

Microsoft and Facebook Plan Atlantic-Spanning Cable

Written by Marco Attard
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Microsoft and Facebook team up to handle customer demand for high-speed connectivity to respective online services by building "Marea"-- a subsea cable spanning the Atlantic described as the highest-capacity yet.



Telxius, the Telefónica telecommunications infrastructure company, is the operator of 6600km submarine cable. It will also be the first to connect to the cable as it trails from a N. Virginia data hub to Bilbao, Spain before spreading to network hubs across EMEA. The route the cable takes is south of other transatlantic cables, allowing for more resilient connections.

The two companies add Marea will be interoperable with a variety of networking equipment through the use of a new "open" design promising lower costs and easier equipment upgrades.

"As the world is increasingly moving toward a future based on cloud computing, Microsoft continues to invest in our cloud infrastructure to meet current and future growing global demand for our more than 200 cloud services, including Bing, Office 365, Skype, Xbox Live and the Microsoft Azure platform," Microsoft says. "The Marea transatlantic cable we're building with Facebook and Telxius will provide new, low-latency connectivity that will help meet the increasing demand for higher-speed capacity across the Atlantic. By building the cable along this new southern route, we will also increase the resiliency of our global network, helping ensure even greater reliability for our customers."

Construction of the cable starts from August 2017, with completion expected for around October 2017.

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