



DISH Network Celebrates Third Birthday! 2 Million Customers and Growing Only Three Years After DISH Network's 1996 Debut

LITTLETON, Colo.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--March 5, 1999--EchoStar Communications Corp. (NASDAQ: DISH, DISHP) is proud to announce today that DISH Network™ is celebrating its third birthday with a special promotion: Current customers will receive a limited edition DISH Network bean bag bear when they add one or more premium movie packages during the month of March.

After broadcasting its first video signal across the nation March 3, 1996, DISH Network has since grown quickly to over 2 million customers in less than 3 years.

"A special thanks goes to our customers from everyone at DISH Network for helping us reach our third birthday," said Charlie Ergen, chairman and CEO of EchoStar. "DISH Network originated with a pledge to offer the American public the best possible alternative to cable. In light of recent cable rate hikes, we're proud to announce that we haven't raised the price one penny for our America's Top 40 basic programming package since DISH Network's inception. And to challenge cable companies, we froze our rates until the year 2000."

Some milestones in DISH Network's remarkable 3-year history include the following:

1996 - After the pivotal launching of the Echo I satellite in December

1995, DISH Network is born March 3 and signs on its first

customer in April. - EchoStar's second satellite, Echo II, launches to provide DISH

Network a total of 200 audio and video channels. - By December, DISH Network boasts 350,000 new customers.

1997 - Echo III satellite launches to expand DISH Network's

international, educational and business programming, delivery of

data and local channels. - EchoStar is the first DBS provider to drop its satellite

receiver price point to under \$200. - DISH Network achieves 1 million subscribers in 1997.

1998 - Echo IV launches to augment DISH Network's local programming

initiative and provide expanded international channels,

educational and business television, and data applications. - DISH Network becomes the only DBS provider to broadcast

local

channels in 13 select cities. - EchoStar announces agreement with News Corp. and MCI WorldCom to

obtain licenses to operate two more high-powered satellites, an

uplink center and FOX Network local retransmission rights. - EchoStar offers FREE digital satellite TV systems, after rebate,

with the popular DISH Network One-Rate Plan. - DISH Network guarantees not to raise its programming prices

through March 1, 2000.

1999 - DISH Network reaches 2 million customers. - DISH Network leads DBS industry with a record 100,000 net

subscribers for January.

"DISH Network has experienced tremendous growth and continues to develop cutting-edge technology as a result," Ergen said. "We strive to provide even more choices with services such as high definition and interactive TV, data services and local-to-local programming. With these accomplishments under our belt, getting older only gets better."

DISH Network offers America's Top 40 programming package for only \$19.99 or America's Top 100 CD programming package for \$28.99 -- as well as premium multichannels of HBO, Showtime, Cinemax and STARZ/ENCORE! -- providing crystal-clear, CD-quality audio and video channels all served by an 18-inch satellite dish.

For more information about movie packages and a limited edition DISH Network birthday bear, call 1-800/333-DISH (3474), or visit our website at www.dishnetwork.com.

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 (ETC, formerly HTS™ - Houston Tracker Systems, Inc.), designs, manufactures and distributes DBS set-top boxes, antennas and other digital equipment for 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. - 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 up to 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 over 2 million customers. DISH Network is a trademark of EchoStar Communications Corporation. HTS is a trademark of Houston Tracker Systems, Inc. DISH Network is located on the Internet at:

www.dishnetwork.com

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