

DATA CENTERS · ISSUE #7

THREADS OF LIGHT

Adult / Community Edition · Prestige

CREDITS

Threads of Light · Data Centers #7 · Adult / Community edition

Story and production: GOTB Consulting, Chicago

*Lead: Mateo Olmedo · Heroes: Undertow, The Auditor, Commons, Gridline · On screen:
Lena Ashgrove, Channel 5 · Cameo: Dess*

AI-GENERATED ART, FICTIONAL CHARACTERS

All characters, the town of Prairie Bend and Channel 5 are fictional. Any resemblance to real people is a coincidence. No real logos are shown. Real places, agencies and utilities are named only where public sources are cited; officials appear by role.

Every number was checked against public sources (see Sources). Disputed points carry a CONTESTED stamp and the strongest case on each side.

Nonpartisan: no parties, no politicians.

Shore safety: never touch, dig near or anchor over marked cable routes; leave buoys and beach vaults alone.

Lettering: Bebas Neue, Oswald, Kalam, Libre Baskerville, Courier Prime, Special Elite (set in Pillow; no fonts embedded).

© 2026 GOTB Consulting. All rights reserved.

THE CAST



MATEO OLMEDO

Two chairs, one level.
Gives each side its
strongest voice.



THE AUDITOR

Sees it, reports it.
Cannot fix it alone.



GRIDLINE

Lineworker hero. Light
rides the same grid.



COMMONS

Repair crews and
neighbors. Lantern up.



FACT FILE · 01

350 E. Cermak (ORD10), Chicago: 8 stories, 1,005,500 sq ft, over 70 network providers; the operator calls it "the most interconnected multi-tenant data center in the Midwest."



THE AUDITOR

EIGHT STORIES, 1,005,500 SQUARE FEET, OVER 70 NETWORK PROVIDERS.



THE AUDITOR

THE OPERATOR CALLS IT THE MIDWEST'S MOST INTERCONNECTED.

FACT FILE · 02



REPORTED

350 E. Cermak (ORD10), Chicago: 8 stories, 1,005,500 sq ft, over 70 network providers; the operator calls it "the most interconnected multi-tenant data center in the Midwest."

Source: Digital Realty, "ORD10 Data Center | 350 East Cermak" (operator page)

GOTB / DC FILE

PHONE TO TOWER



THE AUDITOR

YOUR PHONE GOES WIRELESS ONLY TO
THE NEAREST TOWER.



THE AUDITOR

AFTER THAT: FIBER, ON LAND AND
UNDER THE SEA.

FACT FILE · 03

A phone's signal travels wirelessly only to the nearest cell tower; from there it rides terrestrial and subsea fiber.

Source: TeleGeography, "Submarine Cable Frequently Asked Questions"

GOTB / DC FILE

HEARING ROOM



MATEO

CHAIR ONE: MORE FIBER AND MORE DATA CENTERS MEAN JOBS AND CONNECTION.



MATEO

CHAIR TWO: WHO PAYS FOR THE POWER, THE LAND AND THE RISK?



MATEO

BOTH CHAIRS GET THEIR STRONGEST CASE.

