



Butler-Bremer
communications

715 Main Street • Plainfield, Iowa 50666

319-276-4458

www.butler-bremer.com

Connections Published Quarterly ©2010

CONNECTIONS



Published quarterly for the customers of Butler-Bremer Communications

More minutes, unlimited text & web, and earlier nights & weekends!

INTRODUCING OUR
\$59.99*
NATIONWIDE PLAN.

- Unlimited text, web, and mobile-to-mobile
- More anytime minutes
- Nights and weekends starting at 5pm

	i wireless	verizon	at&t	Sprint	US Cellular
Monthly Cost	\$59.99	\$89.98	\$84.99	\$69.99	\$69.99
Nationwide Minutes	500	450	450	450	450
Unlimited Mobile-to-Mobile	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unlimited Messaging	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unlimited Web / Email	✓	✓	2 GB	✓	5 GB
Nights / Weekends Starting at 5pm	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30 Day Risk-Free Guarantee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
\$100 Bonus to Switch Companies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



BIG SALE! MEGAtalk. **\$29.95!**

PAY IN ADVANCE

NO Contract, NO Credit Check, NO Deposit, NO Bill.



Includes Phone + Activation + 3 Days Unlimited Nationwide Talk

- Add unlimited talk for \$35* a month
- Add unlimited talk + text for \$40* a month
- Add unlimited talk + text + web for \$50* a month

*When you purchase a 60 day MEGAtalk Pay in Advance Plan.

T-Mobile AFFILIATE*

GET YOURS AT ANY OF OUR FOUR LOCATIONS:

- Butler-Bremer Communications in Plainfield
- Seery Telecommunications in New Hampton
- Tripoli Plumbing & Heating in Tripoli
- Hardware Hub in Fredericksburg



319-276-4458
www.butler-bremer.com

The National Broadband Plan could take away your access to fast and affordable broadband

For over 100 years, Independent Telecommunication Companies, like Butler-Bremer Communications, have invested in the necessary networks and infrastructure to keep our state connected. But federal proposals are in the works that could jeopardize rural Iowa's access to equitable and fairly priced communication services in just a few years' time.

THE REAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN (NBP)

Proponents of the NBP want you to think it is good for rural Iowans. However, the mind-set surrounding the NBP is that since the broadband network is already built, ongoing investment and support of

Continued on page 3



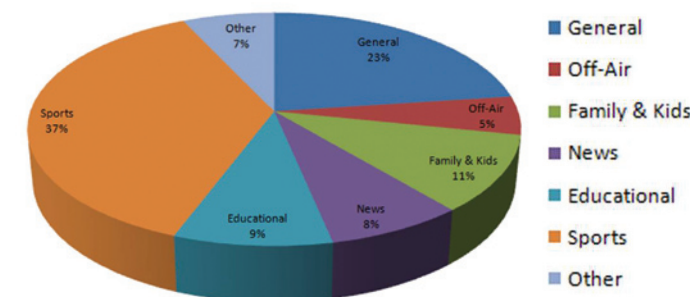
Go to www.TheGreatDisconnect.org for more information and to learn how you can help.

A behind the scenes look at cable prices

As a cable customer, you may wonder why cable rates continue to go up over time. The answer? Programming costs. As a cable company, Butler-Bremer Communications must pay every network we carry a certain price per customer every month. Up until a few years ago, we could provide the off-air stations for free, which helped to keep the costs down. But today, we are forced to pay our local broadcast networks to provide the "free" off-air channels on our cable system.

The price Butler-Bremer pays for programming goes up typically between 7% and 9% per customer every year. In fact, over fifty-six cents out of every dollar we collect from customers for Cable TV service is spent to acquire programming. And even more amazing, 37% of our total programming cost goes to acquire just eight sports channels, which are, by far, the most expensive.

Butler-Bremer's Digital TV Programming Costs by Channel Category:



Continued on page 2

Recent DIRECTV® and DISH® rate hikes make Cable TV an even BETTER deal!

If you have satellite TV, you've probably noticed an increase in your rates lately. DIRECTV® hiked rates \$2 to \$3 per package AND raised receiver costs from \$5 to \$6 a month — a big hit for customers with multiple TV sets. DISH Network just hiked package prices \$5 each across the board — a rate increase of up to 12.5%!

Satellite prices these days can be very expensive. With DIRECTV®'s Choice™ Package currently at \$60.99 per month plus \$10 for HD, \$7 for a DVR and \$6 for each receiver — you can see how rates can easily top \$100 a month. And with DISH Network's Top 120 Plus Package at \$49.99 a month, plus extra charges for HD, DVRs and Receivers (\$7 a month for each HD receiver), it's gotten extremely expensive to watch TV! But it doesn't have to.

Why pay for channels you don't need or want? With Digital TV from Butler-Bremer Communications you get over 150 channels with FREE HD on two TV sets for \$49. And, you can add a DVR to as many TVs as you want for just \$5 each! For a limited time, when you add Digital TV we'll give you the Starz & Encore Multi Pack FREE for 30 days!*

Secure your router to reduce identity theft and signal stealing!

Many of you have wireless routers through Butler-Bremer that are not secure, leaving yourself open to real danger and signal stealing. Hackers and identity thieves are targeting home wireless networks, looking for people that have not taken steps to protect their network. Without a secure network, hackers can steal your passwords, credit card numbers and bank account information over your own wireless network.

