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WIRELESS AND IoT SOLUTIONS FOR SMART REAL ESTATE

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LEADING THE WAY

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Airwavz Solutions: A Better In-Building Wireless Solution for CRE 48



Airwavz Solutions looks at solving poor wireless service inside commercial office buildings a little differently.

ON THE AIR

Airwavz Solutions offers a better multi-carrier in-building wireless solution for commercial property owners. **By Jim Harris**

Wireless connectivity keeps moving higher up the commercial office tenant priority list and may one day rival 'location' itself. To meet tenant demands, commercial office building owners are exploring cellular service enhancements. But there are so many options to explore.

Airwavz Solutions looks at solving the conundrum of poor wireless service inside commercial office buildings a little differently than other companies offering in-building cellular systems.

"Seventy percent of wireless

Airwavz Solutions
www.airwavz.com
Headquarters: Charlotte, N.C.
Employees: 15 to 20
Specialty: In-building wireless systems
Mark Horinko, founder and president:
"We design, build, own, manage and operate the whole system from beginning to end."

traffic originates or terminates inside of commercial buildings, but less than five percent of these buildings have an adequate infrastructure to handle this traffic," company founder and President Mark Horinko says. "As a service provider intent on helping building

owners carve out a competitive wireless advantage, our goal is to use the technology itself to drive down the cost to building owners while exceeding tenant performance expectations."

The company specializes in deploying wireless infrastructure, including Distributed Radio Access Network (D-RAN) technology, a multi-technology and multi-carrier in-building wireless solution. In conjunction with construction of an in-building D-RAN system, Airwavz develops, builds and manages a small data center within

IBW COMMERCIAL DAS: Airwavz Solutions

the city submarket and centralizes equipment from several different carriers. These data centers are located in large, dense metropolitan areas populated with large commercial buildings – the company’s target customers. Airwavz’s data centers convert radio signals into fiber-optic signals that are transmitted to commercial buildings.

“Centralizing the equipment brings the cost of the system down for the building owner while reducing space requirements for equipment. We have been able to pull a large percentage of the cost of maintaining an in-building wireless system out for our clients,” Horinko adds. “In terms of performance, D-RAN architecture can handle four to five times as much capacity at 30 to 40 percent less cost than traditional DAS and is fully scalable as technology evolves.”

The company offers its services at a monthly recurring cost akin to a utility. “We own, manage, operate, design and build the whole system from beginning to end,” Horinko says. “We approach the building community as an ‘infrastructure as a service’ model, and for less than a building spends on something like carpeting or window washing each year, their tenants get something they’re increasingly demanding – reliable cellular connectivity wherever they are inside that building. Plus, owners can easily pass through these costs to tenants since they’re so modest.”

Horinko notes that working closely with the wireless carriers to ensure the building and system meet their criteria is absolutely mission-critical. “The carriers’ cap-



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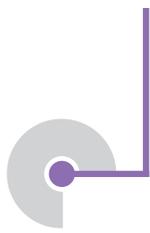
ital budgets are stretched, and so they’re investing funds to connect into a limited number of buildings each year,” he says. “So, we effectively bring together building owners and multiple wireless carriers in a mutually beneficial relationship by driving costs down for everyone and creating a competitive advantage for the building owner.”

“Achieving a wireless advantage in the competitive commercial real estate space means having advanced wireless infrastructure, with multiple carriers providing direct connectivity within a commercial building,” the company

says. “When this happens, the result is higher tenant satisfaction, more dollars per square foot and a higher occupancy rate than the building across the street.”

DRAWING ON EXPERIENCE

Horinko began seeking the best available in-building wireless technology eight years ago when Brad Davis, the then-President and CEO of DukeNet Communications – a regional fiber optic network company – hired him as a consultant to look into small cell tower technology. “Small cell was getting a lot of hype at the time,



but as I looked into it I saw a lot of challenges, such as its cost and lack of exclusivity,” he says.

