



This Week's Headlines

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August 22, 2008

MTA UPDATE

Member Dues to Remain the Same for 2009

The MTA Board of Directors has set the dues for 2009. All classes for members will remain at the same level as 2008. For Active Members, that means that the same formula used to calculate dues for 2008 will be used again for 2009. There may be slight increases or decreases to individual member dues because of changes in the company's Minnesota revenues or access lines. There will not be a "MART" surcharge for those members that had been MART members before the merger and had also been paying MART dues in the past.

MTA Takes First Steps to Create Foundation

Upon the recommendation of the Safety Committee, the MTA Board of Directors has begun the process to create a foundation to award scholarships in set amounts to a set number of high school seniors each year. The scholarships will be directed to students who are interested in technical educations and want to live in rural areas after completing their educations. Applications will be distributed to high schools by MTA members in areas served by MTA members. The foundation will form partnerships with the many MTA members who currently have local scholarship programs to maximize the scholarships going to the selected students. The foundation, patterned after a very successful foundation established by the Wisconsin State Telecommunications Association, will formalize and expand the process that MTA has had in awarding scholarships in Minnesota.

Agenda for Office Managers Conference Announced

'Managing by the Numbers' and 'Hiring the Right People' are just two of the interesting topics on the agenda for the upcoming MTA Office Managers Fall Conference. The conference is September 24-26, 2008 at the Best Western-Kelly Inn, St. Cloud. For the complete agenda and registration form [click here](#). Contact [Christie Turn](#) if you have any questions.

Strong Agenda for Customer Service Group's Event

Do you want to learn how to handle an emotional person before the

Filings

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 These Dates](#)

[Telco Marketing Group Conference](#)

Sept. 10-12, 2008
Fair Hills Resort
Detroit Lakes

[MTA Customer Service Peer Group Fall Conference](#)

September 17, 2008
Hilton Garden Inn
Maple Grove

[MTA Office Managers Fall Meeting](#)

September 24-26, 2008
Best Western-Kelly Inn
St. Cloud

[MTA HR Peer Group](#)

Meeting, Sept. 25, 2008, Sherburne
TeleSystems
Big Lake

[MTA Fall Conference October 9-10, 2008](#)

Northland Inn
Brooklyn Park

situation gets out of control? How about successful methods for collecting bad debt? If these topics interest you plan on attending the MTA Customer Service Group's Fall Conference. The one-day event is September 17, 2008 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Maple Grove. For more details, [click here](#).

[Accepting Registration for Marketing Conference](#)

Attendees at the upcoming Telco Marketing Group's summer conference will learn how to use statistics to design their sales campaigns and hear a comparison of marketing strategies for a small town versus a big city. This year's conference at Fair Hills Resort in Detroit Lakes gets under way at 3:00 p.m. with a nine-hole golf outing at Wildflower Golf Course, followed by a social gathering at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday and concludes at noon on Friday. The cost for MTA members is \$100. The agenda and registration form is available on the [MTA web site](#) (scroll down to bottom of page). If you need to reset your user name and password [click here](#). For more on the conference, contact [Paul Solsrud](#).

[For Historical Presentation](#)

[Looking for a Few Good Performers](#)

Do you have acting or professional voice service experience? Do you know someone who does? The MTA is looking for a few volunteers to take part in the opening historical presentation to kick off the centennial convention on March 2, 2009. If you would be willing to participate in the opening historical presentations contact [Mike Nowick](#) at 651-291-7311.

[MTA Supports Orent for NECA Board](#)

MTA is pleased to announce its endorsement of Bob Orent for reelection to the National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA) board in Subset 3. Orent has proven his ability to energize, lead and build consensus on a variety of complex issues, especially in areas such as inter-carrier compensation, access and universal service. He has held leadership positions at the Michigan Exchange Carriers Association, USTelecom (chairman), Organization for the Protection and Advancement of Small Telecommunications Companies (OPASTCO), and the Rural Telephone Finance Cooperative (RTFC). He was elected to the NECA board about five years ago. During this time he has served on most of the standing NECA board committees. Currently, he serves as chairman of the Traffic Sensitive Pool Committee and the newly created Corporate Governance Committee. In addition, he is a member of the Executive Committee and was elected by the board as Vice Chairman of the Board for the past two years. NECA members will be receiving their ballot information around Sept. 3rd or 4th.

Stat of the Week

Americans drove 12.1 billion fewer miles in June than the same month a year ago, according to the Federal Highway

INDUSTRY UPDATE

[FCC Coming to Minnesota To Promote DTV Transition](#)

Federal Communication Commissioners will be in Duluth and the Metro Twin Cities area on February 17, 2009 to increase awareness about the

Administration. That's a 4.7 percent decline.

