

## Telecom veterans to lead Connexion Technologies

Frank Norton, Staff Writer

CARY - Connexion Technologies hired two veteran telecom executives to run the company and explore options such as going public. The company, founded in 2002 by former Cary Mayor Glen Lang, on Monday named John J. "Jack" Mueller as chief executive and Peter D. Ley as chief financial officer. Both are from outside the company and have decades of experience in the telecommunications industry.

Lang will remain on the privately owned company's board and serve in a chairmanlike capacity, focusing on business development and strategy.



John Mueller

Connexion builds fiber-optic networks for new subdivisions, condominium projects and resorts. It makes money by leasing that infrastructure to cable and telephone companies that serve those communities. Connexion hardware is now deployed in about 170 developments and helps serve more than 200,000 homes across the country -- the largest concentration is in Florida.

The company has expanded far faster than anticipated and outpaced its ability to raise money to fund new investments, Lang said. It has about 350 employees, nearly half at its Cary headquarters and the rest at more than a dozen offices in Florida and other parts of the country.

"We've always used private equity to grow, but now we're looking at the equity markets and the public debt markets," said Lang, 51, who was mayor of Cary from 1999 to 2003. "So we were very fortunate to be able to recruit guys with extensive experience in those markets.

"We've grown to the point where we need to diversify our capital resources," Lang said.

That diversifying could mean an initial public offering of stock, new funding from private equity investors or borrowing money on debt markets. The company last month announced a \$50 million line of credit from a German bank.

To get to the next level of growth, Connexion will need even more funding, plus the management expertise needed to run a larger company with more sophisticated funding

options, Lang said. So the company is turning to Mueller and Ley, both of whom have extensive management experience at publicly traded firms.

Mueller is chairman of Idearc, a New York Stock Exchange company and the publisher of Verizon Yellow Pages. He recently served as president and CEO of Valor Communications Group, which he took public in 2005 before the company merged to become Windstream Corp.

"Connexion has tremendous potential, and I'd like to help it reach that potential," Mueller said. He said he was attracted to Connexion's unique business model as a landlord to cable, phone and security companies. "That's a multidimensional opportunity," he said.

Ley most recently was a media and telecom investment banker with Banc of America Securities, which he joined in 2000. Before that, he was chief financial officer of Commonwealth Telephone Enterprises in Pennsylvania.

Lang said taking Connexion public will be a serious consideration, but he wouldn't give a timeline for such a possibility.