

## **Jamaican investors' stream high-speed data via electrical plugs - To roll out product in local hotels**

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Lewis Buchanan, chief executive of IVA Communications, a Jamaican company based in the United States. IVA will open an office in Jamaica in July. - photo by Janet Silvera

**IVA Communications, a group of investors with Jamaican connections, is rolling out a new form of telecommunication in local hotels, called iWire, which enables broadband access over electrical wiring.**

The system uses power outlets for high-speed data transmission.

The product's introduction marks IVA's market entry into Jamaica. The company is based in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States. It will open an office in Kingston later this month.

Its iWire system has the capability of transforming a building's internal electrical wiring into an intelligent broadband networking platform, said Lewis Buchanan, IVA chief executive. The other partners, three Jamaicans and a Trinidadian, are president Keith Johnson, Fitroy Francis, Garland Johnson and Gary Berridge .

The group is investing US\$2 million in its Caribbean operation and is also about to start doing business in Panama.

"The system is designed for deployment in challenging situations where traditional connectivity using hard-wired (CAT-5) or wireless LAN technology is not economically, environmentally or technically feasible," Buchanan told the **Financial Gleaner**.

The iWire gateway, along with an eXtender, converts an ethernet signal to a power line communication (PLC) format and injects that into the electrical infrastructure in the building where the system is being installed.

It is then connected to an iBridge which recovers the PLC signal and reconverts it into standard ethernet format for use in end-user devices.

## **Internet connection**

Essentially, the system allows Internet and data connection from any electrical outlet.

The company's iWire solution is currently deployed in 600 U.S. hotels, residences, schools and the Marine Corps, while the Department of Homeland Security is getting ready to roll it out at airports.

"Transport Security Administration (TSA) is deploying the system in all U.S. airports," said Buchanan.

He added that iWire is intended for installations where performance, reliability, scalability (capability of the use of future systems), administrative control, and security are critical. Security cameras, point of sales (POS), voice over Internet (VoIP), and digital signage are all accommodated on the system.

## **Lightweight components**

iWire components are lightweight, compact and straightforward to install. The system uses four key components - the Gateway, the eXtender, the Coupler and the iBridge, to deliver networking in a facility.

"In some environments, eXtenders are necessary to extend the reach and amplify the signal within the building," noted Buchanan.

Accordingly, he said the system will not only eliminate the need for cabling in the hotels, but will leverage a building's existing wiring by saving cost and time, while providing Internet access that can be deployed at all locations.

Installation can be completed anywhere from a few hours to a couple of days. A licensed electrician is needed only for a very limited amount of time.

The IVA Communications' CEO said that iWire has many distinct cost advantages, because deployment can be completed in such a short period of time, minimising disruption and loss of business during installation.

"The system is scalable, requiring only additional iBridges to add new users and can be moved or relocated with little or no cost."

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