



NEWS RELEASE

CenturyTel Completes Acquisition of Midwestern Fiber Optic Business

2003-06-09

MONROE, La.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--June 9, 2003--CenturyTel, Inc. (NYSE:CTL) completed the previously announced \$38 million purchase of the operating assets of Digital Teleport, Inc. (DTI), a fiber optic transport business based in St. Louis. CenturyTel will operate the business under the name LightCore, a CenturyTel company.

The LightCore acquisition should provide operational synergies and a new source of revenue for CenturyTel over the next three years.

"The LightCore network is highly complementary to CenturyTel's existing operations and will help us operate more efficiently resulting in added value for our shareholders and customers," said Glen F. Post III, CenturyTel chairman and CEO. "This investment also advances CenturyTel's clustering strategy and affirms our commitment to actively pursue growth opportunities through acquisitions."

LightCore's fiber optic network spans 5,700 total route miles, of which 3,200 are lit in portions of Missouri, Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Texas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Tennessee. Approximately 64 percent of the lit network is in Missouri, CenturyTel's second largest state in terms of access lines served. As of March 31, 2003, CenturyTel served more than 476,000 access lines in the state.

LightCore provides wholesale fiber optic services to national and regional communications carriers in small-to-mid-size city markets and to enterprise customers and government agencies in St. Louis. In 2002, the company reported \$21.5 million in total revenues and generated positive cash flow from operations.

CenturyTel does not expect substantial changes to the operations of the business. The transition will be seamless for LightCore's existing customer base. "We look forward to working with our new employees and building relationships with our new customers," Post said.

CenturyTel, Inc. provides communications services including local, long distance, Internet access and data services to more than 3 million customers in 22 states. The company, headquartered in Monroe, La., is publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol CTL, and is included in the S&P 500 Index. CenturyTel is the 8th largest local exchange telephone company, based on access lines, in the United States. Visit CenturyTel at www.centurytel.com.

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SOURCE: CenturyTel, Inc.