



NEWS RELEASE

CenturyTel and EchoStar Renew Strategic Partnership

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MONROE, La. and ENGLEWOOD, Colo., May 16, 2007 (PRIME NEWSWIRE) -- CenturyTel, Inc. (NYSE:CTL) and EchoStar Communications Corporation (Nasdaq:DISH) announced today a multi-year extension of a strategic partnership to continue marketing CenturyTel / DISH Network satellite television service to residential households in states served by CenturyTel.

CenturyTel will continue to manage the customer relationship, allowing customers to order, arrange installation and activate service from one source. Both new and existing CenturyTel / DISH Network customers will continue to have a single point of contact, receive a single monthly CenturyTel bill and qualify for bundled discounts.

"This partnership delivers strategic benefits for both companies," said Shirish Lal, vice president of Marketing for CenturyTel. "It advances CenturyTel's strategy to offer our customers a full suite of products and services that complement our current offerings."

"We are pleased that CenturyTel recognizes the ongoing value of providing the CenturyTel / DISH Network service to its customers," said Tom Stingley, senior vice president of Alliance Management at EchoStar. "We look forward to continued success in providing customers an option that includes CenturyTel's quality telecommunications products, including high-speed internet, combined with DISH Network's unparalleled satellite TV services such as HD programming and cutting-edge, affordable DVR technology."

CenturyTel markets the satellite TV product as CenturyTel / DISH Network, offering CenturyTel customers hundreds of popular, all-digital, TV channels including movies, sports, news, music and the most national high-definition channels in the country. The satellite TV product is offered as a part of a bundle that may include local and long distance telephone service, multiple feature offerings and dial-up or high-speed DSL Internet service.

CenturyTel, Inc. (NYSE:CTL) is a leading provider of communications, high-speed Internet and entertainment

services in small-to-mid-size cities through its broadband and fiber transport networks. Included in the S&P 500 Index, CenturyTel delivers advanced communications with a personal touch to customers in 25 states. Visit CenturyTel's Web site at www.centurytel.com.

EchoStar Communications Corporation (Nasdaq:DISH) has been a leader for more than 26 years in satellite TV equipment sales and support worldwide. The Company's DISH Network(tm) is the fastest-growing pay-TV provider in the country since 2000 and currently serves more than 13.4 million satellite TV customers. DISH Network offers a premier line of industry-leading Digital Video Recorders (DVRs) and hundreds of video and audio channels as well as the most national HD and International channels in the U.S., Interactive TV, Latino and sports programming. DISH Network also provides a variety of package and price options including the lowest all-digital price in America and the DishDVR Advantage Package. EchoStar is included in the Nasdaq-100 Index (NDX) and is a Fortune 300 company. Visit www.echostar.com or call 1-800-333-DISH (3474) for more information.

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