

Press Release

Carinthia gains independent digital infrastructure as BIK launches ALPSiX powered by Smartoptics and Arista

Oslo, Norway – September 18, 2026 – Smartoptics, a leading provider of optical networking solutions, today announced that BIK Breitbandinitiative Kärnten GmbH has launched ALPSiX, a new digital infrastructure hub for Carinthia, Austria. The turnkey network is delivered by Inter.link and EdgeOps using Smartoptics optical and Arista packet technology. The network design is cost-efficient, compact and easy to use, supporting the long-term digital competitiveness of Carinthian businesses.

BIK is Carinthia's state-owned broadband company, responsible for extending fiber and connectivity across the Austrian region. ALPSiX is Carinthia's first Internet Exchange Point, owned by BIK and operated by global internet exchange operator DE-CIX. The hub's network maximizes fiber utilization with 4x100G-to-400G aggregation using cost-efficient Smartoptics muxponders and minimizes operational overhead with Arista switches chosen for software quality. ALPSiX is designed to scale from two initial points of presence today into a resilient, European-standard interconnection hub.

"Today, all Carinthian internet traffic routes through Vienna and Frankfurt – that's lost revenue and lost opportunity for local tech companies. ALPSiX, built by proven, battle-tested European partners, not experiments, changes the equation: local peering means lower costs for ISPs, attractive conditions for data centers, and real jobs for digital talent in Carinthia," says Peter Schark, CEO, BIK.

Inter.link delivers the network as general contractor and EdgeOps operates the DWDM layer. The ring connects Klagenfurt and Villach across a 33-kilometer northern segment and a 103-kilometer southern segment using Raman amplification. Smartoptics ROADMs allow BIK to add new points of presence along the ring as usage grows. Inter.link uses Arista's 7280 DCS platform for its European 400G network, enabling instant provisioning of Network-as-a-Service products. With two Inter.link points of presence in Klagenfurt and Villach, connected via the Smartoptics DWDM platform, BIK will offer services such as IP Transit, Layer 2 Connectivity, Cloud Connects, and DDoS Protection.

The SoSmart network management suite gives EdgeOps a single, intuitive view for provisioning wavelengths on the ring. It also turns OTDR transceiver data into a map that shows exactly where to send a repair crew when fiber breaks.

"Across Europe, more regions are choosing to build and control their own digital infrastructure instead of relying on distant hubs. Open optical networking is a strong enabler for that shift – no vendor lock-in, no waiting on one supplier's roadmap. ALPSiX is a shining example of how digital sovereignty can stimulate regional business and connectivity, and we're proud to work with BIK, Arista, Inter.link and EdgeOps in building it," says Magnus Grenfeldt, CEO, Smartoptics.

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About Smartoptics

Smartoptics provides innovative optical networking solutions and devices for the new era of open networking. Our customer base includes thousands of enterprises, governments, cloud providers, Internet exchanges as well as cable and telecom operators. We have an open networking approach in everything we do which allows our customers to break unwanted vendor lock-in, remain flexible and minimize costs. Our solutions are used in metro and regional network applications that increasingly rely on data center services and specifications. Smartoptics is a Scandinavian company founded in 2006. We partner with leading technology and network solution providers such as Brocade, Cisco and Dell and have a global reach through more than 100 business partners.

For additional information about Smartoptics, please visit <https://www.smartoptics.com/>

About BIK

As a wholly owned subsidiary of the state, BIK builds for the people of Carinthia. What began as a visionary initiative is now the infrastructure for the future. Stable, fast, and reliable internet connections throughout both urban and rural areas form an essential foundation for a strong and competitive business location. BIK's mission is to bring digital infrastructure to rural areas so that equal opportunities can be ensured regardless of needs, time, or location.