

ACCESS 2012

Foreword

The Third International Conference on Access Networks [ACCESS 2012], held between June 24-29, 2012 - Venice, Italy, continued a series of conferences dealing with access networks, services and technologies based on the previous NEUTRAL and HOWAN workshop treating particular access aspects. ACCESS 2012 aimed to provide an international forum by researchers, students, and professionals to present recent research results on advances in networking access, including the newest emerging access technologies, broadband access, wireless access, copper access, optical access, mobility aspects, as well as optical/wireless combination and neutrality.

Hybrid Optical and Wireless Access Networks (HOWANs) consist of a multi-hop wireless mesh network (WMN) at the front-end and an optical access network, e.g., a passive optical network (PON) at the back-end. PONs use inexpensive and passive optical splitters to divide a single fiber into separate strands feeding individual subscribers. EPON is based on the Ethernet standard, which comes with the added benefit of the economies-of-scale of Ethernet, and provides simple and easy-to-manage connectivity both at the customer premises and at the central office.

Granting positive externalities to the shared access infrastructure in order to enhance digital inclusion and broadband penetration by triggering a positive feedback loop among users, service providers, network operators, and investors is an option. The access infrastructure can be considered as a network per se, called "neutral access network" (NAN), which provides internal services and possibly exploits its territorial dimension in order to overcome the dichotomy between "on-line" and "off-line" people. While in a traditional access network, people who are not registered with any ISP are left out from the so called "information society", NANs can provide an intermediate area, which is logically placed "before the Internet", where on-line services and applications can be made available to residential and nomadic users who are not yet registered with any ISP.

We take here the opportunity to warmly thank all the members of the ACCESS 2012 Technical Program Committee, as well as the numerous reviewers. The creation of such a high quality conference program would not have been possible without their involvement. We also kindly thank all the authors who dedicated much of their time and efforts to contribute to ACCESS 2012. We truly believe that, thanks to all these efforts, the final conference program consisted of top quality contributions.

Also, this event could not have been a reality without the support of many individuals, organizations, and sponsors. We are grateful to the members of the ACCESS 2012 organizing committee for their help in handling the logistics and for their work to make this professional meeting a success.

We hope that ACCESS 2012 was a successful international forum for the exchange of ideas and results between academia and industry and for the promotion of progress in networking access.

We are convinced that the participants found the event useful and communications very open. We also hope the attendees enjoyed the charm of Venice, Italy.

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