

Against All Odds

PRINT

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Written by Matt Brunk

Last August, the 19th to be specific- **I reported on a hot tip** from my wife that Verizon showed up in our neighborhood to install FIOS. Then in December, I wrote about the **unknown future of all my telecom wares** and in becoming the power source for FIOS and that in itself is a turning point of becoming more dependent upon my local power grid to provide continuous juice just so I can make a telephone call.



After not seeing any Verizon activity in my neighborhood for sometime, I decided to visit their website. I entered in my home telephone number and discovered after a few minutes that FIOS is now available for my home. So I signed on January 29th for the 12 month plan to get **FREE** installation, **FREE D-Link VDI-624 (DI-624)** router with 802.11g wireless, and the first month of usage **FREE** and a reduced monthly rate of \$34.95 vs. \$39.95 for download speeds up to 5Mbps and upload speeds of 2 Mbps.

On February 6th my wife found a doorknocker informing us that **Verizon** visited to perform a site survey. Then on February 10th, while having breakfast, the sound of digging into frozen earth got our attention and we met the crew burying the fiber in time to divert their path since **Miss Utility** failed to mark the **Adelphia** cable TV/Internet cable that didn't go through the middle of our backyard but instead went on a longer route to the corner of our home. The crew did a very good job of trenching and in complying with our request to not disrupt the Adelphia cable acting as our backup just incase things went wrong.

All the things that went wrong didn't prevent this cutover. I ordered online and was given a reference number and never given an order number. Order numbers in Telco land are paramount to getting things done. No order number- no post to hang your hat on. The sodbusters installing the fiber left a little trash in the yard and the insignificant signs of trenching will disappear. The delivered router a **DVI604 (DI-604)** did not have the 802.11g wireless feature as advertised- I've already deployed my **Belkin 802.11n** and don't mind the little snafu. Verizon's webpages are outdated and the phone numbers lead anyone making an inquiry to order status into what we call "telephone hades." I still question the techs installing the big ONT (Optical Network Terminal) inside my home but I guess time will tell when they dispatch for trouble and I'll be stuck waiting at home from 9am until midnight for a tech to show up. I emailed Verizon customer service and the response was simply unresponsive, but I'm just the customer. Am I an unhappy customer? No- it's what I expected.

Afterwards, we heard the forecasts of snow headed our way- 3-6 inches, then 6-10 inches and by the time we reached Starbucks on Saturday, people were already questioning if we would get any snow. We got about a foot of snow and it drifted. When I called Verizon to schedule the visit for another day they assured me a technician would be onsite 8am – 5pm in spite of the weather so I asked for an afternoon visit. Within a few minutes, the call center person contacted dispatch and they agreed to a 1:30 pm or later arrival. They weren't kidding about later. The two techs showed up at 7:00pm and finished at 11:30 pm. I was too pumped up to sleep so I played with my new wares.

My voice line- POTS (Plain Old Telephone Service) is anything but plain. You see "I've got the power" that is to say- I must provide the power to the FIOS connection else, the provided UPS will power the connection for 3 hours. It's good that during the past couple of years I put effort into energy reduction steps in our home because when the next power bill comes in, it will have an increase- not that it's going to be horrible, but it will be a 24x7 lamp that I don't want going out. You see- Verizon contrary to what you think or believe- is getting out of the power business. Many don't realize that traditional telephony is built upon a "powered network" but the same is true about IP networks.

What does this all mean? My costs go up, their costs go down. My experience goes way up (this is subject to further review) and their maintenance goes way down. My opportunities increase and their chances for additional revenue increase. By no means am I complaining. I'm an advocate for fiber to every home, farm, business or wired location in the USA. Build it and they will come.

Verizon is building it customers are coming onboard. I've scouted blogs, forums, and dark sites and found that a significant number of user posts are more than positive. There's more to this story, but I'm working it for later. There's more opportunity coming.

In fact- think about it. I've been fortunate to go through an evolution in telecom. Now, how do we get to 'revolutionary' changes for the good of business and our fellow man?

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Question on the Fios - did they require you to get the POTS line

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along with the Internet access, or can you have Internet w/o the POTS? Verizon was notorious for forcing POTS on their DSL customers.

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