Catching The Wave

"Fiber: Catch the Wave!" is the theme of the 2016 **Broadband Communities** Summit. Let us show you how.

Having never been a surfer, and not expecting to become one anytime soon, I consulted some online sources to find out how, exactly, one catches a wave. The basic steps are as follows: Study your wave; paddle out to it; sit on the board; paddle hard; stand up; ride in to shore.

I'm glad to say you can learn all these steps at the **Broadband Communities** Summit.

Study your wave. Learn what users will do with fiber broadband when the wave comes in – run smart cities, smart buildings and smart grids; combat diseases; make businesses more productive; watch 4K over-the-top video; create new educational opportunities. There's even a special session on how Austin's famed creative sector is gearing up for the gigabit world.

Surfers say that what's on the ocean floor is just as important as what's on the surface, so we've included deep dives into such new technologies as in-building wireless and software-defined networking. There's also a co-located Light Brigade training program to become a certified fiber-to-the-home professional. Watch out for those rip currents!

Paddle out to the wave. What's the best way to get started with a broadband project? Prepare yourself by attending sessions on financial modeling, public and private financing, contracting and legal issues. Learn to gauge demand using online surveys and preregistrations. Find out how forward-looking mayors build community support for broadband and how advocates gather key stakeholders and encourage them to collaborate.

Sit on the surfboard. The key is choosing the right time and place to commit. Learn from successful broadband deployers – large and small, public and private – how they decided where and when to start building their networks.

Paddle hard. When the wave comes in, you must be properly seated on the board and moving at the same speed as the wave. This part is tricky (or so I've been told). The many Summit sessions about best practices and lessons learned in different types of projects will help you navigate the currents.

Stand up. Time to go live! There are myriad sessions on overcoming all the barriers – technical, financial, political – waiting to knock you down.

Ride in to shore. Now that you're standing up, use your network to good advantage. At the Summit, experts will share their experiences in using broadband to boost their local and regional economies, increase the value of their properties, maximize revenues, protect vulnerable populations and overcome the digital divide.

Surfers (and network builders) are a friendly group. Talking to your peers is always the best way to learn. For best results, don't miss the opportunities for getting connected at the Summit. ❖

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