

# Mount Washington Observatory Case Study

## New England's Highest Point Stays Connected with FairPoint Ethernet

At the remote and inhospitable Mount Washington Observatory in New Hampshire, researchers study weather and climate, and deliver distance-learning via the Web with FairPoint's reliable, high-speed Ethernet services.



### Business Challenges

New England's highest peak, Mount Washington, is the self-proclaimed "Home of the World's Worst Weather," and with good reason. The peak has long held the record for the world's highest human-recorded wind speed (231 mph), set in 1934.

In this place of extreme wind, cold and snow, researchers work at Mount Washington Observatory with the mission of better understanding weather and climate. The private, nonprofit scientific and educational institution also shares what it learns with the public through distance-learning courses broadcast live from the summit.

Connectivity is critical to research and educational efforts but certainly challenging in these conditions. In the past, the observatory experienced spotty Internet service, affecting its ability to communicate and educate.

"We struggled with our wireless microwave connection to the summit," said Pete Gagne, Mount Washington Observatory's IT manager. "Connections could be lost or slowed considerably due to inclement weather or not enough bandwidth at peak user times."

### FairPoint Solution

Mount Washington Observatory teamed with FairPoint Communications to consolidate all of its telecommunications services from multiple carriers to just one service provider. By switching to FairPoint, the nonprofit organization has a network that can support an array of services, including Internet, phone and videoconferencing.



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Over the span of eight months, FairPoint crews battled inclement weather on the summit and traveled to North Conway and Durham to install a 10 MBPS Ethernet Local Area Network (E-LAN) service, 10 MBPS Ethernet Dedicated Internet Access (EDIA) service, and high-capacity Ethernet data circuits, along with voice services. FairPoint delivered these services over its resilient IP-based network, completing the work before the road closed for the winter.

Since 2008, FairPoint has invested an average of more than \$1 million per week in its communications infrastructure and technology across northern New England. With more than 16,000 miles of fiber and access to more than 95 percent of all businesses, FairPoint's network is the most robust and ubiquitous network in the region and is able to meet the demands of some of the region's largest institutions like regional health care facilities, financial institutions, and government and education entities.

## Benefits

FairPoint was able to meet all of Mount Washington Observatory's service needs at the remote summit location, the North Conway Weather Discovery Center (an interactive science museum), as well as its video conference link with the ConnectNH program at the University of New Hampshire in Durham. The move simultaneously improved the summit's connectivity while reducing cost – due to consolidation with a single provider.

"Our telecom system is incredibly intricate, but FairPoint's team took the time to carefully map out the entire infrastructure," Gagne said. "FairPoint worked to really understand our specific needs, and how the technology could be improved to handle those needs. They delivered cost-effective, reliable, higher bandwidth services and traveled to the top of New England to make it happen."

The high-speed connection also provides critical support as the observatory delivers its distance-learning.

"Our videoconferencing program is an essential part of our educational mission and a critical source of revenue," Gagne said. "Thanks to FairPoint's expertise and services, the program is stronger and more reliable than ever. It is quite a feat to be able to illustrate to various groups of students what's going on at the top of the highest summit in New England."

## For More Information

FairPoint helps organizations like yours by developing customized solutions to increase their network capacity in order to meet their mission.

**Contact your local account manager or visit [fairpoint.com](http://fairpoint.com) to learn more.**