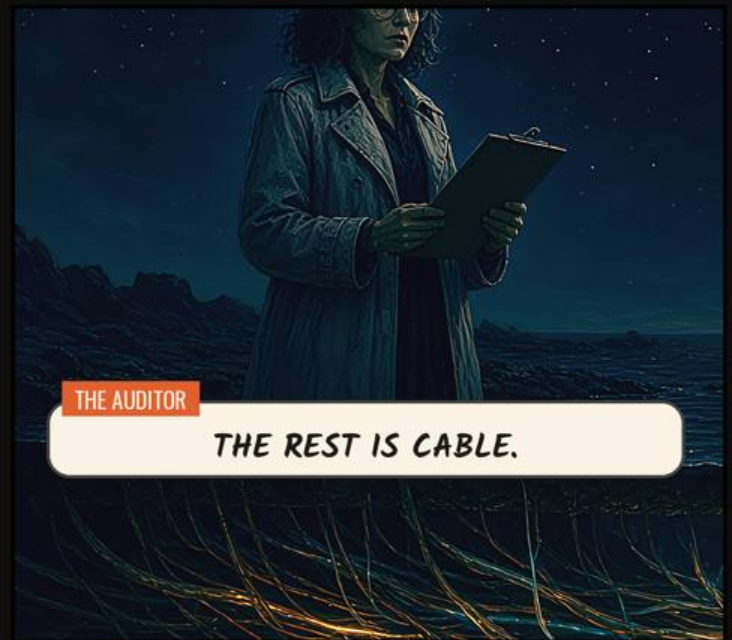
FACT FILE · 04



Framing panel: the two chairs present the strongest case on each side. Figures appear on the panels that follow, each with its source.

Source: GOTB framing (no statistic)

GOTB / DC FILE



FACT FILE · 05

Satellites carry just 0.37% of all U.S. international capacity.

Source: TeleGeography, "Submarine Cable Frequently Asked Questions"

GOTB / DC FILE



FACT FILE · 06



REPORTED

As of 2026, TeleGeography tracks more than 600 active and planned submarine cables. As of early 2026, over 1.5 million km of submarine cable is in service globally.

Source: TeleGeography, "Submarine Cable Frequently Asked Questions"

GOTB / DC FILE

UNDERTOW



GARDEN-HOSE WIDE OUT HERE.

UNDERTOW



HAIR-THIN GLASS INSIDE.

UNDERTOW



MAREA ALONE CAN CARRY 224
TERABITS A SECOND.

FACT FILE · 07

For most of its ocean journey a cable is about as wide as a garden hose; the light-carrying fibers are roughly the diameter of a human hair. The MAREA cable can carry 224 terabits per second.

Source: TeleGeography, "Submarine Cable Frequently Asked Questions"

GOTB / DC FILE



UNDERTOW

NEAR SHORE THEY'RE BURIED IN THE SEABED.



UNDERTOW

OUT DEEP, THEY REST ON THE FLOOR.

FACT FILE · 08

Near shore, cables are buried under the seabed for protection; they go all the way down to the ocean floor.

Source: TeleGeography, "Submarine Cable Frequently Asked Questions"

GOTB / DC FILE

STORM REPAIR



FACT FILE · 09

Roughly 200 cable faults a year. Fishing vessels and dragged anchors cause two-thirds of all faults; deliberate sabotage and shark bites are exceedingly rare; fish bites (including sharks) caused zero faults 2007-2014.

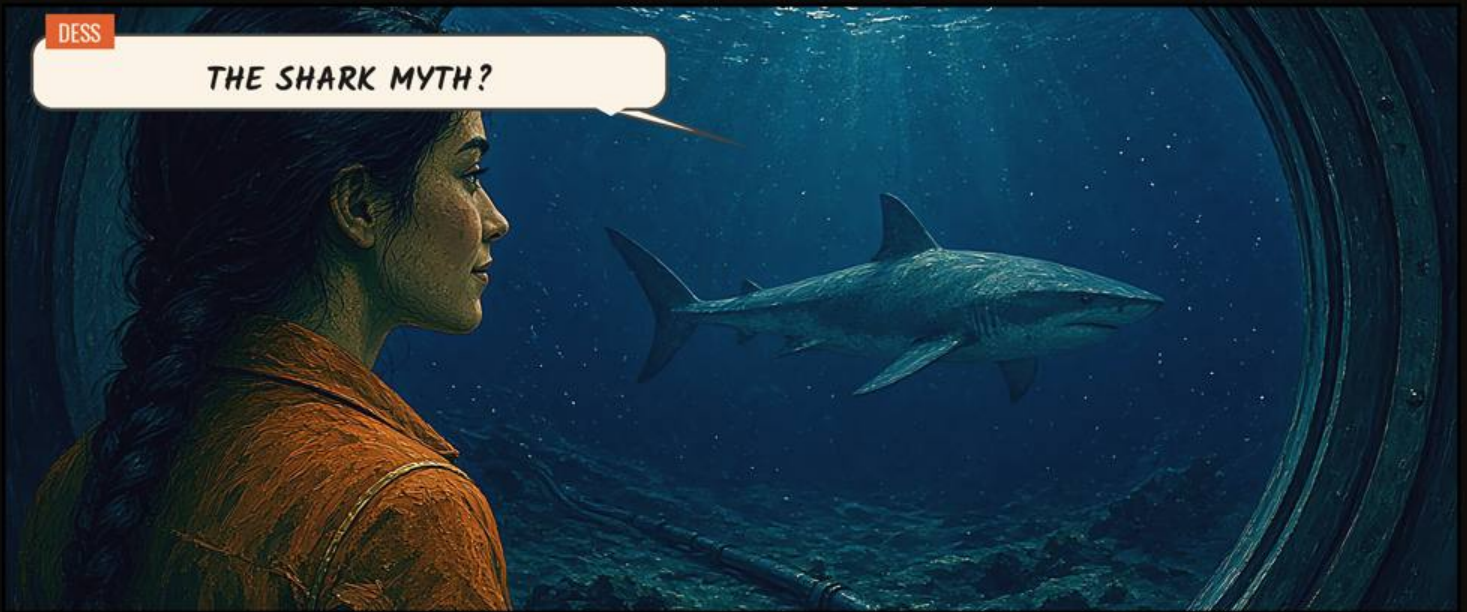
Source: TeleGeography, "Submarine Cable Frequently Asked Questions"