If you need help setting up your Butler-

Butler-Bremer Digital TV gives you over 150 channels + FREE HD on 2 TV sets for less than \$50 a month. Schedule your installation by 8/31 and get Starz & Encore Multi Pack FREE for 30 days*!

If you're tired of paying sky high prices for your satellite service, give us a call today at 276-4458 to schedule your installation or to go www.Butler-Bremer.com/cable-tv/freeoffer for details! ■

**Offer expires 8/31/11 and only applies to new Digital TV customers who have not had Butler-Bremer Digital TV service in the last 90 days. Taxes and fees are not included in the rates shown. Installation charges will apply. Call for complete details. DIRECTV® and DISH® prices based on published web rates as of 5/9/11.*

Bremer router security give us a call at 319-276-4458 and we will help you with this process. ■



A behind the scenes look at cable prices continued

According to Richard McBurney, CEO of Butler-Bremer Communications, "We would love to do a special sports tier so only customers who want sports channels would have to pay to watch them, but the programmers don't allow us to provide sports on a separate tier."

Programmers also tie the hands of Cable TV operators in other ways. Typically, large media companies with multiple channels force cable systems to purchase their full suite of programming rather than just the channels they want to carry. And, speaking of paying expensive prices for sports programming, every time you hear about ESPN or Fox signing a big deal to televise a league or a game, that cost filters down directly to you. In fact, most of the cable rate increases over the last ten years have been driven by sports.

We will continue to add the most popular channels and more HD channels, and to give you the most value and the most channels at the lowest possible price. To see our current line-up, go to www.Butler-Bremer.com/cable-tv/digital-tv. ■

The National Broadband Plan continued

the network is no longer required. WRONG! Telecommunications infrastructure is like roads and bridges. It requires ongoing maintenance and upgrades not only to work, but also to keep up with technology. As rural Iowans like us require faster speeds and more bandwidth for things like online video, it costs real money to deliver those services. Unfortunately, there are several components of the NBP that could shut down investment in our rural network.

The NBP promotes auctions in which the lowest cost bidder is awarded the contract to provide broadband service to an area. This could result in wide discrepancies in price, service and technology across the country. Also, the NBP proposes price-cap regulations. This means that whichever company wins the contract to provide services is only allowed to charge a certain price for those services regardless of what it costs to provide the services. We all know how much more costly it is to build and

maintain a network out here in rural Iowa where there may be only a handful of people per square mile. Therefore, if the price the companies can charge is capped, there is no incentive to continue to invest in Iowa's telecom network.

Maybe the most important unintended consequence of the NBP is if local rural telecom providers like Butler-Bremer Communications are forced out of business, who will support and reinvest in our communities? We provide low cost and no cost services to libraries, hospitals and schools. We assist in providing emergency services for local fire departments and EMTs. We provide scholarships, we give back to our communities, we pay taxes and we make sure our local telecom network will support economic development in our areas now and in the future. Without an independent local provider, that could all go away very quickly.

THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

The NBP proposes to increase broadband

speed to 100 Mbps (megabits per second) for 100 million homes... unless these homes (and businesses) are in rural, less-profitable areas. The target for OUR area is downloads of up to 4 Mbps – 25 times slower broadband than in urban areas! How does this make sense if we are to stay competitive as a great place to live and work?

Even scarier, there are provisions written in the plan that could put less profitable rural regions at risk of having no service at all.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Right now, these changes are still just plans and proposals. But soon, they could be reality. We need YOU to be an advocate for rural America. To take action call or write (or e-mail) your legislator, write a letter to the editor of our local newspapers, and tell people around you about this important issue. Together, we can raise awareness to get the changes made in legislation that we need to stay connected here in rural Iowa. ■

Internet bandwidth use is growing due to streaming video

The Internet has come a long way from where it was just a few years ago. Just three short years ago, nobody was watching Netflix movies on their Xbox or their Wii. And Facebook didn't really catch on until 2008, while today over 41% of the U.S. population has a Facebook account.

In the last 12 months, Butler-Bremer has doubled the amount of bandwidth it purchases without raising Internet rates for our customers. However, the explosion of Butler-Bremer Internet customers using streaming video has still impacted overall Internet performance for our customers during peak usage times.

Here at Butler-Bremer we've found that just a handful of web sites are causing a significant amount of our total bandwidth use. In fact about 1/3 of our bandwidth use comes from customers using just TWO web sites: Netflix and YouTube. Compare this with the fact that all of the web browsing by all our customers combined only uses about 15% of our bandwidth and you can see just how much bandwidth is used by streaming video. Unfortunately, the need for more bandwidth just



ABOUT 1/3 OF BUTLER-BREMER'S TOTAL INTERNET BANDWIDTH USE IS FROM A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF CUSTOMERS WATCHING YOUTUBE AND NETFLIX VIDEOS.

keeps growing. And bandwidth costs money.

To deal with the need for more bandwidth, Butler-Bremer is exploring various network management tactics to get the very most out of the bandwidth we already purchase. As time goes on and bandwidth use increases even more due to evolving Internet needs, we will continue to purchase additional bandwidth to keep up with your demands. Because who knows what new and exciting Internet trend will be coming down the road tomorrow? ■