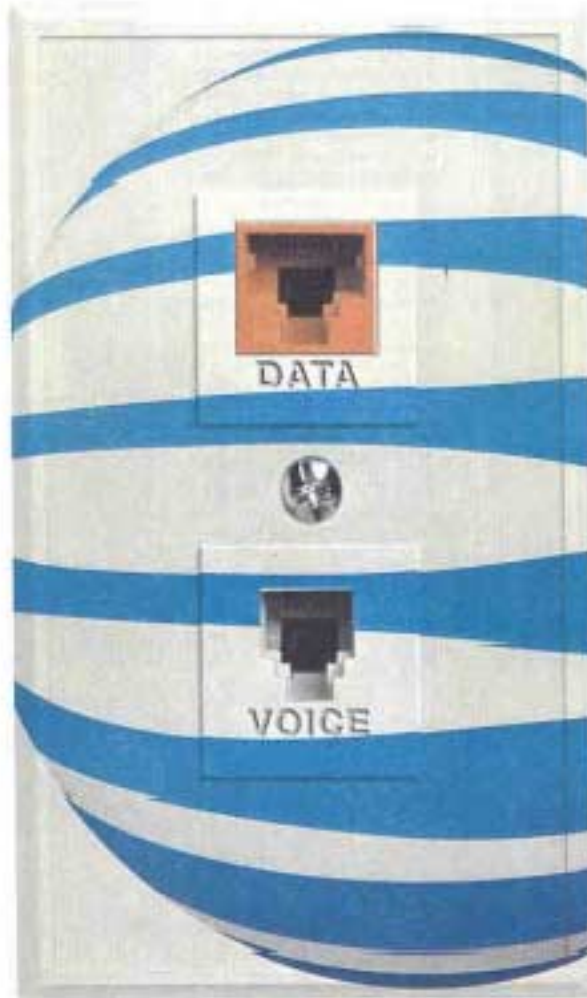


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Unlimited Internet	included	\$19.95
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Thursday, June 29, 2000

**Phil Porter**  
*Dispatch Business Reporter*

Darla King doesn't hate Ameritech. She just finds CoreComm less expensive. So she's gradually switched her home and business phone service to the upstart Cleveland-based company.

It's a beginning -- but hardly a revolution.

King is one of 29,000 Ohio residential customers who have switched to CoreComm, compared with 2.3 million Ameritech residential customers who've stayed put.

What makes CoreComm unique is that, of the wave of new companies seeking to bundle telecommunications services -- from long distance to digital subscriber lines, cellular phones and caller identification -- CoreComm is the only company in Ohio actively seeking local residential customers.

"It's a lot less expensive, and they make it very simple," said King, a Clintonville resident who operates King Business Interiors. "At the office, we've also got long distance, a business calling card and a car phone. You can put everything on one bill; it cleans it all up."

Patty J. Flynt, president of the telecommunications company, argues that CoreComm has gained the confidence to build its own residential telephone infrastructure from watching its parent, CoreComm Ltd. of New York, turn other communications businesses into successes.

One spinoff is NTL Inc., a big cable television company in the United Kingdom, that has turned a \$10 billion infrastructure into 3 million cable, Internet and phone customers.

In the 1980s, Barclay Knapp, the president and chief executive of CoreComm



**Eric Albrecht / Dispatch**

**Darla King conducts business using CoreComm telecommunications service. She also uses CoreComm at home.**

Ltd., and Chairman George S. Blumenthal built the former Cellular One wireless franchise in Ohio before selling it to AirTouch for \$2.5 billion.

"Most companies haven't figured out how to make the economics of residential telephone service work," Flynt said. "We've figured out the economic model."

A piece of the model is bundling services for the underserved residential and small-business market -- local phone, long distance and premium Internet service -- at a price that Ameritech charges for local service alone.

Marilyn Miller, vice president of Firststar Bank, uses CoreComm for her personal cellular and residential phone, estimating she saves about one third. At home in Lewis Center, Ohio, she gets local residential service, call waiting, caller ID and call forwarding for one flat fee of \$25.

Most Ohioans have never heard of CoreComm. The company is working to change that with marketing agreements with the Cleveland Indians, the Cleveland Browns and the Columbus Blue Jackets.

The agreement with the Indians got the company a shared sign behind home plate seen on televised Major League Baseball games from Jacobs Field since last year.

CoreComm began offering local telephone service to residential customers in Clintonville in March 1998, ending up with 3,000 accounts in Ohio by the end of the year. This year, the numbers are projected to expand to 45,000 residential customers statewide.

