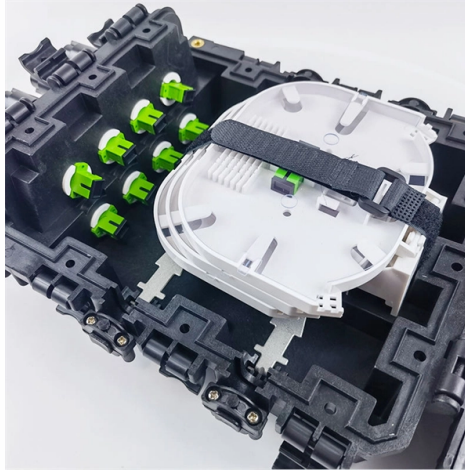


What is an ONU Optical Network Unit



Overview

ONT stands for Optical Network Terminal. ONU stands for Optical Network Unit. An ONT and an ONU are the same things.

Key Takeaways

An Optical Network Unit (ONU) is a customer-side device in Passive Optical Network (PON) systems that converts fiber-optic signals from an ISP's Optical Line Terminal (OLT) into electrical signals for internet, voice, or TV services. It acts as the endpoint of the fiber connection in homes or buildings, enabling broadband access over optical fiber.

What an ONU Does

- **Signal conversion:** Translates downstream optical signals into electrical signals and converts upstream electrical signals back into optical form.
- **Service delivery:** Supports internet, VoIP, IPTV, and other broadband services over a single fiber.
- **Traffic management:** Handles QoS, VLANs, and prioritization for latency-sensitive applications.
- **Security:** Provides authentication and encryption to protect user networks.
- **Remote management:** Allows ISPs to configure, update, and monitor the device.

ONU vs. ONT vs. Modem

Feature	ONU	ONT	Cable Modem	Network
Type	FTTB/FTTC	FTTH	Coaxial cable	Typical Location
Building	comms room	(multi-user)	Inside home (single user)	Inside home
Function	Converts optical signals for multiple users	Converts optical signals for one user	Converts RF signals to digital data	

Note: Many ISPs use ONU and ONT interchangeably.

Components of an ONU

- Optical transceiver: Sends/receives optical signals (often SC/UPC or SC/APC connectors).
- Electrical interfaces: Ethernet (RJ45), phone (RJ11), and sometimes coaxial ports.
- Media conversion module: Handles optical-to-electrical and electrical-to-optical conversion.
- Traffic/QoS engine: Manages bandwidth and prioritization.

Types of ONUs

Common categories include:

- SFU/SBU: Single-family or single-business units (one user).
- HGU: Home gateway units with Wi-Fi and multiple Ethernet ports.
- MDU/MTU: Multi-dwelling or multi-tenant units serving many users.
- GPON / XGS-PON / 100G PON ONUs: Differ by supported speeds (2.5 Gbps, 10 Gbps, 100 Gbps).

Why ONUs Matter

ONUs are essential for modern fiber broadband, enabling high-speed, reliable connectivity. Over 92% of global fiber broadband connections rely on ONUs for stable service delivery.

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