GOTB / DC FILE

MYTH CHECK

DESS

THE SHARK MYTH?



DESS

**FISH BITES CAUSED ZERO FAULTS
FROM 2007 TO 2014.**



FACT FILE · 10

Fishing vessels and dragged anchors cause two-thirds of all faults; deliberate sabotage and shark bites are exceedingly rare; fish bites (including sharks) caused zero faults 2007-2014.

Source: TeleGeography, "Submarine Cable Frequently Asked Questions"

GOTB / DC FILE



THE AUDITOR

RESILIENCE IS REDUNDANCY;
NETWORKS SPREAD CAPACITY ACROSS
SEVERAL CABLES, SO ONE BREAK
DOESN'T TAKE A CITY DOWN.



FACT FILE · 11



Networks spread capacity across multiple cables so that if one breaks, traffic keeps running.

Source: TeleGeography, "Submarine Cable Frequently Asked Questions"

GOTB / DC FILE

CHAIR ONE



CHAIR ONE: A CITY WHERE THE NETWORKS MEET ATTRACTS THE NEXT INVESTMENT.



THAT'S AN ADVANTAGE WORTH PROTECTING.

FACT FILE · 12

Framing panel: the two chairs present the strongest case on each side. Figures appear on the panels that follow, each with its source.

Source: GOTB framing (no statistic)

GOTB / DC FILE

CHAIR TWO



FACT FILE · 13

Framing panel: the two chairs present the strongest case on each side. Figures appear on the panels that follow, each with its source.

Source: GOTB framing (no statistic)

GOTB / DC FILE



FACT FILE · 14



Framing panel: no new statistic on this page. Figures appear on the panels around it, each with its source.

Source: GOTB framing (no statistic)

GOTB / DC FILE

LENA · ON SCREEN

NEXT: THE ELECTRICIANS, FITTERS
AND CREWS WHO BUILD ALL OF IT.



FACT FILE · 15



Framing panel: no new statistic on this page. Figures appear on the panels around it, each with its source.

