

# Creating a Frictionless Fiber Broadband Experience: Sunbridge in Central Florida

Offering homeowners instant-on, 10 Gbps, fiber-based gigabit service, Sunbridge, a master-planned community, stands out from other developments in Florida's competitive real estate market. Our thanks to Alex Figuero, vice president of operations at Dais Holdings, a Tavistock Development Company subsidiary; Karlee Kunkle, senior communications manager at Tavistock; and Matt Hirsch, sales account manager at ADTRAN for helping compile this profile.

By Sean Buckley / *Broadband Communities*

**P**icture living here: a neighborhood with beautiful new homes, restaurants, shops, parks and pools – all connected by a wide network of trails with easy access to oak forests, lakes, wetlands, gardens and even a small farm. Sound idyllic? That's the idea behind Sunbridge, a master-planned community near Orlando, Florida, developed by Tavistock Development Company.

Sunbridge's first neighborhood, Del Webb, opened to residents in 2020 and features a 27,000-square-foot clubhouse and indoor and outdoor amenities for the community of mostly 55-plus retirees. A second neighborhood, Weslyn Park, will open this fall.

Sunbridge plans to add more neighborhoods with a mix of single-family and multifamily homes and a commercial district over the next 10 years. Besides its proximity to nature, the developers hope to draw residents to Sunbridge by offering what it calls a frictionless fiber broadband experience.

"A great way to differentiate ourselves from other communities is via the technology," says Alex Figuero, vice president of operations at

Tavistock subsidiary Dais Holdings, which oversees Sunbridge and other properties. "It's fantastic being able to tell residents that when they move into a Tavistock-developed community, such as Del Webb Sunbridge, their internet service on day one will be a 2 Gbps internet service with the ability to upgrade to 10 Gbps."

Getting to this point took some planning and innovation: When Tavistock began looking for a broadband provider for Sunbridge, it found the area's Tier-1 cable companies and telcos didn't fit the bill.

The developer wanted to provide multigigabit services to support increased demand from residents and businesses for over-the-top (OTT) streaming, telehealth, remote education and work-from-home scenarios. It found its answer in 832 Communications, a service provider that delivers symmetrical 10 Gbps fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) services based on the XGS-PON standard. Tavistock owns all the physical assets, and 832 Communications provides services via those assets.



When residents move into a Sunbridge home, they get 2 Gbps internet service immediately, with the ability to upgrade to 10 Gbps.

### **FUTURE-PROOF NETWORK**

By leveraging the ADTRAN Total Access 5000 (TA5000) 10G fiber access platform, Tavistock can deliver symmetrical 10 Gbps broadband to an anticipated 10,000 Sunridge residents over the next 10 years.

Matt Hirsch, sales account manager at ADTRAN, says that although Tavistock adopted GPON for other properties, the developer saw that XGS-PON would enable it to offer symmetrical 10 Gbps services. All future deployments for FTTH in its communities will be based on XGS-PON.

Tavistock has existing GPON equipment in other markets, so it can make less-disruptive upgrades to XGS-PON via ADTRAN'S combo optical line terminal (OLT). The combo OLT simultaneously supports GPON and XGS-PON.

"The value that Tavistock saw was that we have GPON now, but we have XGS-PON ready to release," Hirsch says. "Tavistock has embraced XGS-PON, and all deployments going forward will be XGS-PON, so it will have 10G capabilities."

Figuro says that ADTRAN'S TA 5004, which is the solution it specified for Sunbridge, "enables us to meet the demands of today and the unforeseen demands for tomorrow."

Based on the engineering and data that ADTRAN provided to Tavistock, Tavistock adopted type A

and B infrastructure. Figuro says this architecture, which leverages 2x32 fiber splitters, provides "much better reliability, connectivity and uptime for the customer."

Tavistock is ready to address single-family homes with FTTH and later will address multiple-dwelling units (MDUs) and businesses.

"Today, the PON network is all for fiber to the home, but we are looking at this as a fiber to the X type of architecture," Figuro says. "Eventually, we will have MDUs and commercial businesses, so we'll need to be able to provide business-class services."

### **A FRICTIONLESS EXPERIENCE**

Tavistock says it can create a frictionless experience by leveraging XGS-PON. "For Sunbridge, this partnership with ADTRAN enables people to enjoy where they are living, but still be able to access the benefits of technology," says Karlee Kunkle, senior communications manager at Tavistock.

Working directly with 832 Communications gives Tavistock more control over the service experience, and new network monitoring and provisioning tools, such as ADTRAN'S Mosaic Cloud software-defined platform, enable providers to be more proactive about the customer experience. The platform is an open microservices architecture that provides network management and SDN control for the entire access network. Mosaic's programmable network elements range from the data center to the customer premises that complement the Mosaic Cloud platform and OS.

"Applications such as ADTRAN'S Mosaic Insight help the service provider know a customer is having an issue before the customer even knows there's an issue," Figuro says. "We have a vested interest in the customer experience because if they have a bad technology experience, it will reflect poorly on us regardless of who the service provider is."

### **PROPERTY OF THE MONTH HIGHLIGHTS** ~ Sunbridge in Central Florida ~

- 27,000-acre development
- Single-family and multifamily home options
- 10 Gbps symmetrical FTTH services
- Instant-on broadband
- OTT video options



The development's access to nature and high-speed internet draws residents.

