

## **COALITION OF COMPETITORS ASKS GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT CUSTOMER CHOICE FOR BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS**

*The Coalition supports MTS Allstream's petition to increase competition, investment and innovation ... Bell and TELUS petitions would stifle competition*

**OTTAWA, ON, May 4, 2009** – A coalition of independent telecommunications service providers is asking the Canadian Federal Government to send a clear message that increased competition in the broadband Internet market is necessary for Canadians and Canadian businesses.

In April, MTS Allstream, Bell Canada, Bell Aliant and TELUS petitioned the Federal Government. MTS Allstream's petition sought to ensure and expand competitive access to last mile broadband facilities, while Bell and TELUS asked that recent CRTC decisions and orders in that regard be overruled.

"Internet access and other broadband services are a fundamental element of economic growth," said Coalition spokesperson and Chair of the Canadian Association of Internet Providers (CAIP) Tom Copeland. "The Coalition is concerned that the full creative and productivity-enhancing potential of these services will not be realized if Bell and TELUS are allowed to control the pace and extent of competition through their stranglehold on network infrastructure."

The Coalition supports MTS Allstream in its quest for fair competitor or wholesale access to Bell and TELUS' broadband services and facilities.

While the MTS Allstream petition is calling for fair access to wholesale broadband facilities and services, the Bell and TELUS petitions are attempting to reduce the already limited access that is available today. The Bell and TELUS proposals ask for latitude to raise prices, reduce competition, and control the content that users are able to access.

"Granting the MTS Allstream petition will ensure that consumers have a multiplicity of choices among broadband service providers as well as lower prices and higher levels of product and service innovation" said Copeland. "Some of the recent issues with Internet service pricing, speeds and even throttling of ISP and retail customer traffic would not exist if there were more Internet and broadband competition."

The Coalition calls on the Federal Government to roundly reject the Bell and TELUS petitions. Rejection of these petitions would send a clear message that Canada plans to be a leading edge innovator in broadband Internet, Ethernet and other next generation communications services.

"The Coalition believes that the right wholesale framework would bring about the kind of competition that would provide customers with the variety of service and pricing options that are available in other countries" said Copeland.

The Coalition agrees with MTS Allstream that wholesale access to broadband Internet is an essential service as defined by the CRTC. The limited access that competitors have to Bell and TELUS last mile facilities has already greatly diminished Internet competition shrinking the total market share of independent ISPs from 64% in 1997 to 7.7% at the end of 2007.

"Canadian consumers and businesses are already feeling the consequences of less competition in the Internet and broadband services market." said Copeland.

According to the most recent OECD study, Canada is no longer a broadband leader and Canadians are paying higher prices for a lesser service than customers in most other developed countries.

"If Bell and TELUS prevail, the situation for Canadian customers and businesses will only get worse," said Copeland. "This outcome would be completely out of step with Canadian government policy and action most recently taken by the Federal Government to promote competition in the wireless market."

To view the Coalition's comments to each of the MTS Allstream and the Bell and TELUS petitions, please visit [www.CAIP.ca](http://www.CAIP.ca)

### **About the Coalition**

The members of the Coalition provide a wide variety of telecommunications services to both the residential and small- to medium-sized business markets, including Internet access services, local and long distance voice services (including VoIP-based services), wireless services and broadband data services. The following companies are proud members of the Coalition:

<b>Acanac Inc.</b>	<b>acanac.com</b>
<b>Accelerated Connections Inc.</b>	<b>dsl4u.ca</b>
<b>AEBC Internet</b>	<b>aebc.com</b>
<b>Advanced Knowledge Networks</b>	<b>akn.ca</b>
<b>AOL Canada</b>	<b>canada.aol.com</b>
<b>Apexia Voice and Data</b>	<b>apexia.ca</b>
<b>Bruce Telecom</b>	<b>brucetelecom.com</b>
<b>Caneris Inc.</b>	<b>caneris.com</b>
<b>Cybersurf Corp.</b>	<b>cybersurf.com</b>
<b>Distributel Communications Limited</b>	<b>distributel.ca</b>
<b>eagle.ca Internet Solutions</b>	<b>eagle.ca</b>
<b>E-GATE Communications Inc.</b>	<b>egate.com</b>
<b>Execulink Telecom</b>	<b>www.execulink.ca</b>
<b>Ikano Communications</b>	<b>ikano.com</b>
<b>Interlink Connectivity Inc.</b>	<b>iplink.net</b>
<b>Lightspeed Communications</b>	<b>lightspeed.ca</b>
<b>Managed Network Systems, Inc.</b>	<b>mnsi.net</b>
<b>Nexicom Communications Inc.</b>	<b>nexicom.net</b>
<b>NRTC Communications</b>	<b>www.nrtco.net</b>
<b>Primus Telecommunications Canada Inc.</b>	<b>primus.ca</b>
<b>RipNET Limited</b>	<b>ripnet.com</b>
<b>Skyway West Business Internet Services</b>	<b>skywaywest.com</b>
<b>SmarttNet</b>	<b>smartt.com</b>
<b>Start Communications</b>	<b>start.ca</b>
<b>Stargate Connections Inc.</b>	<b>stargate.ca</b>
<b>SureNet Communications Group Inc.</b>	<b>surenet.net</b>
<b>TekSavvy Solutions Inc.</b>	<b>teksavvy.com</b>
<b>Vianet Internet Solutions</b>	<b>vianet.ca</b>
<b>WTC Communications</b>	<b>wtccommunications.ca</b>
<b>Wightman Telecom</b>	<b>www.wightman.ca</b>

The Wire Inc.	thewire.ca
Yak Communications (Canada) Corp.	yak.ca
Xit Telecom Inc.	xittelecom.com
Canadian Association of Internet Providers	caip.ca

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