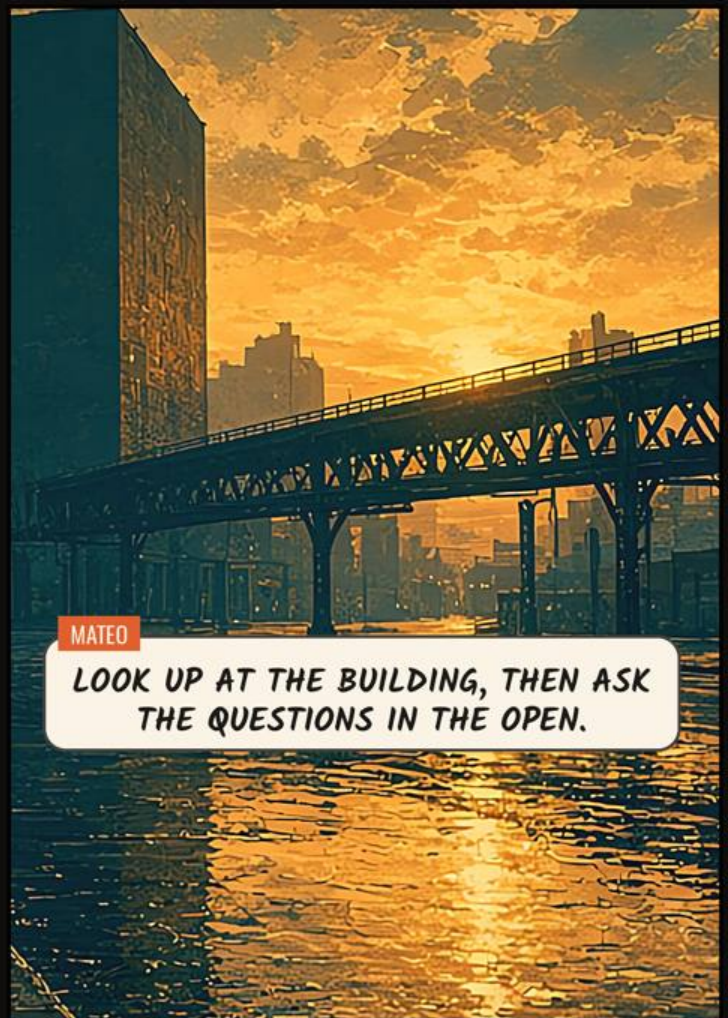
Source: GOTB framing (no statistic)

GOTB / DC FILE



MATEO

TWO CHAIRS, ONE LEVEL.



MATEO

LOOK UP AT THE BUILDING, THEN ASK
THE QUESTIONS IN THE OPEN.

GOTB Consulting, Chicago: infrastructure and procurement for the power, water and public works these projects depend on.

BY THE NUMBERS

600+

Active and planned undersea cables tracked as of 2026.
(TeleGeography, Reported)

1.5 MILLION KM

Submarine cable in service worldwide, early 2026.

~200

Cable faults a year worldwide. (ICPC)

TWO-THIRDS

Share of faults from fishing gear and dragged anchors. Fish bites
2007-2014: zero.

0.37%

Share of U.S. international capacity carried by satellite. (FCC)

224 TBPS

What the MAREA cable can carry, in terabits per second.

TWO CHAIRS, ONE LEVEL

The strongest case on each side, labeled. Nonpartisan.

BUILD MORE

Where networks meet, jobs and investment follow. More fiber and more data centers mean a better-connected city.

COUNT THE COSTS

Every new building draws power, land and water. Ask who pays and who decides.

BUILD IN SPARES

Resilience is redundancy: several cables, several paths, so one break never takes a city down.

WHAT BOTH SHARE

A connected city, public planning, decisions made in the open.

YOUR TURN

What would you ask before a new hub is built?

SOURCES

Full list with fact IDs: FACT_BASE.md and NUMBER_CHECK.md (GOTB internal).

TELEGEOGRAPHY

TeleGeography, "Submarine Cable Frequently Asked Questions"

DIGITAL REALTY

Digital Realty, "ORD10 Data Center | 350 East Cermak" (operator page)

ABOUT GOTB CONSULTING

WHO WE ARE

A Chicago firm working on infrastructure and procurement for the systems communities depend on.

DATA CENTERS

Siting, delivery and community questions.

POWER

Grid connections, substations and lines.

WATER

Supply, treatment and cooling.

PUBLIC WORKS

Roads, pipes and public spaces.

THE END



TWO CHAIRS, ONE LEVEL.

Build the threads in the open, and both can sit down.

GOTB CONSULTING · CHICAGO

Data centers · Power · Water · Public works

AI-generated art, fictional characters