

The Big Ronaldo

■ Transmission towers and dishes: "Big" Ronaldo's system

- Expanded his hobby into two successful companies
- Offers wireless Internet in the 2.4 and 5.8 GHz ranges
- Satellite DXing at a very low elevation
- Enthusiasm for technology led to his hobby and his profession

“Big” Ronaldo’s Two Companies



If you live in a city that’s named Louveira, you’ll quickly come across ambiguous names. For “Big” Ronaldo Zovaro it was clear that one of his companies that sells amateur radio equipment would get the domain name www.louvetel.com.br. But we couldn’t quite understand the reason behind giving his second company, a wireless Internet provider, the domain name www.pignet.com.br. Of course, it’s much more important that he’s a satellite enthusiast.

His property is full of every kind of dish. Unfortunately, he doesn’t have all that much time anymore to play around with his hobby. “My company Pignet employs 15 people,” he explains to us during a visit to his company in Louvei-

ra, a city of 37,000 people in the São Paulo province in southeastern Brazil.

You can’t miss his main office: in addition to a large 5-meter satellite dish there are two masts that streak towards the sky. These masts carry the transmitting antennas for his wireless Internet service that his company offers.

“Besides these two master transmitters, we also operate 30 additional repeaters throughout the city”, Big Ronaldo explains to us regarding his business. “This allows us to reach more than 90% of all the people in Louveira. We install roughly 50 reception systems every month; at the moment we have about 2000 customers that use our service.”

Transmissions take place in the 2.4

and 5.8 GHz ranges and customers can access his Internet service within a radius of about 1km from each of the transmission antennas. “Our service costs 50 Real per month with a one-time installation cost of 180 Real”, says Ronaldo.

Ronaldo is an enthusiastic satellite hobbyist. He installed his first dish in 2002: “It was a 1.6-meter antenna”, remembers Ronaldo. Additional dishes were not far behind: his big dish is a 5-meter monster that he erected with an actuator motor.

Most of the time he has this dish pointed to SATMEX 5 at 116° west. “This is real DX reception here in southern Brazil since this satellite’s elevation is just 9°”, adds Ronaldo as he refers to

■ “Big” Ronaldo at the base of the mast for his 5-meter dish. One of his 2.8-meter antennas can be seen in the background to the left.





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1. To the left a portion of his 5-meter dish, to the right a 1.6-meter antenna pointed to SATMEX 5 at 116° west. It's easy to see the low elevation of 9°.

2. "Big" Ronaldo uses a large assortment of test equipment in his workshop. One of his companies sells and repairs amateur radio equipment.

3. Ronaldo's company Pignet offers wireless Internet service in the Brazilian city of Louveira.

another 1.6-meter dish that is also pointed to SATMEX 5: "The smaller antenna is used for Ku-band reception on SATMEX 5."

Next to those are two more antennas that are 2.8-meters in diameter: "One of them is aligned with NSS806 while the other is pointed to STARONE C2 at 70° west."

At one point Ronaldo had 19 dishes installed although today he doesn't have as much time anymore to work on his hobby because of his two companies.

He still remembers when he got his first issue of TELE-satellite in his hands: "A friend of mine went to Switzerland and came back with two issues." Today he reads the Portuguese version of TELE-satellite in the Internet.

Ronaldo managed to take his interest in satellite reception and successfully expand it to two companies that have to do with transmission technology. He created two successful companies from his hobby.



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