EchoStar To Offer New Personal Television Services for DISHPlayer - World's First Combination Internet/Satellite TV Receiver

LAS VEGAS--(BUSINESS WIRE)--July 19, 1999-- DISHPlayer To Offer New Digital Video Record Features EchoStar Communications Corp., (NASDAQ: DISH, DISHP) announced today that EchoStar and WebTV Networks will offer incredible new personal television (PTV) services for DISHPlayer™, the revolutionary new satellite receiver that will provide digital video recording, enhanced TV Pause, program skip, fast-forward and rewind along with on demand news, weather, sports and entertainment later this fall.

Developed with WebTV Networks, Inc., DISHPlayer is the world's first interactive satellite TV receiver with a built-in, ultrafast 8.6 gigabyte hard drive capable of simultaneously recording and playing back full-quality digital video. The disk drive makes possible a number of enhanced PTV features, including TV Pause ("freezing" a TV show and resuming when the viewer is ready to watch again); skip, fast-forward or rewind any recorded program; digital video recording (automatic recording of several hours of high-quality digital video), and downloadable video games via satellite. DISHPlayer can also browse the Internet and send e-mail via the built-in WebTV® Plus service for satellite.

EchoStar will include in the PTV services an instant news feature, delivering on demand news, weather, sports and entertainment information.

DISH Network offers programming beginning at $19.99 per month for 40 of the most popular all-digital satellite TV channels. DISH Network also offers two interactive services: WebTV Plus service for satellite for $24.95 per month and, starting this fall, PTV services and downloadable games for $9.95 per month. DISH Network customers who subscribe to both WebTV Plus service for satellite and PTV services will receive a $5.00 per month discount. DISHPlayer is available from nearly 20,000 DISH Network retail locations nationwide for only $199 until Sept. 30, 1999, or by calling DISH Network directly at 1-800-333-DISH (3474). DISHPlayer will also be available this in conjunction with DISH 500, EchoStar's advanced satellite TV system offering 500 channels on a single small dish.

"DISHPlayer's personal television features offer customers greater control over when and how they watch TV," said Charlie Ergen, chairman and CEO of EchoStar. "You can get personal television services with a simple software download through your satellite dish, which means the DISHPlayer you buy today is equipped for future product enhancements."

EchoStar's Revolutionary Satellite Receiver

DISHPlayer is a state-of-the-art DISH Network satellite receiver that provides customers with access to over 350 channels, including broadcast networks, sports, international and pay-per-view programming, in crystal-clear digital video and CD-quality audio and with a Dolby Digital™ output included for full theater surround sound. This set-top box features a printer port for printing out web pages or e-mail messages and provides parental blocking capabilities, allowing parents to control access to web sites and TV programs. In addition, the picture-in-picture capability lets viewers surf the web and watch TV simultaneously. They can also automatically program their video cassette recorder to record any show they choose, with the press of a button on the remote control. The DISHPlayer system includes a remote control and wireless keyboard.

Interactive Television

DISHPlayer offers a rich electronic TV guide that provides new features such as the TV Search capability, giving viewers the power to easily find subjects of interest from the detailed TV show listings using the DISHPlayer's keyboard. This advanced TV guide also links Internet content with programming found in TV Listings, providing easily accessible program-related information at the touch of a button. The TV Recent feature saves thumbnail pictures of the last six channels so that viewers can quickly return to the previous channels they were watching. The WebTV Plus service for satellite will offer a variety of games such as You Don't Know Jack™, which can be updated weekly by satellite.

Content creators, such as MSNBC and The Weather Channel, will be able to design enhanced programming delivered via satellite to DISHPlayer and all types of broadcast receivers that comply with a proposed specification by the Advanced Television Enhancement Forum (ATVEF). Broad industry adoption of the ATVEF specification will enable television viewers to enjoy interactive television programming on a wide variety of compliant receivers and accelerate the market for interactive television products and services.
Internet Experience

The WebTV Plus service for satellite is an enhanced version of the WebTV Plus service, the leading Internet TV offering worldwide. The WebTV Plus service provides an easy-to-use, robust Internet experience via a 56K modem connection, offering up to six e-mail accounts and child-protection features. The DISHPlayer supports popular multimedia e-mail features in the WebTV Network service, allowing a subscriber to easily plug in a camcorder and send pictures and audio clips through e-mail.

EchoStar Communications Corp., includes three interrelated business units:

- DISH Network™ is EchoStar’s state-of-the-art DBS system that offers customers over 300 channels of digital video and CD-quality audio programming, fully MPEG-2/DVB compliant hardware and installation.
- EchoStar Technologies Corporation designs, manufactures and distributes DBS set-top boxes, antennas and other digital equipment for the DISH Network and various international customers that include ExpressVu Canada and Telefonica’s Via Digital system in Spain. ETC also provides uplink center design, construction oversight and project integration services for customers internationally. ETC also oversees EchoStar Data Networks Corporation in Atlanta, a leading supplier of MediaStream® technology for distributing Internet content over satellite networks.
- Satellite Services provides the delivery of video, audio and data services to business television customers and other satellite users. These services include satellite uplink, satellite transponder space usage, and other services. Satellite Services also administers SKY VISTA, a direct broadcast satellite service offering over 27 channels of popular digital satellite television programming to viewers in Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the U.S. territories in the Caribbean.

DISH Network currently serves approximately 2.6 million customers. DISH Network is a trademark of EchoStar Communications Corporation. DISH Network is located on the Internet at: www.dishnetwork.com

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CONTACT: EchoStar Communications Corporation
J udianne Atencio, Communications Director, 303/723-2010
e-mail: judianne.atencio@echostar.com