

# Big names pony up for power-line broadband

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Current Communications announced Thursday it had received \$130 million in investments to accelerate Broadband over Power Line technology.

The Maryland company said in a news release that the new strategic equity investors included EarthLink, General Electric, TXU Corp. and Bermuda's Sensus Metering Systems. They join a roster of existing partners such as Hearst Corp., Duke Energy and Goldman, Sachs.

Current uses BPL technology to provide broadband service that runs across power lines, allowing the potential for a new source of retail Internet service as well as accommodating "smart grid" electric meters for utility companies.

"This technology provides utilities with a more intelligent, real-time and secure power grid that should help conserve energy, reduce electricity disruptions and protect critical infrastructure," said Alex Urquhart, president of GE Energy Financial Services.

TXU Corp. will be taking advantage of the smart-grid concept by providing BPL on TXU Electric Delivery power lines that serve more than 2 million customers in Texas.

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