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Editor's letter

There was a flurry of undersea cable activity at the end of 2009. In Asia, the Middle East, Europe and the Mediterranean cable builds were announced or cables came online.

Huawei Marine Networks completed its first turnkey undersea cable, Hannibal, connecting Tunisia to a landing station in Sicily. And on the same day that Huawei Marine announced the completion of Hannibal, it also announced a turnkey contract with PT Telekomunikasi Indonesia to build the "Mataram-Kupang" undersea cable system. This 1,200km system will connect five islands off the east of Indonesia and have an initial capacity of 4×10Gbps. The project is scheduled to be completed at the end of 2010.

All this activity is in tune with Telegeography's prediction of a cable boom in 2010. This is why in January's issue we look at the next stage of development in the undersea cable market. Just as undersea cable capacity grew from 2.5Gbps wavelengths (2.5G) to 10G, cable operators are examining the feasibility of making the move from 10G to 40G on repeatered cable systems. Customer demand has yet to outweigh the cost of upgrade equipment, but on the highest volume routes 40G adoption is imminent.

Retiring and replacing a cable is an expensive proposition and 40G hopefully is a way for cable operators to extend the lives of their cables and deploy new cables that can stay in the water longer. 40G uptake is expected to begin in 2010.

Beyond the undersea cable market, carriers are approaching 2010 with cautious optimism. The term recovery is not being tossed around lightly but there is hope that 2010 will deliver further growth and confidence. In the *Trends and talking points* feature on p27 we examine market predictions for the new year. CDN, global Ethernet and the potential of NGNs are still topics of interest and will shape carrier developments in 2010. Keith Willetts, CEO and chairman of the TM Forum, believes that wholesale is entering a new stage of development and comments that the term "wholesale" doesn't cover the ever-growing areas of interest that carriers are pursuing. In 2010, it will be hard to be surprised by the opportunities that carriers pursue as they seek to redefine themselves and capacity demands increase.

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