Providing a seamless broadband experience for residents starts when they move into a property. Traditionally, when people move into new homes, they reach out to an ISP to get service installed, and activation typically takes two to four days.

Residents who move into Sunbridge will have internet ready to use the day they move in. After installing the necessary internet equipment (e.g., routers, ONTs) before a resident moves in, 832 Communications remotely activates the internet-only service.

In the Sunbridge Del Webb neighborhood, 832 Communications offers only broadband data. According to Tavistock, the data-only service was embraced by the community. "It was a bold approach for providing data services," Figuero says. "You need XGS-PON technology and that robust connection to enable over-the-top services that are seamless and offer a better experience than that of a cable box type of service experience."

## A DESIRABLE LOCATION

With favorable weather, a business-friendly environment and desirable lifestyle features, Central Florida is drawing new residents, and housing is in strong demand. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, more people worked and went to school remotely than ever before, driving this trend.

"You have this migration from various areas of the country and internationally to Orlando and surrounding areas," Figuero says. "We're

one of those markets that's benefiting from those migration patterns and from the impacts of COVID-19."

Sunbridge's close proximity to Orlando International Airport – one of the country's busiest – adds to its draw. In addition, Sunbridge is close to Florida's Space Coast, which includes Port Canaveral, SpaceX, NASA and the University of Florida.

"Central Florida is growing, and Sunbridge and its unique location will benefit the community," Kunkle says. "You can live in Sunbridge and be surrounded by water, but you don't have to sacrifice having access to high-speed internet and the ability to work from home."

## VITAL STATISTICS

**Property Description:** Sunbridge is a master-planned community encompassing more than 27,000 acres between metro Orlando and the Space Coast in Central Florida. It mixes residential, recreational, business and civic buildings connected by trails and offers residents access to forests, lakes, wetlands and other waterways. To provide residents and businesses with high-speed broadband internet connectivity, property developer Tavistock is leveraging ADTRAN's TA5000 fiber access platform to deliver symmetrical 10G service through XGS-PON OLT and ONT modules. Current residents can access high-speed broadband upon move-in.

**Demographics:** The first Sunbridge neighborhood, Del Webb, is home mostly to people 55 and older.

**Greenfield or retrofit?** Greenfield

**Number of units:** Current entitlements allow building more than 36,000 single-family homes and apartment units in Sunbridge.

**Style:** Single-family homes currently

**Date services started being delivered:** The Del Webb neighborhood opened in 2020.

**Any special requirements that the property had:** No

## LESSONS LEARNED

**What was the biggest challenge?**

Tier-1 providers did not offer high-speed broadband options in the region surrounding Sunbridge, so it needed to find an alternative option. Tavistock set out to provide symmetrical 10 Gbps services to support the influx of residents and businesses to the area and to support subscribers' increase in demand for OTT streaming, remote education and remote work. Tavistock was challenged to find a provider with its vision for connectivity in Sunbridge, so it provided connectivity itself through the service provider 832 Communications with the help of ADTRAN.

**What was the biggest success?**

Tavistock's plan to grow to 10,000 subscribers over the next 10 years is what prompted its partnership with ADTRAN, and ADTRAN's flexibility and ease of use makes it the right solution for Tavistock to build its best network and support the community's unique needs. Residents now and in the future will have access to the high-speed internet needed for remote education, remote work, telemedicine, streaming and more.

**What feedback does the leasing/sales office get from residents/guests?** Feedback has been positive. Residents enjoy the freedom to pick an OTT provider for TV programming and benefit from



# PROPERTY OF THE MONTH

high-speed internet for telework and telehealth services.

## SERVICES

*Services offered or planned on the network:* Through 832 Communications, Sunbridge offers residents 10 Gbps-capable high-speed FTTH internet access. Every home is equipped with Wi-Fi routers activated before residents move in. The fiber-based internet connection enables residents to use their favorite OTT video and VoIP services. Users who opt for a more traditional set-top box video platform can get service from 832 Communications' partner, FastLite Entertainment.

*Do additional service providers operate separate broadband networks on the same property? If so, how does the property owner/manager keep providers from*

*getting in one another's way?* No, 832 Communications is the exclusive provider of broadband internet services in Sunbridge.

*Is the point of contact for resident technical support the property manager, the service provider or a third party?* The service provider, 832 Communications

## BUSINESS

*Which parts of the network are owned by the service provider, and which parts are owned by the property owner?* Tavistock owns all the physical assets, and 832 Communications provides services via those assets.

*Is there a bulk-service agreement?* Yes, between the HOA and the service provider. For now, it's only for internet services.

*Network benefits: Evidence that the network helps attract residents,*

*retain residents or increase property values:* The ability to offer 10G services will increase the value of property in Sunbridge and will be an attractive draw for potential new residents and businesses. The flexibility and ease of use means that 832 Communications can rapidly deploy fiber and turn up services.

## TECHNOLOGY

*Broadband architecture:* FTTH

*Vendors/products:*

- 832 Communications (broadband ISP)
- ADTRAN (broadband network equipment)
- FastLite Entertainment (OTT TV services) ❖

*Sean Buckley is the editor-in-chief of BROADBAND COMMUNITIES. He can be reached at sean@bbcmag.com.*

# Bringing Fiber to Communities

With lightning-fast, symmetrical fiber connections, people can work, learn and stream with ease. NorthState is proud to offer the very best in fiber technology.



NORTHSTATE.NET

