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## Joytel: Making high-speed faster for business

UNF graduate finds his niche in new field of wireless Internet.

**David Bauerlein**

After graduating from the University of North Florida, Mark Marques took off to the tallest building he could find in Jacksonville.

He had a degree in electrical engineering and an interest in the emerging field of wireless Internet technology. Even before getting his degree in 2004, he'd drawn up a business plan for what would become Joytel Wireless Communications.

The 37-story Modis tower fit the bill for where to start. On the tower's roof, he installed antennas that beam Internet service to customers in downtown Jacksonville.

"That's where the future of communication is going - completely wireless," Marques said. "That's why I was so aggressive in getting a foothold in the technology."

Marques, 30, isn't alone in this belief.

Clearwire, a national company, has been in the Jacksonville market since 2007. Cable television giants Comcast and Time Warner Cable have been discussing a plan to fund a national wireless venture operated by Sprint Nextel and Clearwire, according to a recent Wall Street Journal article.

The network would use WiMax technology, which transmits high-speed broadband Internet service through the air over a distance of miles. It's far more powerful than WiFi, which people are familiar with at cafes and other wireless spots for their laptop computers.

Marques said the Federal Communications Commission awarded a license to Joytel in January for the company to use the 3.65 gigahertz WiMax frequency. He said some of his equipment meets the criteria for WiMax, which stands for worldwide interoperability for microwave access. He plans to add more to Joytel's network.

The interest from investors in WiMax is a double-edged sword for Marques because it vindicates his business vision, but also means he'll be facing growing competition. Joytel now has five people working for it, including contractors. Marques would not say how many customers he has, but said business has doubled each year.

"You've got to start somewhere," he said. "It's a David-and-Goliath-type battle. I'm just trying to build my business one customer at a time."

Marques said he isn't trying to compete for residential customers. He's focusing instead on wooing businesses, both in downtown Jacksonville and St. Augustine. Ultimately, he'd like to expand into Orlando and Miami.

"I needed to find my niche, and my niche was really furnishing high bandwidth in downtown areas," he said.

Based on a three-year service plan, Joytel charges \$279 to \$1,349 per month.

The faster the connection speed, the more expensive the plan. Marques said the connection speed is the same for downloading and uploading files, whereas some competitors sell service that has much faster speed for downloading than uploading. He said the uploading speed is important to businesses because people depend more on being able to communicate remotely with the office, such as by e-mail.

"The Internet right now is the medium companies use to conduct business," he said. "It's changed how business is operated."

"WiMax isn't fully developed," he said. "It's still in its infancy. There are going to be so many changes and developments in the next decade that from what it is today, it's going to be a lot more powerful and a lot faster."

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