

BAYCITY COMMUNICATIONS TAKES ON LANDLINE PROVIDERS WITH "VOICE LINK" DIGITAL PHONE SERVICE

Media release, 25 August 2008, BayCity Communications, Christchurch, New Zealand:
Satellite broadband wholesaler BayCity Communications believes the launch of its new Voice Link phone service will provide serious competition for other NZ telcos. Voice Link enables rural and urban customers to get toll free calling to national and 40 international landline numbers plus their satellite broadband connection for less than \$100 + GST per month (RRP).

From August 26th, subscribers to **Voice Link** will be able to use an optimised satellite connection to enable a high quality, fully featured phone service and toll free calling. The RRP cost of **Voice Link** for a residential customer is \$49.95 + GST per month and can be combined with any residential satellite broadband connection.

BayCity's general manager Duncan Boennic says the **Voice Link** residential plan is competitively priced against other toll calling packages and provides New Zealanders the option to replace their landline, get satellite broadband and get a free toll calling bundle regardless of where they live in the country.

"This actually beats the other offers out there," Boennic says, "because most of the companies offering cheap toll packages target customers who already have a phone connection with Telecom or TelstraClear. Our bundled offering works out cheaper than the cost of a tolls package, plus broadband, plus a landline with any other provider."

"Customers will have a normal phone number and can make high quality, toll free calls to any location within the 40 countries we connect to."

Boennic says that while the product is primarily targeted at rural New Zealand, it is also a very competitive offering in a more urban environment, for anyone looking for an alternative to the bigger players.

Customers signing up for a package of broadband and phone service will pay just RRP \$99.90 (+ GST) per month with entry level broadband, plus a one off RRP cost of \$149.90 (+ GST) to install the satellite dish if they don't already have one.

The new service is offered exclusively in New Zealand via BayCity and will be launched in conjunction with reseller Farmside, while negotiations continue with other potential resellers.

With the Government currently reviewing the TSO, **Voice Link** provides a competitive alternative to Telecom as the incumbent TSO provider, for New Zealanders who require phone service in areas that have been tagged as uneconomic or not viable.

Ralph Chivers, CEO of the Telecommunication Carriers Forum agrees that satellite based telecommunications has an important role to play in New Zealand, particularly in hard to reach parts of the country.

"It's hard to imagine living life without access to a telephone service of some kind. For many in our community a telephone service is their only connection to the outside world: it is their means of doing business, of getting the services they need, of staying in touch, of staying safe. This is particularly true for customers in rural and hard-to-reach areas," Chivers says.

"Thanks to the introduction of this new Voice over Satellite service, BayCity is one of several telecommunications companies who will be in a good position to provide services to the more difficult to serve areas of New Zealand."

BayCity's Boennic says that delivering **Voice Link** is an important step to being able to offer rural New Zealand a complete triple play telecommunications service.

"Satellite broadband is well established in New Zealand as the leading technology for delivering high speed internet services to rural areas. By adding a cost effective phone service we are extending the value that users can get from products such as our Rocket Broadband offering, " Boennic says.

"For a recommended retail price of just \$99.90 per month, any New Zealander, anywhere in the country will be able to get broadband and a satellite based phone service. That's a very compelling offer and one that we can deliver right here, right now."

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About BayCity Communications:

BayCity Communications is the National Service Operator for a range of satellite based communication products throughout New Zealand, including broadband internet, and Voice over IP. BayCity Communications has exclusive access to the IPSTAR telecommunications satellite in New Zealand and is contracted to provide New Zealand service providers with a range of wholesale bandwidth. The IPSTAR satellite was launched in 2006 and is the largest two-way communications satellite of its kind. www.bccnz.com

About Voice Link:

The residential **Voice Link** service costs RRP \$49.95 +GST per month in addition to any existing satellite broadband plan charges. As part of the package, customers enjoy toll free calling to all local and national numbers as well as 40 international destinations.

Business users will be able to purchase the same toll free calling package for RRP \$129.95 +GST per month via the **Voice Link Business** plan.



Unlike Skype and some other Voice over IP services, all **Voice Link** calls run via a voice optimised satellite connection, ensuring far higher call quality and consistency of service. Testing of the service has shown that it exceeds internationally accepted recommendations for call quality.

Visit www.farmside.co.nz for full details on purchasing Voice Link.

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