

### WHAT IS OPEN-ACCESS?

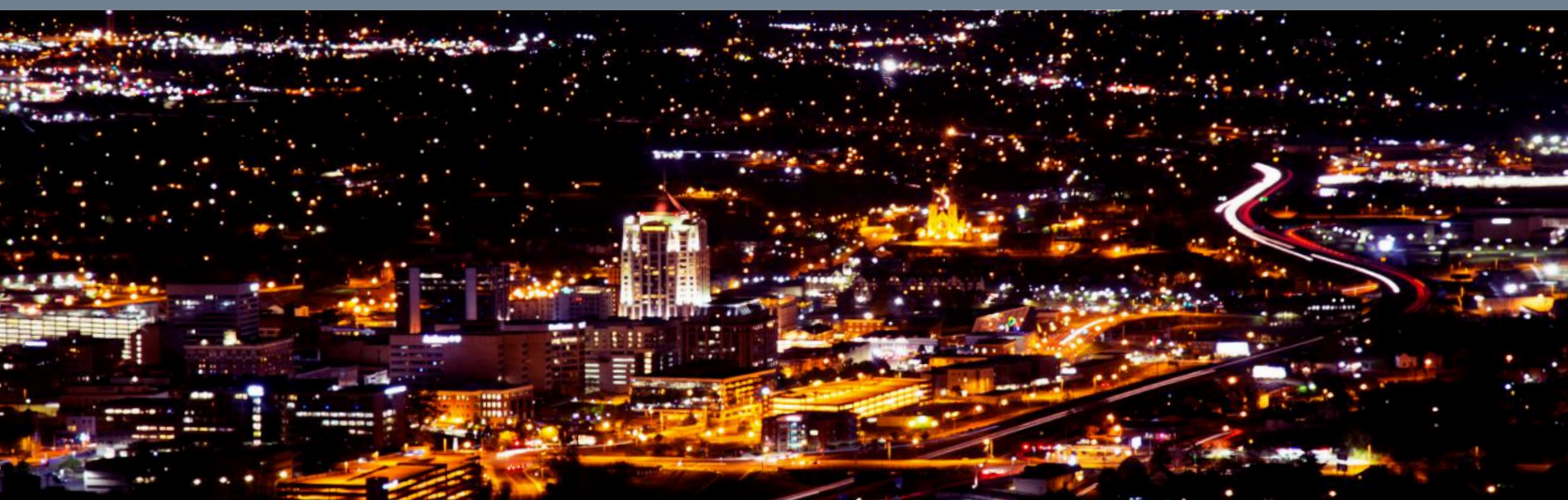
An Open-Access Network (OAN) separates the ownership of the physical network infrastructure from the delivery of services. It allows for one entity to own and maintain the infrastructure, and multiple entities—Internet service providers (ISPs)—to deliver services. The effect of this open-access arrangement allows the network infrastructure owner to remain neutral and non-competitive with ISPs.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE ROANOKE REGION?

In the Roanoke Valley Broadband Authority's (RVBA) open-access network, the RVBA owns, maintains, and services the actual and physical fiber network. In other words, the RVBA provides the initial investment into the fiber network, along with all maintenance and operation for any network updates, expansions, and potential outages. However, this "last mile" delivery of Internet services to individual businesses is managed by individual ISPs who purchase access to the RVBA infrastructure. This arrangement allows for new and smaller ISPs to break into an already established market and encourages market competition among Internet providers.

### WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

An open market for fiber Internet means that business owners, invested municipalities, and community members reap the benefits of a more robust ISP market. Since an open-access model promotes competition, greater consumer choice, lower prices, and greater transparency, this business model allows for new and innovative ISPs to enter the market and offer you the best and most affordable Internet access available.



## WHAT ARE THE KEY BENEFITS OF AN OPEN-ACCESS NETWORK (OAN)?

### **It creates a business structure that allows private and public interests to collaborate rather than compete.**

In this model, incumbent and new ISPs are invited to use the new, high performance network to sell services to their existing customers as well as market to new customers with new and enhanced services that they were not able to offer in the past.

