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Michael Cook, President of Maryland Telephone, Explains How Healthcare Organizations Must Adopt New Technology to Meet Patient Needs

Towson, MD- July 29, 2008- Unless you've lived on a deserted island for the past several years, you know that the growth of the healthcare industry and related services has literally exploded. The demand for services in this sector is so overwhelming that companies cannot keep up. Institutions, hospitals, and medical offices are busting at the seams and unfortunately most are unaware of the latest technology that can dramatically help them become more efficient, more profitable and better prepared to fulfill patient needs in an effective manner.

In order for the players in this industry to prosper, meet demand, and ultimately save lives new technologies must be implemented. There is a variety of technologies that have only scratched the surface in regards to their utilization. A few examples of these technologies include high definition videoconferencing, managed IT services, and IP video solutions.

Healthcare professionals understand the potential to improve access to medical services through telemedicine, but the poor quality and high cost of legacy videoconferencing systems has limited clinical application. Distance poses a special challenge for health care. How do you connect a patient to the right specialist many miles away? How can a team of caregivers meet to develop a treatment plan? Recent advancements in high definition technology enable healthcare professionals to see patients otherwise beyond their reach and to connect patients to clinicians at different medical facilities, making healthcare more accessible to everyone. High definition solutions enable patient consultations with specialists far away in central diagnostic centers.

Running an efficient data network is not easy either regardless of the industry, especially with the convergence of voice and data. In today's environment, healthcare organizations cannot afford to let their guard down, especially with sensitive patient information that they collect and transmit both internally and externally. There are too many threats and other issues that plague network integrity and performance. So what are companies supposed to do? One answer is to outsource the management of their network IT services.

Essentially, managed IT services are designed to assist in maintaining and supporting the network and IT infrastructure. Types of services include remote network monitoring and reporting 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, firewall monitoring, intrusion detection, patch assessment and vulnerability scanning, preventative tasks, disaster recovery, data backup and regular performance analysis. As we all know, the network is the backbone of a business and if it's not managed correctly employee productivity and profitability rapidly declines. Outsourcing the management of a network makes sense because it has nothing to do with the core competency of a healthcare organization.

One of the latest innovations spawned by the Internet that's rapidly gaining popularity is IP video. This phenomenal tool connects IP cameras to the Internet so one can view just about anything on from any location around the world in real-time. IP video is having a tremendous impact on the ability to protect

patients, ensure that medication is delivered properly, collect valuable information to support against fraudulent lawsuits, identify visitors and employees, monitor hazardous work areas, and thwart theft. Healthcare will remain the fastest growing industry for quite sometime. Organizations from the local dentist to hospitals with large campuses need to take a hard look at the latest technology to meet overwhelming demand. The first step is to partner with the right business communications provider that understands HIPPA requirements, takes a global approach to technology, and offers guidance that transfer value all the way through the chain to the end user. This is an exciting time in both healthcare and technology and the success of the former depends on the latter.

ABOUT MARYLAND TELEPHONE

Since 1974, Maryland Telephone has been a leading provider of innovative telecommunications solutions. The company offers comprehensive, high-quality communications services including business telephone systems, computer telephony integration (CTI), wireless communications, local and long distance service, networking, broadband connectivity and videoconferencing.

Through the company's strategic partnerships with major manufacturers including Inter-Tel and Verizon, Maryland Telephone brings state-of-the-art communications products to market. Maryland Telephone's mission is to reduce its customers' costs while improving their telecommunications capabilities. As basic as this mission statement sounds, it has been a successful one for the company, ensuring consistent growth and helping expand into the global marketplace.

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