

CEO

Barbara DeGarmo / barbara@bbcmag.com

PUBLISHER

Nancy McCain / nancym@bbcmag.com

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Masha Zager / masha@bbcmag.com

EDITOR-AT-LARGE

Steven S. Ross / steve@bbcmag.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Sean Buckley / sean@bbcmag.com

COPY CHIEF

Eli Penberthy / eli@bbcmag.com

ADVERTISING SALES ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Irene Prescott / irene@bbcmag.com

EVENTS COORDINATOR

Dennise Argil / dennise@bbcmag.com

ONLINE NEWS EDITOR

Marianne Cotter / marianne@bbcmag.com

ART DIRECTOR

Karry Thomas

CONTRIBUTORS

Rollie Cole, Sagamore Institute for Policy Research

David Daugherty, Clarus Broadband
Heather Burnett Gold, HBG Strategies
Joanne Hovis, CTC Technology & Energy
Trevor Jones, OTELCO

Michael A. Kashmer, Digital Broadband Programming Consultant
W. James MacNaughton, Esq.
Christopher Mitchell, Institute for Local Self-Reliance
Bryan Rader, UpStream Network
Craig Settles, Gigabit Nation
Robert L. Vogelsang, Broadband Communities Magazine

BROADBAND PROPERTIES LLC

CEO

Barbara DeGarmo

VICE PRESIDENT, BUSINESS & OPERATIONS

Nancy McCain

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Robert L. Vogelsang

BUSINESS & EDITORIAL OFFICE

BROADBAND PROPERTIES LLC
1909 Avenue G • Rosenberg, TX 77471
281.342.9655 • Fax 281.342.1158

www.broadbandcommunities.com

Broadband Communities (ISSN 0745-8711) (USPS 679-050) (Publication Mail Agreement #1271091) is published 7 times a year at a rate of \$24 per year by Broadband Properties LLC, 1909 Avenue G, Rosenberg, TX 77471. Periodical postage paid at Rosenberg, TX, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to **Broadband Communities**, PO Box 303, Congers, NY 10920-9852.

CANADA POST: Publications Mail Agreement #40612608. Canada Returns to be sent to Bleuchip International, PO Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2. Copyright © 2019 Broadband Properties LLC. All rights reserved.



MDU Knowns and Unknowns

Residents' need for speed, their demand for video service and their interest in other technology amenities may vary from market to market, but the MDU world still has its eternal verities.

In our multiple-dwelling-unit (MDU) issue each year, **BROADBAND COMMUNITIES** tries to reflect a range of perspectives. Not surprisingly, the industry leaders and experts whose views are represented in this issue don't agree about everything.

Is video a necessary feature of an MDU service package? No, says one provider; yes, says another. Will residents pay higher rents for smart-home features? Yes, according to some; the jury's still out, according to others. Is bulk broadband a winning strategy? Sometimes yes, sometimes no – and not everyone agrees about when it is and when it's not.

Rapid technology change is a major reason for this diversity of opinion. Because technologies diffuse unevenly over time and across space, residents of different MDUs may be at different points on the adoption curve for a new technology. As Mike Coco of Choice Property Resources comments about smart-home technologies (p. 48), "In terms of adoption, we're still somewhere between innovators and early adopters – we're not at mass market yet."

Geographic and demographic differences can have large effects on the demand for newer technologies, so knowledge of each specific market is critical.

GROUNDS FOR AGREEMENT

On several subjects, however, there is broad agreement.

- MDU residents consider high-speed broadband a top amenity, even if they define "high speed"

differently based on their needs. They value more than just speed. Reliability, consistency and "seamless" broadband experiences are equally important, if not more important, to most users.

- Robust broadband infrastructure in MDUs enables owners to reduce operational costs by implementing building automation technologies. New broadband-enabled technologies may include building security, package delivery, energy conservation or water leak detection. Not all these applications make economic sense in every building, but they (and others) are well enough developed that they are worth investigating. In new construction or major renovations, the ability to support open-source building automation technologies may be a sufficient economic reason to invest in fiber infrastructure.
- Developers and broadband providers need to work together to plan for broadband. Differing assessments of the market's revenue potential, lack of understanding of the available technology options, and insufficient communication about project timelines can all lead to frustration and less-than-optimal results. But when developers and providers see eye to eye, they both win – and so do residents. ❖

Masha Zager

masha@bbcmag.com