



This Week's Headlines

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www.mnta.org. Check it out!

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MTA UPDATE

[MTA Centennial Celebration](#)

Put Your Company's History on Display

The MTA Centennial Committee is inviting all member companies to share their companies' pasts by exhibiting items in the historical display that will be part of the MTA 100th Annual Convention. The committee is looking for telephone equipment, outside plant equipment, business office materials, directories, and marketing and promotional materials that have been used over the last 100 years.

At this time the committee is attempting to determine what is available to be shown. An information letter and form that contains a list of items for members to consider was distributed electronically to you this week. Feel free to add your own items. Please complete the item description form, include a photograph and return it to the MTA office by **April 15** for consideration to be in the historical display.

If your items are chosen to be in the historical display, you will be asked to bring them to the convention at your expense and to show them for the duration of the convention. Since many items will be valuable, security will be provided for the duration of the convention.

Members Invited to Join MTA Centennial Club

On March 29, 1909 nearly 100 independent telephone companies gathered at the Nicollet Hotel in Minneapolis to form the Minnesota Independent Telephone Association.

On the eve of your association's centennial, the MTA Centennial Committee invites all member companies to join the '**Centennial Club.**' The Club will help the MTA properly observe this milestone with a commemorative picture book, a special centennial convention and celebration and publicity across the state and nation.

In recognition of your contribution of \$500, your company will be listed as a 'Centennial Club' member in the commemorative picture book and at next year's convention. The book will be found at telephone companies,

INDUSTRY CALENDAR

PEOPLE & COMPANIES

Do you have an announcement for *People & Companies*? Send an e-mail (info@mnta.org) or fax (651-291-2795) to MTA.

Save The Date

MTA Golf Day
July 7, 2008

Stat of the Week

In March, U.S. employers cut 80,000 jobs. That is the third consecutive month unemployment has increased. Source: U.S. Labor Department.

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Is there someone in your organization who you would like to add to the distribution list? Send their name, company, and e-mail address to info@mnta.org and we'll add them to the list.

WEEKLY BULLETIN is intended for MTA members. Redistribution is limited to internal audiences only.

If you wish to be removed from the MTA e-List, click here to [unsubscribe](#).

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libraries and museums across the state for years to come. To be properly acknowledged, your contribution must be received at the MTA office by May 1, 2008. The invitation to join the **Centennial Club** will be sent to all members Monday, April 7. Questions about the Centennial Club may be directed to Mike Nowick at 651-291-7311.

Next MTA-U Course Is for Manager, Supervisors

Now in its fourth year, MTA-U for managers and supervisors is the annual source for developing leadership skills and learning important human resources responsibilities. Members have the option of taking the one-day course on June 5 or June 6 at the Radisson Suite Hotel in St. Cloud. The course will cover de-escalating emotionally charged people; industry update & technology trends; and finance for non-accounting professionals. The cost is \$175 for MTA Education Committee Program members, \$225 for other MTA members and \$225 for non-members. Online registration for the course is available at www.mnta.org

Online Registration Open for Retransmission Consent Workshop

The MTA has partnered with Cinnamon Mueller law firm to conduct a retransmission consent workshop on **April 29, 2008** in St. Cloud. The workshop, sponsored by the MTA Video Committee, is open to all members. The workshop will get under way with a noon luncheon at the Kelly Inn and conclude by 4:00 p.m. Chris Cinnamon will conduct the workshop. The program will review the Watch this publication for more details and registration information. retransmission/must carry rules, review the digital signaling transition and its effect on retransmission/must carry. Attendees will also find out what legal representation may be available from the law firm in upcoming negotiations. For fast, easy online registration, [click here](#).

New Logo Unveiled

This week's edition of the MTA Weekly Bulletin contains the new MTA logo in the masthead. The logo is a combination of the MART and MTA logos. It was designed by Steven Dick, Lakedale Communications.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MTA Bill Passed, Sent to Governor

The House this week gave final passage and sent to the governor a bill (HF 2414 – SF 2262) that repeals a number of obsolete telecom rules in Chapter 7810. The bill was drafted by the MTA Legislative Committee and was the result of numerous meetings this past year with the Department of Commerce, Public Utilities Commission and Attorney General's Office. Here's an update on legislation that impacts the telecom industry:

- The bill providing for a statewide inventory of broadband service is taking a different path in the House as opposed to the Senate. The Senate bill (SF 2866) has passed all committees and has been awaiting floor action on the Senate calendar. The inventory would be done "in house" by the Department of Commerce and

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used to produce maps showing broadband speeds and availability down to the county/governmental level. The House bill (HF 2959) has passed committee but it was originally put in the Energy Finance Division's Omnibus bill because it has an appropriation attached to it. That bill (HF 2305) has since been incorporated into what has now become the House Omnibus Finance bill (HF 1812). The language in the House bill differs from the Senate bill in that it calls for the broadband inventory to be done by a third party contractor and paid for with \$175,000 taken from the TAP fund. The inventory is to be used to produce maps showing broadband speeds and availability down to the census block level. To date the House and Senate bill authors have not had any discussions on how to resolve their differences in how the broadband inventory is to be done. Also included in HF 1812 is language authorizing a study of three states that have enacted legislation authorizing state-wide video franchising. The study is to be done by the University of Minnesota and would be paid for by taking \$85,000 from the TAP fund.

