CROWN CASTLE

Building an innovative hybrid network to bridge Cleveland's digital divide.

Cleveland has long struggled with one of the widest digital divides in the nation, leaving thousands of residents without access to reliable, high-speed internet.[1] As the only internet service provider headquartered in Cleveland, DigitalC is working to bridge that digital divide for good. To bring this vision to life, we partnered with the non-profit organization to design and deploy a new type of network—to the city's most underserved neighborhoods.

The Need

With dense tree cover and aging infrastructure making traditional broadband deployment difficult, Cleveland consistently ranks among the least-connected major cities in the US. This impacts everyone from children who have inadequate access to online learning to job seekers who are unable to access opportunities. DigitalC wanted to change all this by:

> Finding innovative solutions that overcome the traditional obstacles to accessible broadband.

> Using infrastructure solutions that can be deployed quickly and cost effectively.

> Offering a fast, reliable and affordable internet solution to underserved neighborhoods.

> Expanding economic opportunity by enabling residents to pursue remote work, access job training and participate in the digital economy.

The Solution

We partnered with DigitalC to deploy a next-generation mesh network that uses a combination of both towers and fiber. Inspired by next-generation fixed wireless access (ngFWA), the solution adapts to environmental obstacles like buildings and trees, delivering high-speed internet without the need for traditional line-of-sight connections.

Key advantages of the deployment include:

> **Reliability:** Wireless millimeter wave rings were built using approximately 25 of our towers, with each ring connected via fiber to two separate data centers in Cleveland to ensure redundancy.

> **Speed:** The entire citywide deployment was completed in just 18 months—an accelerated timeline for a project of this scale.

> **Reach:** The network prioritizes Cleveland's most underserved neighborhoods, including areas like Phoenix Village, part of the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority.

Name
DigitalC

Location
Cleveland, Ohio

Industy
Telecommunications

Size
5,000 subscribers
(23,500 expected by 2028)

Solution
Internet Access Towers

1. Connectyourcommunity.org, *"Cleveland and Detroit lead worst-connected large cities of 2023."*

The impact.

> Since launching the new network in January 2024, DigitalC has already connected over 5,000 households—with a goal of reaching 23,500 by the end of 2028.

> Residents now have access to fast, reliable internet at dramatically lower prices than traditional providers—in areas most affected by the digital divide.

> In communities that have historically been overlooked, residents are thrilled that DigitalC is finally making transformative, cutting-edge technologies available to them.

> The City of Cleveland's survey results show 90% of responders feel they've received speed as promised with very strong support for transparent pricing, reliable service and responsive support.

> This progress is driven by a cross-sector coalition—led by the Mandel, Myers, and Gund Foundations, the State of Ohio, and the City of Cleveland—with support from Microsoft, the public school system and housing authority.

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Cleveland is going from worst to first—and we're proving what is possible when community is centered. This citywide network is the first of its kind, built by a nonprofit and backed by partners committed to delivering the speed, dignity and access that Cleveland residents deserve

JOSHUA EDMONDS, CEO
DigitalC

Why Crown Castle?

Our unique, nationwide portfolio
With approximately 90,000 route miles of fiber, we own and operate one of the largest and densest fiber networks in the country with a presence in 23 of the top 25 US markets.

Our proven track record
In our 30 years of experience owning and operating network assets we've seen it all and we're always ready to adapt to changing network trends.

Our deep expertise
We've worked with nearly every industry so we understand your unique opportunities and challenges and can tailor solutions to meet your goals.

CC CROWN CASTLE

Crown Castle owns, operates and leases more than 40,000 cell towers and approximately 90,000 route miles of fiber supporting small cells and fiber solutions across every major US market. This nationwide portfolio of communications infrastructure connects cities and communities to essential data, technology and wireless service—bringing information, ideas and innovations to the people and businesses that need them.

For more information, please contact 1-855-91-FIBER or visit CrownCastle.com