

## RTÉ NL gets up to speed with AirSpeed Telecom

**AirSpeed Telecom has helped RTÉ NL tap into the full power of licensed microwave radio to give one of its most remote studios a new lease on life.**

These days there are few places in Ireland, or indeed the world, that are totally inaccessible to communications. In even the remotest areas, wireless and satellite technologies can be used to get a signal, make a call or check e-mail. But as user demands grow, just having a connection isn't enough. Without LAN speed broadband connectivity, any business with remote operations cannot operate effectively -- and its users face unnecessary delays, costs and frustration as narrowband technologies fail to meet their rising expectations of what a company network should do.

That's the predicament RTÉ NL found itself in with its remote studio in Ballydavid, a small radio-only outpost in the southwest, broadcasting from the Dingle peninsula. RTÉ NL is the communication network operator that carries television and radio signals for RTÉ and other broadcasters, as well as offering site services to other communications companies. RTÉ NL's existing connection to the site was only 2Mbps, using older licensed microwave radio equipment installed in the 1990s. As RTÉ NL contemplated an upgrade, it was keen to offer Ballydavid users much higher bandwidth, if possible.

*"There's a demand for capacity from the studios that's increasing all the time, especially for Ethernet type data transfer capacity,"* explained Ciaran Sinclair, Project Manager for RTÉ NL. *"Producers at Ballydavid have a huge desire to scan our archives in Limerick or Donnybrook and browse or download content. Ballydavid does a lot of programming with Irish traditional music, culture and folk tales -- material recorded from the 1930s to the 1950s on all kinds of devices. All that content is stored remotely."*

Pressure on the 2Mbps link meant slow service for Ballydavid producers, who often had to resort to ordering physical tapes to be delivered by courier. A truly high bandwidth solution would help eliminate network delays and unnecessary shipping costs, and dramatically improve the network experience for all Ballydavid users. After considering its options, RTÉ NL decided to replace its older generation equipment with a new, managed service for licensed microwave radio from AirSpeed Telecom:

- **Truly high bandwidth, to Ballydavid and back:** AirSpeed Telecom is successfully pushing 20Mbps out to Ballydavid, following careful assessment of the terrain and expert design of a four-hop licensed microwave radio link. The link spans a remarkable 140km, connecting Ballydavid to its Cork city studio. The broadcast-quality network will carry some hours of radio transmission, plus all LAN traffic, including remote access to content archives in Limerick and Dublin.

- **World-class technical skills deliver rock-solid connectivity:** delivering such a long microwave radio network is technically demanding, and highlights the caliber of networking skills that RTÉ NL has been able to access at AirSpeed Telecom, both during the design phase and looking ahead as AirSpeed Telecom begins managing the network on RTÉ NL's behalf. *"One hop of the link is a long, 90km over-sea path, which is very demanding on microwave radio technology. The existing link we have is reliable, but it's narrow at 2Mbps. With 20Mbps, the signal is more prone to fading, especially over water, and this is a big over-water path,"* Ciaran said. *"We have had no problems with the AirSpeed link. The local engineers say it's holding up fine, and we're delighted that it seems to be working so well."*

*"I wouldn't hesitate to work with AirSpeed Telecom again if the opportunity arose. They understood our issues and put a solution in place that works."*

**Ciaran Sinclair**  
Project Manager  
RTÉ NL

As for Ballydavid users, they are to start using the new 20Mbps connection as soon as some construction work is completed on the Cork studio, where a tower had to be replaced. Ciaran says he expects users in Ballydavid will notice a huge improvement. Additionally, the new network will allow RTÉ NL to deliver Ballydavid users with voice over IP for the first time, saving the broadcaster further on its communication costs.

Ciaran said he's been very pleased overall with the AirSpeed Telecom experience. *"I wouldn't hesitate to work with them again if the opportunity arose. There have been absolutely no problems,"* he said. *"They understood our issues and put a solution in place that works."*



Views of Dingle from  
AirSpeed Telecom POP

