

sale will not jeopardize Cablevue employees — many of whom have punched the Morton company time-clock for more than 25 years.

"They are a big company made up of smaller companies who bring family values to their communities. I have a good feeling about Cogeco and the way they do business," she said.

"They have acquired our employees along with our business. They have a good record of keeping staff as much they can," said Porter. "We view them (workers) as very good employees and believe a new company will also see these qualities."

Porter said she will stay on through the transition period but couldn't say if she will remain when the buyer assumes full ownership.

Louis Audet, president and chief executive officer of Cogeco Cable couldn't be reached at press time but in a statement from Montreal offices, he said the Cablevue purchase will boost its total customer base in Ontario to 640,000 customers. Across Canada, the company services 909,000 basic cable customers.

Audet said the latest acquisition will mirror other smaller cable providers just brought into the Cogeco fold "with a view of benefiting from synergies and offering services to customers that are competitive in terms of quality, diversity and price."

In addition to the basic cable services, as part of the deal, Cogeco will also purchase Cablevue's QuinteNet high-speed broadband Internet service, an expanding IT market Cogeco has also been working to meet.

In Kingston, earlier this year, Cogeco launched its high-speed Internet access. Cablevue launched its high-speed Internet service in July.

The use of coaxial cable networking already in place throughout Quinte, Internet service enables customers to download in seconds, not minutes, without blocking use of the phone.

Porter said she has no idea when the agreement will be finalized given pending scheduling dates before the CRTC.

Cogeco has subscribers in Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

"They're trying to establish a presence along the Highway 401 corridor," said Porter. "This was the missing piece of the puzzle. It happened relatively quickly, but I'm not at liberty to discuss it."

The sale will become final pending due diligence measures by Cogeco and full approval by the Canadian Radio and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

The news late yesterday marks a major departure for a family empire started by Myles Morton in 1966 when the first line of cable wires contrasted the Belleville skyline, bringing nine channels to city homes, said Porter. Trenton soon followed in the late 1960s.

Today, Cablevue offers 68 channels.

Porter said she and family members wrestled with mixed feelings about the sale of a community business that has grown with a family long connected with local media, including the dissemination of cable television signals, radio and at one time The Intelligencer, now owned by Hollinger Inc.

Cablevue customer service representatives, community programmers, technicians and those in administration were informed about the acquisition Thursday at their Belleville and Trenton offices.

Porter said she is confident the

