because it’s a cheaper way for larger providers to serve more customers than laying additional fiber-optic cables in the ground.

Wilcon, based in downtown Los Angeles, has had a strong foothold in central Los Angeles and a key connection to Asia via the One Wilshire building. The company’s new West Los Angeles-based Freedom

Communications unit will provide routes spreading from Bakersfield down to San Diego.

Neither could have easily replicated the other’s infrastructure, and no competitors match those routes, the companies said.

“We had an Achilles’ heel in the downtown corridor where Wilcon has an enormous depth of reach into those key Internet hubs,” Freedom Chief Executive Dave Daigle said. “To have that key plug-and-play capability into the downtown corridor is an enormous asset.”

Daigle said Freedom customers include the likes of Verizon Wireless, Intuit, Broadcom and Cedars-Sinai Hospital. With the new better-connected network, customers such as banks could reach more branches and ATMs in suburbs while entertainment companies dealing with online video would have a potentially improved way to transfer the large video files across the globe.

Wilcon Chief Executive Jon DeLuca said he expects to see “tremendous growth,” including from wireless carriers buying up more dark fiber to serve



Wilcon purchased Freedom Dark Fiber Networks in an acquisition that gives companies across Southern California the ability to lease cables from Wilcon to create a private Internet network

smartphone users consuming large amounts of data.

“As demand for bandwidth proliferates, customers are getting more sophisticated,” DeLuca said. “Although Wilcon has traditional Internet services, we are seeing more and more large customers look for dark fiber to really control their own network.”

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