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.

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Brent J. Christensen,
Secretary-Treasurer;
Randy Young,
President/CEO

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upcoming transition to digital television. According to an FCC release, the Commission identified target television markets for specific DTV outreach, including all markets in which more than 100,000 households or at least 15 percent of the households rely solely on over-the-air signals for television.

[Read more](#)

Qwest, CWA and IBEW Reach Tentative Agreement

Qwest this week reached separate three-year tentative agreements with the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). The proposed contract will apply to nearly 20,000 CWA members and nearly 200 IBEW members in Montana.

No details on the contract were announced.

FTC Ruling Will Stop Some Prerecorded Sales Calls

The Federal Trade Commission this week issued a ruling that bars telemarketers from making prerecorded sales calls unless the seller obtains the consumers permission, starting September 1, 2009. The ruling also requires that, by December 1, 2008, sellers and telemarketers provide, at the outset of all prerecorded messages, an automated keypress or voice-activated interactive opt-out mechanism so that consumers can opt out as easily as they can from a live telemarketing call. [Read more](#)

Comcast Must End Discriminatory Network Practices

The FCC this week ordered Comcast to stop blocking some large files. The Commission ruled that Comcast has unduly interfered with Internet users' right to access the lawful Internet content and to use the applications of their choice, according to an FCC news release. Specifically, the Commission found that Comcast had deployed equipment throughout its network to monitor the content of its customers' Internet connections and selectively block specific types of connections known as peer-to-peer connections. The Commission rejected Comcast's defense that its practice constitutes reasonable network management. The Commission ordered Comcast to disclose the details of its discriminatory network management practices to the Commission within 30 days. [Read more](#)

Sprint Will Provide Live Broadcast Of NFL Games

Sprint announced this week that its customers will be able to listen to the live radio broadcasts of every NFL game throughout the 2008 regular season at no charge. Sprint customers will also be able to watch all eight of the Thursday Night Football telecasts carried by NFL Network live beginning on Nov. 6 via the new NFL Mobile Live application. [Read more](#)

FCC & REGULATORY FILINGS

AUGUST 29: COPYRIGHT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS: The Copyright Statement of Accounts form plus royalty payment for the first half of calendar year 2008 (January – June) is due to be filed by August 29 at the Library of Congress' Copyright Office by cable TV service providers.

AUGUST 31: USAC LIFELINE CERTIFICATION: All eligible

telecommunications carriers (ETCs) must file with the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) by August 31, 2008 that the ETC has complied with state Lifeline verification procedures. Minnesota and Wisconsin companies should file a certification; North and South Dakota companies must file a certification and a verification, Iowa companies should file only a verification.

SEPTEMBER 2: FCC FORM 477, LOCAL TELEPHONE COMPETITION AND BROADBAND REPORTING FORM: Facilities-based providers of broadband connections to end user locations must report user data through June 30, 2008.

SEPTEMBER 30: FCC FORM 507, UNIVERSAL SERVICE QUARTERLY LINE COUNT UPDATE

OCTOBER 1: STATE CERTIFICATION OF UNIVERSAL SERVICE SUPPORT: State Public Utility Commissions must certify by October 1, 2008 that eligible rural carriers are using universal service support for the intended purposes. State commissions must file this annual certification with the FCC and the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC).

INDUSTRY CALENDAR

MTA & Industry Meetings/Events This Week

Aug. 20: MTA Associate Members Committee

Aug. 18: MTA Board of Directors

Upcoming MTA & Industry Meetings/Events

Aug. 25: MTA Legislative Committee meeting, conference call, 2:00 P.M.

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

PEOPLE & COMPANIES

CHR Solutions, a provider of telecommunications engineering and infrastructure managed services, and Impulse Advisory Services, LLC of Dallas, a provider of strategy, marketing, product management and corporate finance advisory services, announced that CHR has acquired certain assets of Impulse and that its employees have joined CHR effective August 16, 2008. Both companies are privately held and terms of the agreement were not disclosed. [Read more](#)

David Del Zoppo is the new Chief Executive Officer for **diversiCOM**. He comes to *diversiCOM* from Rural Cellular Corporation where he was responsible for finance and accounting functions. He brings over 30 years of business related knowledge and experience to the *diversiCOM* companies.

Martin Group, a provider of BSS|OSS software solutions and next

generation engineering, has agreed to acquire enhanced services software from CopperCom Acquisition Corp. (Boca Raton, F.L.). The software enables carriers to offer its customers self care, advanced messaging, new revenue applications and capabilities with flow-through provisioning from their existing network infrastructure. For additional information, visit www.martin-group.com.

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