

## DISTANCE SINGING:

Wanganui Opera singer Deborah Wai Kapohe uses ultra fast broadband for singing lessons.

PHOTO/ FILE



# City keen on getting hooked up to UFB

By Staff Reporter

Wanganui residents are already making the most of the city's now completed ultra-fast broadband network (UFB).

Of the 18,000 users able to connect, the uptake in Wanganui is 7 per cent, or more than 1000 connections.

Ultrafast Fibre have spent the past four years installing the network, with Wanganui becoming the first city the company has completed in the central North Island.

"Having the communal network completed is a hugely significant milestone for Ultrafast Fibre and all our Wanganui stakeholders, particularly the [Wanganui District] council and Digital Leaders Forum," said Ultrafast general manager of sales and marketing Richard Riley.

The network officially launches with a three-day expo from May 14-16, which will include information about ultra fast fibre along with practical workshops. "We believe that fibre broadband is going to positively influence and enable

the city's residents and businesses in so many facets of the digitally connected world," Mr Riley said.

One of those already taking advantage of the fibre network is professional opera singer Debbie Wai Kapohe.

She takes singing lessons with a teacher based in Dunedin from her Wanganui home over the UFB network. Previously she had to travel the length of the country.

"Now my lessons are done at home via Skype, which is so efficient and easy," she said.

Ms Kapohe said singers and creative artists could use UFB to be more productive.

"Before I got connected, the internet was just too slow to research and download files properly. It was incredibly frustrating," she said. Ms Kapohe also uses UFB in her arts facilitation work for Wanganui District Council.

"It's important for Wanganui to stay connected with what's happening in the arts world," Ms Kapohe said.

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