



Stock Symbol: MBT

News Release

Campaign Launched to Reverse Harmful CRTC Decision

Regulator's decision risks price spikes and less choice for broadband Internet service

OTTAWA, ON, September 10, 2009 – MTS Allstream, the Canadian Association of Internet Service Providers, the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses and nearly two dozen individual companies (from across Canada) today launched an internet based campaign to convince the federal government to correct a CRTC decision that is harmful to competition in broadband Internet, Ethernet and other next generation communications services.

It is expected that more companies will decide to align behind this campaign in the weeks and months ahead.

Called the “Campaign for Competitive Broadband”, the goal is to ensure that network facilities built with the benefit of a historic monopoly and guaranteed rate of return, are accessible to a wide range of competitors who want to offer choice in services to businesses and consumers. Bell and Telus, which control these networks in most parts of the country, would have the ability to shut out competitors if the CRTC decision is allowed to stand.

"Canadian small and medium size businesses pay the most expensive prices for high-speed broadband among all OECD countries, except for the Slovak Republic, and this CRTC decision would only make things worse," said Chris Peirce, Chief Corporate Officer, MTS Allstream. "It would open the door to a re-monopolization of the kind of telecom services that are critical to the success and competitiveness of businesses across Canada. Bell and Telus would be better off, everyone else will be a loser."

MTS Allstream, which is spearheading the effort, and the other participants in this campaign urge Canadians to learn about the risks to them if this decision is not reversed, by visiting www.competitivebroadband.com, and using the capabilities of the website to make their concerns known to Industry Minister Tony Clement and others in Ottawa.

Through www.competitivebroadband.com, MTS Allstream is providing Canadians with an opportunity to learn about the issue, join a growing online petition, e-mail the federal government, the CRTC and their local MP, as well as encourage others to join the campaign.

“The idea for this campaign immediately garnered the support of businesses, organizations and associations across the country,” said Corinne Pohlmann, Vice-President of National Affairs for the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. “We’re calling on everyone who cares about access to competitively priced internet services, to join with us in reversing this decision. This is a serious threat to thousands and thousands of businesses across Canada and especially those in more rural areas. They know what happens when monopolies rule, and cannot afford to stand by a decision which virtually guarantees higher prices, and weaker service.”

“Over decades, companies like Bell and Telus built networks supported by federal rules which created telephone service monopolies,” said Tom Copeland of the Canadian Association of Internet Providers (CAIP). “This was effectively a subsidy by taxpayers so that all Canadians could have an interconnected telecommunications network. Once built, the federal government enacted a number of rules, one of which required Bell and Telus to allow competitors to use these networks at prices regulated by the CRTC. This ensured competitive pricing, and spurred innovation – all of which is now threatened by the CRTC decision to lift these rules.”

MTS Allstream has filed its own petition to the federal cabinet asking it to take the necessary steps to have the CRTC recognize that competitive access to broadband and the Internet is essential for Canadians and Canadian businesses. MTS Allstream’s Campaign for Competitive Broadband encourages all Canadians to support this notion by visiting www.competitivebroadband.com.

About the Coalition for Competitive Broadband

The Coalition for Competitive Broadband represents consumers and businesses that believe in healthy competition for high speed Internet and other next generation telecommunication services. The coalition came together in response to a recent CRTC decision which, if not reversed, would result in less competition, higher prices, weaker service and declining innovation. The coalition is open to all those who share these concerns and want Ottawa to set a course that will ensure healthy competition. The Campaign is supported by organizations which collectively serve or represent over 250,000 businesses with 1,200,000 employees and 900,000 consumer Internet customers in Canada. To learn more, and find out how you can help, please visit www.competitivebroadband.com.

About MTS Allstream

As one of Canada’s leading national communication solutions companies, MTS Allstream provides innovative communications for the way Canadians want to live and work today. The Company has more than 100 years of experience, with 6,000 employees across Canada dedicated to a mission of delivering true value as seen through the eyes of our customers. In 2008, MTS Allstream had nearly two million total customer connections spanning business customers across Canada and residential consumers throughout the province of Manitoba. The Company’s extensive national broadband and fibre optic network spans almost 30,000 kilometres. MTS Allstream is a proud sponsor of Cindy Klassen, 2006 World Champion and Canada’s greatest Olympian, and a proud contributor to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. Manitoba Telecom Services Inc.’s common shares are listed on The Toronto Stock Exchange (trading symbol: MBT). Customers, stakeholders and investors who want to learn more about MTS Allstream services, markets, community commitments and record of creating shareholder value are encouraged to visit: www.mtsallstream.com.

About CAIP

Formed in 1996, CAIP's Mission is to foster the growth of a healthy and competitive Internet service industry in Canada through collective and cooperative action on Canadian and international issues of mutual interest. CAIP membership comprises commercial telecommunication service providers, Internet providers, independent cable companies and enterprises interested or involved, directly or indirectly, in the industry of Internet service provisioning. CAIP provides effective industry advocacy respecting public policy and regulatory matters (e.g., access, copyright, privacy and security issues, e-commerce guidelines) affecting Canada's ISP industry. Find out more about CAIP at www.caip.ca.

About CFIB

CFIB is Canada's largest association of small- and medium-sized businesses. Encouraging the development of good public policy at the federal, provincial and municipal levels, CFIB represents more than 105,000 business owners, who collectively employ 1.25 million Canadians and account for \$75 billion in GDP. Find out more about CFIB at www.cfib.ca.

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