

## **Verizon still focused on adding TV lines in towns where it already has service instead of new towns**

2012 August 23 by Jon Chesto tags: [Comcast](#), [Medford](#), [Plympton](#), [Verizon](#)



A former colleague of mine couldn't help but be hopeful when he saw the Verizon crews installing fiber-optic lines along one of the main roads in his hometown of Plympton. After all, he had tried to negotiate with Comcast for a better deal for his cable TV service and was rebuffed because, he was told, he lived in a noncompetitive market. So he's naturally trying to find out how to convince Verizon to finally offer its FiOS TV service in Plympton.

Unfortunately for him – and for the rest of us in cities and towns with no FiOS TV – there's still a long wait before the company will even consider expanding from its existing communities.

After an aggressive rollout that began in late 2005, local Verizon officials told me in December 2009 that [they would essentially be halting the additions](#) of any new towns to the Verizon TV market in Massachusetts. At the time, Verizon offered FiOS TV in 106 communities. Today, with the addition of Medford earlier this year, the number remains stuck at 112. And it's not going to change anytime soon.

That leaves some of the Boston area's biggest communities – including Boston itself – without FiOS TV.

Verizon spokesman Phil Santoro tells me the company has added fiber-optic lines in other communities without TV essentially to upgrade the older copper wires used by the landline system (the fiber is lashed to the existing copper lines). He says the company spends about \$600 million a year on improving its infrastructure in this state. But just because there's fiber in the town doesn't mean Verizon will offer TV there.

Santoro says the company has committed to stringing fiber-optic lines past all homes in the existing 112 cities and towns first before adding more communities – typically a five-year process in each town. “We're going to finish all of that work before we consider whether we want to expand FiOS (TV) to other communities,” Santoro says. “FiOS TV is done expanding for now.”

That could mean a nearly five-year wait from when Medford started getting FiOS TV until another community is added (i.e. early 2017). It's possible, Santoro says, that customer demand could prompt Verizon to consider adding more towns earlier. But he says it's also possible that Verizon won't add FiOS to any new communities in the state even after those five years are up.

Santoro says a number of factors were used in picking the lucky cities and towns: the proximity to Verizon's existing workforce, the local marketing opportunities, and the ease in pulling permits in a particular community. Underground utility lines are also a deterrent, because they're more expensive and tougher to work on than overhead lines.

For those of us who are still left wanting our FiOS TV, Santoro says Verizon has a section on [its website](#) where we can indicate our interest in the service.

Verizon has been steadily gaining TV customers in Massachusetts ever since it started offering TV here. [Documents filed with state regulators](#) show Verizon had more than 335,100 customers in 2011, up 20 percent from 2010 and nearly 50 percent from 2009. Comcast, of course, remains the unassailable

market leader despite a modest drop in market share, with more than 1.5 million customers remaining in the state last year.

from → [Boston](#), [South Shore](#), [telecommunications](#)

## 5 Responses

1.



Bill Hannon [permalink](#)

August 24, 2012, 9:06 AM

Such a shame. The town of Plympton which is served from the Kingston Central Office was engineered to get FIOS service and the fiber had started to be placed @4 years ago. That was when someone decided that building in Duxbury would make more money for them. Plympton Selectman Joe Frietas was actively persuing verizon to negotiate a deal for FIOS but was basically “blown off” by ther talking heads.

2.



Margaret [permalink](#)

August 24, 2012, 11:14 AM

This is so frustrating. I live in East Bridgewater & have watched friends in Hingham, Kingston, and Hull all get access to FIOS while we make no progress at all. Stinks!

3.



Dan [permalink](#)

August 24, 2012, 12:15 PM

Verizon had planned to bring FIOS everywhere. They know that the fibre-optic is the best transmission for tv, internet there is.

The problems started when they went into towns and met with the selectmen, gov’t officials, what ever board they needed to, only to walk away shaking their heads. Adelphia/Comcast/Time Warner( all the same company) has such a strong hold here on the south shore. The town officials were too greedy and wanted more from Verizon than what Comcast was actually giving back to the towns.

Pembroke is great example of that. The northern part of town has Verizon FIOS because it is part of a line that serves Marshfield. They approached the Pembroke selectmen many times to install it in the rest of the town, each time the selectmen wanted even more. Verizon basically said, see ya

bye. Pembroke selectmen were just too greedy. Verizon did offer more back to the town than what Comcast was giving back but that was not good enough.

Thanks to the selectmen's backdoor illegal deal with Comcast, Comcast has closed its Pembroke office and 100% free access studio. Now, Pembroke subscribers have to go to other towns if they need to go to a Comcast office. The 100% free access studio, anybody could be trained to use the best up to date Hollywood type equipment is gone to Plymouth as part of PACTV that charges serious money to use outdated equipment

Verizon, come back with whatever legal ways you have so we can have a choice. Many many people are fed up with Comcast, I'm one of them.

Comcast, you are probably reading this, so I would guess my service rates will be going up, and my service will probably get worse too right?



4.

Matt [permalink](#)

August 24, 2012, 1:54 PM

"Pembroke is great example of that. The northern part of town has Verizon FIOS because it is part of a line that serves Marshfield."

Actually that's Hanover.

"They approached the Pembroke selectmen many times to install it in the rest of the town, each time the selectmen wanted even more. Verizon basically said, see ya bye. Pembroke selectmen were just too greedy. Verizon did offer more back to the town than what Comcast was giving back but that was not good enough."

Actually that's not true. Verizon is the one that isn't expanding pure and simple. At no point has Verizon ever offered to wire all of Pembroke Ma.

<http://www.pembroke-ma.gov/pdfs%20and%20forms/Verizon%20not%20in%20Pembroke.pdf>

You cannot legally contract only part of a town. To do so would create lawsuits. Imagine if a town signed contracts for different parts of a town. That would create taxation without representation and create a huge legal issue in the form of inequality.

From what I've seen FIOS is a tad weird. First of all Verizon does not operate their own locations. You have to bring it to the UPS store to send and receive due to the deals that were made. Since there is no UPS store in Duxbury or Marshfield you see them driving to the one in Pembroke to send/receive their equipment. They also strip the old copper wiring for the phone and will not rewire it if you want to drop it. FIOS stays with the house even if you drop the service.

You can strike deals with Comcast on programming by mentioning satellite companies (direct tv and dish network). There's also online services like Netflix, Hulu Plus, Amazon Prime and

countless videos on the Apple app store. Smart tv's are going to become the default sold within the next five years.



5.

Greg Canon [permalink](#)

August 27, 2012, 9:17 AM

Don't feel bad. We've got FIOS in my town and Comcast still charges exhorbitant rates. Part of the issue is Comcast, but part of the issue (a large part, I am led to understand) is channels like ESPN, which hardball the cable networks to carry their entire line and can charge up to \$5/subscriber/month. And those charges are driven by what...? How about \$50 million contracts to sports stars, and billion dollar stadiums (yes, we have Fenway, but we pay through this channel for every bloated sports palace nationwide), etc. You get this stuff in your cable package because the content providers have forced the cable companies to carry the whole line to all subscribers or get nothing, and heavens! We couldn't deprive our public of the All Important God of Sports! The same public that will howl Holy Mother! if their taxes rise \$50 to pay for schools (or vote Tea Party while their bridges crumble). I'm not defending Comcast, they are among my least favorite companies in the world, but there's a lot more at work here. Jon, how about an expose on the economics driving cable rates?

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