



Dakota Carrier
Network

Connecting North Dakota ...and Beyond

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dakota Carrier Network Completes State Network Build out

North Dakota Higher Ed and State Agencies convert to State of the Art Network

Bismarck, December 6, 2000 — Dakota Carrier Network (DCN, LLC), the North Dakota based broadband carrier, today announced that it has completed the Phase 1 deployment of North Dakota State Network ahead of schedule. Phase 1 provides state of the art ATM (Asynchronous Transfer Mode) connections to all State Agencies and the 11 Higher Education campuses.

DCN was awarded the state bid to provision the network transport portion of the State Network in July. The locally owned company was noteworthy as the “unanimous first choice” of the three network evaluation teams. The company has worked with the State Information Technology Department and Corporate Technologies to quickly convert the obsolete frame relay network to an ATM network that has the capability of transporting data, voice and video services.

As he announced the early completion of the project, DCN General Manager, Evan Hass, stated, “Dakota Carrier Network is pleased to be chosen to provide the State Network. The DCN Staff along with the North Dakota Independent Telephone Companies have done a great job to rapidly turn up over 200 broadband circuits that form the network serving the state.”

The State Network initially provides broadband connections to 64 communities across North Dakota. When funding is authorized by the legislature, Phase 2 will connect the school systems to the Network, which will serve a total of over 550 locations in 194 North Dakota communities. The schools will use the network for high-speed Internet connections and video services.

The North Dakota Chief Information Officer, Curtis Wolfe is pleased with the completion of Phase 1, stating, “The collaborative efforts of ITD, DCN and Corporate Technologies has been outstanding and has allowed us to complete Phase I ahead of schedule. I commend DCN, specifically, on their efforts and look forward to the deployment of Phase II.”

Dakota Carrier Network has installed high capacity Nortel ATM Backbone switches, which are capable of providing broadband services to the State Network build out as well as business customers throughout North Dakota. The ATM network utilizes the DCN SONET fiber optic ring transport networks to ensure high quality service that is protected from cable cuts and outages. The backbone network interfaces with the Qwest local networks in the major cities and also connects to existing Independent Telephone Company broadband networks enabling DCN and the local Telephone Companies to connect services anywhere in North Dakota.

ATM service will be used by DCN customers to connect their data networks. It allows business to build their Wide Area Networks (WAN) and also use ATM service for video and voice applications. This is a high-speed service that enables new applications, such as the use of multimedia to the desktop. The ATM network will also be used to more effectively provide Internet service marketed by Internet Service Providers. "The ATM network that will serve the State of North Dakota will also extend enhanced services throughout the state" stated Mr. Hass. "When the ATM Network is fully configured these advanced services will be available in all communities and will add services to the telecommunications options already offered by the North Dakota Independent Telephone Companies."

About Dakota Carrier Network

Dakota Carrier is owned by a group of North Dakota based independent telephone companies. The fifteen telephone companies that comprise DCN represent all of the major local independent telephone companies. They serve over 164,000 customers in 250 communities – more than 85 percent of all the exchanges in North Dakota. DCN's partners serve the region, providing local telephone and private line service to over 90 percent of the total area of the state. The DCN companies currently have over 8,100 miles of fiber optic cable in service.

Media Contact

Evan Hass
701-271-8225
ehass@dakotacarrier.com