### **It reduces costs.**

An OAN functions like a road system or an airport: the community builds a single transportation system shared by all public and private users. This reduces construction and operational costs by eliminating duplicity of facilities and networks.

### **It encourages innovation.**

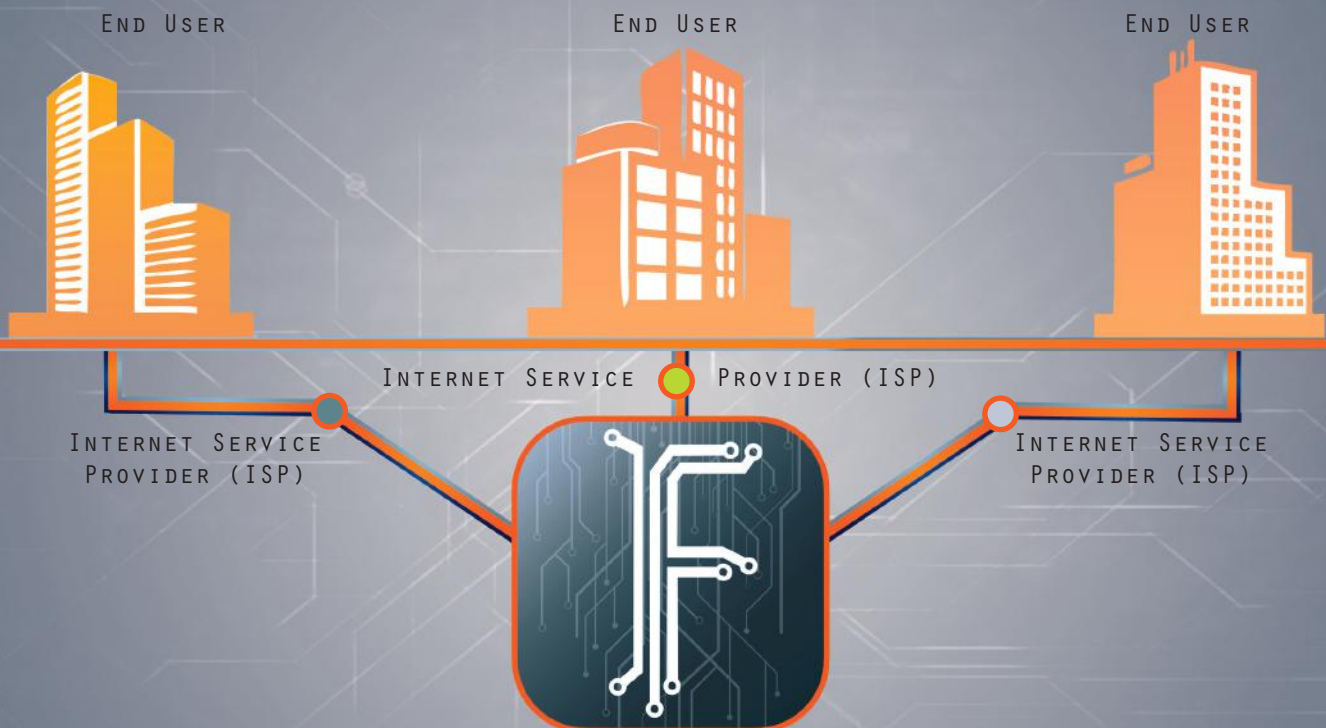
ISPs are able to experiment with new services since their entry cost is lower with a open-access fiber network.

### **It brings a wider choice of ISPs to public and private users.**

Costs are lower both because of the shared nature of the infrastructure and because of increased competition between ISPs.

### **It helps attract and retain businesses.**

Businesses know they have a wider choice of services at attractive prices because of the increased competition.



RVBA FIBER INFRASTRUCTURE