



# Digital Summit 2009 Media Release

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## *Advancing Eastern Ontario's Digital Possibilities*

### *Digital Summit Focuses on Uses of Broadband for Eastern Ontario*

EASTERN ONTARIO– More than 100 public and private sector organizations will gather in Kingston in late March to take the next step in filling a vital infrastructure gap in the region: modern high-speed internet service for communities across Eastern Ontario.

“More and more often, public and private sector organizations are using the internet to provide information, deliver services, do business, tap into expertise beyond the local community, and collaborate on new ventures,” explains Ron Emond, Chair of the Eastern Ontario Wardens’ Caucus and Warden of Hastings County. “More and more often, these uses of the internet require telecommunications networks with substantial data exchange capacity. ”

Emond reports that more than a quarter million people in Eastern Ontario – and the organizations in which they work – do not have access to broadband. “Until we address this issue, Eastern Ontario’s ability to develop into strong, vibrant communities where innovation, economic growth and industry thrive will be severely limited,” Emond says.

A modern high-capacity broadband network for Eastern Ontario will allow residents, educators, health professionals, governments, and businesses to make use of the most modern internet applications. Workshops will explore possible uses of a proposed region-wide broadband network in four thematic areas: e-learning, e-business, e-health, and e-government.

With a high-capacity network in place in the region, Eastern Ontario stakeholders could use the internet for large digital file transfers, video conferencing, online collaborations and inter-professional consultations, interactive web page promotions and e-commerce, online enrolment/registrations, completion and submission of online forms and documents, online learning tools such as webinars and interactive training, and popular video file sharing applications like YouTube, Facebook, and interactive gaming.

Keynote speakers include Matt Wenger, President of OpenGlobal, founder and past President of the non-profit Columbia Mountain Open Network, a ground-breaking community fibre networking initiative spanning 137 rural communities over 90,000 square kilometres in the Canadian Rockies, and Bernard Lord, President and CEO, Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association, former Premier of New Brunswick and champion of the province’s eNB.ca strategy.

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Eastern Ontario Wardens’ Caucus: [EOWC Inc.](#)  
For more information on the Digital Summit and to register:  
[www.eodigitalpossibilities.org](http://www.eodigitalpossibilities.org) or [digitalsummit2009@gmail.com](mailto:digitalsummit2009@gmail.com) or 613-376-6006

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Addressing Eastern Ontario's broadband gap is the EOWC Inc.'s top priority for 2009. The Digital Summit follows the January, 2009 [release of an REOI](#) by the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus for development of a network that will help bring modern, high-speed internet services to at least 95 per cent of the people and businesses across the region. The EOWC Inc. has also been working closely with the Federal and Provincial Governments to develop a proposal for a network that will have capacity to support growth and prosperity throughout Eastern Ontario for the next 10 years. With the Summit expected to develop a clearer picture of the many uses of the network, the next step in bringing a regional network to life will be to invite the private sector to participate in this important project.

The Digital Summit will be held March 24-25, 2009 at the [Ambassador Conference Resort Kingston, Ontario](#). For more information: [www.eodigitalpossibilities.org](http://www.eodigitalpossibilities.org) or [digitalsummit2009@gmail.com](mailto:digitalsummit2009@gmail.com).

The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus is an incorporated non-share capital entity (EOWC Inc.) whose membership includes the eleven Eastern Ontario Counties and two Single-Tier municipalities of the City of Kawartha Lakes and Prince Edward County. The transformation of the original informal Caucus into EOWC Inc. will enable better promotion of Eastern Ontario as well as direct participation in federal or provincial programs that can benefit the region.

The EOWC continues to meet regularly to discuss issues of mutual importance and present the findings to the federal and provincial governments, acting as a unified voice on behalf of their constituents. Over the past few years the EOWC has grown into a formidable organization, drawing upon its diversity and strengths to engage the senior levels of government and improve both the municipal financial position and the socio-economic conditions throughout the region. .

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