

Exclusive Interview with WiMAX Analyst Jeff Kagan about Clear Atlanta

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[WiMAX is spreading fast in Atlanta](#) as Clearwire makes the city a testing ground for the latest broadband technology. Residents of Atlanta now have access to the highest Internet speeds and coverage in America. Here in New York City, Wimax News interviewed [Jeff Kagan](#), a respected Atlanta-based telecom analyst, to give us his expert opinion and perspective on Clearwire's WiMAX service in Atlanta:

What is your experience with Clear WiMAX in Atlanta?

I have been using this service over the last few weeks and so far I am very impressed. The speed of the connection is robust, and the connecting is easy and stable. Clearwire has a very large footprint of coverage around most of metro Atlanta. The experience was like a wireline internet connection, but the connection is wireless.

What were the Internet service offerings in Atlanta until now? How does Clear compare to them?

Atlanta has DSL from [AT&T](#), and service from [Comcast](#), plus cellular internet connectivity. The Clear service offers the speed of the wireline services, but does it wirelessly. The Clear service is just starting to be installed. It is not available in many places around the country yet. However they have aggressive plans to roll out service to dozens of markets over the next year or so.

Clearwire says in the next few months a new modem will be available which ties in with the Sprint network, giving you Clearwire service where available, and then traditional Sprint service everywhere else.

Of [Clearwire's options for mobile broadband](#) connectivity, such as USB modems, CLEAR Spot, and Intel Embedded WiMAX laptops, which has been the most effective?

Clearwire has a variety of ways to connect to the service. If you only have one laptop you can get a USB modem. You can also create a bubble of connectivity around your home or office or wherever you are. Plus you can take that bubble of connectivity around with you by taking the modem. I think the customer has to determine what kind of needs they have. Are they alone or are there multiple computers that need to access the service?

Do you think Clear will become the standard Internet service in Atlanta in the near future?

There are already all of the major service providers selling service in Atlanta, and customers are generally happy, so no I don't see Clearwire winning the majority of business, but I do see them carving out a successful niche for themselves because this is very good technology. Then we will watch the marketplace continue to change and mature in coming years. Remember Clearwire is new. What else will be new over the next several years.

A lot of Clearwire's success will depend on how well they advertise and market and how well customers get to know them. That means the ball is in their court.

How much upload and download speed is currently available with the Clear service?

I found connection speeds in the 5 - 9 Mbps range. Very impressive.

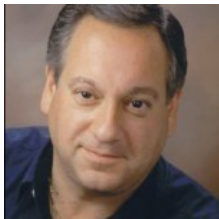
Does Clear greatly improve the quality of voice and video applications on the Internet?

They drove me around in a [car outfitted with Clearwire service](#) and we watched a concert with video and audio and the quality was very good, while we were moving.

Do you believe that Clearwire will be able to follow its [ambitious rollout plan](#) and really become the standard 4G network in the US?

That is the big question. We will not know until we see them rolling out city after city, successfully. As they continue to roll out in many cities, and learn the marketing lessons, what works and what does not, they could indeed become very successful. They have enormous potential, but it is up to them to make the growth dreams come true. The good part of this equation is that other companies are in on the act with Clearwire and they are anxious to market the service to their customers as well. Companies like Sprint and Comcast and Intel should help Clearwire grow.

About Jeff Kagan



[Jeff Kagan](#) is a renowned analyst, speaker, and author on the wireless and telecom industry. He has watched the changing telecom industry closely since the 1980's, enabling him to offer an expert opinion and strategic advice to his clients. Kagan regularly meets with technology competitors, compares their actions, products, and services, and to offer comments to the public. Kagan's analysis has appeared in the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, CNN, CNBC, and CBS, among others.

Clearwire Coverage in 14 states