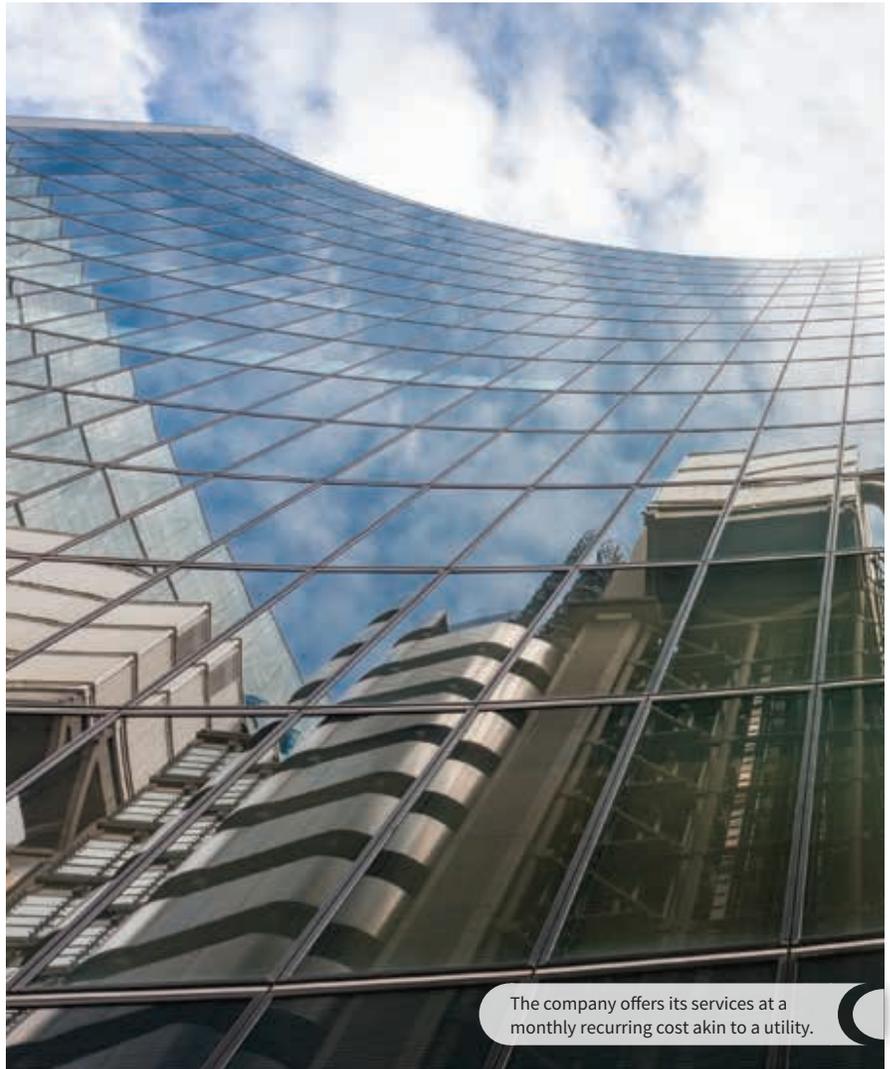
After looking into several different options, Horinko started Airwavz Solutions in 2013 to offer building owners an alternative to small cell technology. Davis today serves as the company’s CEO. “We wanted to make in-building wireless comparable in price to other options that cellular carriers had,” Horinko says. “And we have. The cost of deploying a D-RAN solution is the lowest cost per subscriber a carrier will find – less than towers and small cells. Combine that with building owners ready to solve their in-building wireless issues and it’s a perfect match.”

Horinko has more than 30 years of experience in wireless network strategy, network architecture and design, product development and large-scale network operations. In 2001, he founded and served as executive vice president of Conterra LLC, which delivered broadband infrastructure to rural markets. He is a member of several industry associations including the Fiber-to-the-Home Council, Carolina Wireless Association, Rural Fiber Fund and the Southeast Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors.

“I answered an ad for a cellular company in eastern Pennsylvania back in the early 1980s and was hooked,” he says. “This is a wireless world and the technology is fascinating to me.”

‘TODAY, NOT TOMORROW’

Airwavz is growing its national footprint as it expands from its solid base across the southern U.S. The company currently has



The company offers its services at a monthly recurring cost akin to a utility.

multiple data centers and commercial customers in Houston, Atlanta and Charlotte. Commercial building D-RAN projects and data centers are under development from Dallas to Miami and points in-between. The company is also growing its internal direct business development team, indirect channel and seeking new partnerships with building owners and REITs, Horinko notes. “We’re just getting started and demand is high.”

Airwavz believes in being open, honest and transparent in its communications with all of its clients. “We value each of our customers,

without exception or excuses, and display a ‘today, not tomorrow’ approach to serving their needs,” the company says. “We want to be known by our customers for the quality of our work and our ability to innovate in a constantly changing world.”

“This is a company of technologists who’ve been in wireless since its inception. We’ve seen a lot of different technologies come and go, but that’s not what excites us,” Horinko adds. “It’s how technology enables people to stay connected to what’s most important to them, wherever they are.” ■