- HF 2107 – SF 1918-- This bill establishes a broadband task force appointed by the governor to make recommendations to the legislature on establishing a broadband goal and a plan to implement the goal. It has been passed by the Senate and sent to the House. The House bill is on the House calendar awaiting floor action.
- HF 3327 – SF 2939—This legislation permits telephone companies with more than 50,000 subscribers to opt into the AFOR plan of a larger telephone company has passed the Senate and been sent to the House. The House companion bill is on the House calendar awaiting floor action.

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Comcast Brings Fastest, Most Expensive Internet Speed to Twin Cities

Twin Cities customers will be the first in the nation to get Comcast's new high-speed Internet service, the company announced this week. Comcast is offering residents and businesses up to 50 Megabits per second (Mbps) downloads and up to 5 Mbps uploads.

Comcast began rolling out the new speeds in the Twin Cities on Thursday. Comcast customers using the 50 Mbps service could download a 4 GB HD movie in about 10 minutes. To download the same file on Qwest's 1.5 Mbps DSL service would take more than 6 hours, Comcast said in a news release. The new 50 Mbps / 5 Mbps speed tier will be offered at \$149.95 per month for residential customers and \$199.95 per month for businesses.

Martin to Dismiss Open Access Networks Petition

Federal Communications Commission Chairman Kevin Martin said he would urge fellow commissioners to turn down a petition to require cellular carriers to open their networks to all devices and software applications. Addressing the CTIA Wireless Convention this week, Martin said recent

action by the major carriers to open their network makes such a move unnecessary, according to media outlets. Skype filed the petition in February 2007.

[Reprinted from Last Week](#)

Consumers Continue to Rely on Landline

American consumers have a wide array of choices for personal communication services, but, when it comes to their home, an overwhelming majority -- including those who have a cell phone -- say they plan to keep and continue using their landline home phone indefinitely. Most often the service's proven reliability and safety were given as reasons in a new nationwide survey commissioned by Verizon.

The telephone survey, conducted by KRC Research last month, polled more than 800 consumers aged 18 and over who pay their landline phone bill. It found that:

- Eighty-three percent of the respondents intend to continue using their landline home phone indefinitely -- a strong vote of consumer confidence for landline voice service in a survey group that included a large number of participants who also have a cell phone (74 percent).
- Ninety-four percent of the respondents cited reliability and 91 percent cited safety as the key factors for retaining landline service.
- Seventy-six percent of landline phone owners use their landline phone every day

FCC & REGULATORY FILINGS

APRIL 1: FCC FORM 499-A: TELECOMMUNICATIONS REPORTING WORKSHEET: This form must be filed by all contributors to the Universal Service Fund support mechanisms, the Telecommunications Relay Service Fund, the cost recovery mechanism for the North American Numbering Plan Administration and the shared costs of local number portability.

APRIL 21: LOW INCOME QUARTERLY REPORT: FCC FORM 497, this form, the Lifeline and Link-Up Worksheet must be submitted to USAC by all ETCs that request reimbursement for participating in the low income program

INDUSTRY CALENDAR

Upcoming MTA & Industry Meetings/Events

April 9: MTA Legislative Committee, conference call, 1:30 p.m.

April 17: MTA Video Committee, MTA office, 9:30 a.m.

April 22: MTA Regulatory, Tariffs & Services Committee, MTA office, 9:30

a.m.

April 23-25: MTA Office Managers Spring Conference, The Lodge at Brainerd Lakes, Baxter

April 24: MTA CLEC Committee, 702 Communications, Moorhead, 9:30 a.m.

April 29: MTA Golf Committee, Crow River, Hutchinson, 9:00 a.m.

April 29: Retransmission Consent Agreement Workshop, St. Cloud, noon

For a look at 12 months and more of industry events, [click here](#)

PEOPLE & COMPANIES

Tim Brinkman has joined **Park Region Telephone Company** as Business Operations Manager. Brinkman has worked in the telecommunications industry for the past 12 years. He has a wide range of experience in broadband telecomm and CATV. He was previously with Comcast in Washington, D.C. and prior to that, with diversiCOM in Melrose.

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