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Dakota Carrier Network CEO **Seth Arndorfer**, with scissors, cuts the ribbon on the expansion, accompanied by representatives of member companies, and the Bismarck business community.

DCN celebrates major data center expansion

Earlier this year, Dakota Carrier Network (DCN) hosted a ribbon cutting at its data center located at 4202 Coleman Street in Bismarck to celebrate the early completion of a 30,000-square-foot expansion to the facility.

Approved by DCN's owner companies in August 2015, the expansion increases the data center's available server floor space by six times and expands the center's total footprint to 72,000 square feet. Initially expected to be completed in February 2017, the facility was opened more than a month ahead of schedule.

Costs to date for this project are approximately \$6 million, which reflects only partial completion of data center modules in the expanded area. Modules will be completed to meet customer demands, increasing the overall project cost to an estimated \$30 million when complete.

"Technology allows our lives to move at an incredible pace, so it is fitting that DCN's data center expansion was completed faster than expected," said DCN's CEO Seth Arndorfer. "The amount of Internet bandwidth used by North Dakotans is doubling every 12 to 15 months, and all of this activity creates data which needs to be securely stored and yet remain easily accessible to end users. This expansion is a necessary building block to provide North Dakotans with the infrastructure they need to remain competitive at a global level."

Arndorfer thanked DCN's 15 owner companies for continuously investing in vital technology infrastructure, including the 40,000 miles of fiber optic cable DCN and its owner companies have installed throughout North Dakota and DCN's Fargo data center, which has been operating since 2006.

"No other provider in North Dakota can offer the same level of service or storage capacity that DCN currently delivers to customers," said Paul Schuetzler, DCN chairman of the board and CEO of Consolidated

Telcom. "This expansion further grows DCN's role as the largest co-located data center operator in the state. As owner companies, we are proud of our collaborative work to provide the technology infrastructure our residents and businesses need."

DCN is the only data center operator in North Dakota that offers customers private suites (selected spaces leased exclusively to a single customer) and also offers customers flexibility in choosing cabinets for their specific business applications.

All DCN data centers are designed as carrier-grade hardened facilities able to withstand F4 tornado-force winds, with fully N+1 redundant power and cooling systems. State-of-the-art security is incorporated throughout its data centers, including multiple levels of security, biometric fingerprint scanners, personalized combination locking cabinets and suites, and 24/7 monitoring with a closed caption TV video surveillance system.

DCN ensures 99.999 percent network uptime for customers, offering unstopable reliability that is critical for operations of private clients and public clients alike. Current customers include all North Dakota K-12 schools, the North Dakota University System, North Dakota's 54 critical care hospitals and a variety of private financial organizations, technology firms and other commercial clients. ■

ABOUT DCN

Dakota Carrier Network, created in 1996, is owned by 15 North Dakota-based independent telecommunications companies representing 85 percent of all telephone exchanges in North Dakota and more than 90 percent of the state's total surface area. They serve more than 164,000 customers in approximately 250 communities. The DCN companies currently have more than 40,000 miles of fiber optic cable in service. ■



TELECOM COUNTRY is a feature from the North Dakota Association of Telecommunications Cooperatives. NDATC is the statewide organization of cooperatives and local companies providing telecommunications and broadband service to communities, businesses, and farms across North Dakota. NDATC officers: president, Matt Erhardt, Jr., Center; first vice president, Ron German, Hankinson; second vice president, Lorena Lambrecht, Tioga; and secretary/treasurer, Jan Stebbins, Bowman. TELECOM COUNTRY is also available at www.ndliving.com. For information on NDATC and its member organizations, go to: www.ndatc.com.