

For immediate release
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"Generational leap in capabilities"

Ontario advanced network first to launch operational 100G network

TORONTO - ORION, Ontario's advanced research and education (R&E) network, today announced the first phase of a major technology upgrade, making it the first to deploy a 100G operational network in Canada and the first R&E network in the world to deploy a 100G production network to support research and education.

ORION made the announcement in Toronto today with the selection of Alcatel-Lucent and Cisco Canada to provide the project's next-generation optical transport and routing equipment.

"The upgrade means that Ontario is leapfrogging from a 10G backbone to 100G capacity in key parts of the network," said Dr. Darin Graham, ORION President and CEO. "Moving to 100G is a generational leap in capabilities and a significant technological milestone. It helps move Ontario to the head of the pack in terms of having an extraordinary backbone in place to support new and innovative ways of enabling advanced research, innovation and scientific discovery," he said.

The \$6.5 million project is made possible with a contribution of \$4.8 million from CANARIE, Canada's advanced research and innovation network, and a further \$1.7 million investment from ORION.

"We are proud to partner with ORION to help build on Canada's innovation-building capacity, and to jointly enable the first 100G production network," said CANARIE President and CEO Jim Roche. "CANARIE has had 100G capacity in the eastern and western ROADM networks since 2006. CANARIE will be demonstrating how this capacity can be fully leveraged by stakeholders in the research, innovation and education communities in the coming weeks," he said.

For ORION, the project is a first phase of a major upgrade of the entire network infrastructure, which spans the province along more than 5,800 kilometers of fibre. It is part of ORION's strategy to build on the network foundation as Ontario's enabling innovation backbone, with greater capacity to support research and commercialization, advanced teaching and learning, public and private sectors partnerships and global-scale science and research collaborations.

The project involves significant changes to the network's core architecture and the replacement of routing and optical transport equipment in most of ORION's physical connection points. It introduces new features, including enhanced support for IPv6, MPLS, QoS, and enhanced traffic engineering.

The new capacity will also help address explosive growth in the usage of the network. ORION reports a 40% spike in total backbone traffic in the last year alone.

Alcatel-Lucent and Cisco Canada submitted successful bids for the project. They were selected following a lengthy and comprehensive review process. Alcatel-Lucent technology was selected for optical transport, a significant undertaking involving upgrades to 33 ORION network connection points across the province. The project will incorporate Cisco's state-of-the-art routing technology to deliver video-rich content and support new technologies and applications.

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The project, now in its deployment phase, will be completed in Spring 2011.

About ORION

Supporting speeds hundreds of times faster than the Internet, ORION is Ontario's advanced research and education network. A not-for-profit corporation, ORION links 1.7 million Ontario researchers, scientists, students, teachers and staff who depend on ORION for teaching and learning and to enable their research collaborations and discoveries in physics, cancer research, environmental science and technologies, social sciences and the humanities and multiple other disciplines. Part of Canada's advanced network alliance, ORION connects users and institutions to each other and, through CANARIE - Canada's advanced research and innovation network, to high-capacity research and education networks, partners and collaborators across Canada and around the world.

Learn more about ORION and its partners at the following sites:

www.alcatel-lucent.com

www.canarie.ca

www.cisco.ca

www.orion.on.ca

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