Two acquisitions, expected to close by the end of July, are expected to take the company to 650,000 total customers nationwide, including business, residential and Internet customers -- mostly in six states.

The company is acquiring Voyager, an Internet service provider based in the Midwest, in a stock and cash transaction valued at more than \$300 million. At the same time, it will acquire ATX Telecommunications Services, a regional phone company with small to medium-sized business customers in the Mid-Atlantic states. That deal is worth \$650 million.

The company plans to expand service to Detroit by the middle of July and into New York and Boston later this year.

CoreComm has experienced some bumps in its growth effort.

After an initial public stock offering in September 1998, CoreComm shares more than tripled in value reaching a high of \$48.35 on March 17. But after this spring's meltdown of technology stocks, the stock plummeted. It closed yesterday at \$21.75, up \$1.75.

The company is spending \$7 million to \$10 million in each city it enters for networking equipment and access. Last year, CoreComm posted a net loss of \$103.2 million on revenues of \$58.2 million. And the bleeding continued, with a \$39.9 million loss in the first quarter. Losses are expected to continue for the next couple of years, Flynt said.

The company's efforts have made a fan in state government.

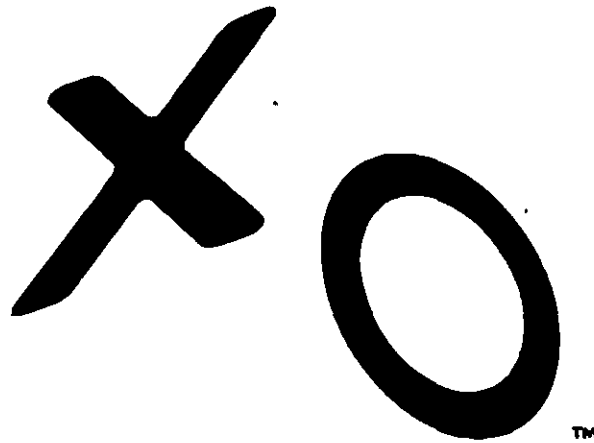
"God bless CoreComm for coming in and trying to do this," said Robert S. Tongren, Ohio Consumers' Counsel, who has been critical of the lack of residential telephone competition in Ohio. He said he doubts that Ameritech will have significant local competition in the next year.

Alan R. Schriber, the chairman of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, is more optimistic. He predicts major movement in residential phone competition over the next six months as a result of new rules to be put in place by the commission.

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## News Archive

### Allegiance Telecom Introduces Service In Cleveland Area

#### Provides Communications Alternative for Small and Medium-Sized Businesses

CLEVELAND, May 25, 2000 - Small and medium-sized businesses, often neglected by the major telecommunications providers, have a new voice in Cleveland. With initiation of Allegiance Telecom, Inc. (Nasdaq: ALGX) service in Cleveland, local businesses can enjoy levels of service previously only available to large corporations. Allegiance is targeting small and medium-sized businesses in the Cleveland area, providing economical local, long distance, international calling, high-speed data transmission and Internet services.

Allegiance is a facilities-based competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC), offering businesses a complete package of telecommunications services. The company is targeting 36 major metropolitan areas in the United States with its "one-stop shopping" approach. Allegiance Telecom is currently operational in 21 other markets, including Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Fort Worth, Houston, Long Island, Los Angeles, New York, Northern New Jersey, Oakland, Orange County, Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose and Washington D.C.

"Telecommunications services, from basic local dial tone to high speed Internet access and e-commerce applications, are vitally important to business owners in Cleveland," said Tony Parella, Allegiance Telecom senior vice president of sales and customer care. "Allegiance brings competition to the local marketplace, providing an economical single source for these business telecommunication requirements, all consolidated on one bill."

Parella noted the new Allegiance Telecom office will be headed by Cleveland area native Mike Csanad, a veteran Allegiance salesperson who has been promoted to city vice president.

Allegiance Telecom's new local sales office is located at 6155 Rockside Road in Independence, Ohio, and can be reached via telephone, 216/503-2000.

Allegiance Telecom has electronically bonded operations support systems (OSS), reducing the time required to process customer orders for local service requests. This bonding between Allegiance and Ameritech systems makes it easier for Cleveland area businesses to switch from one local service provider to another. Electronic bonding enables Allegiance's back office computers to communicate with Ameritech's in real-time, providing for rapid implementation of local service requests, service changes and other data.

"The lack of electronic bonding between other facilities-based local carriers and the incumbents has been widely recognized as the principal bottleneck in realizing the competitive local service marketplace envisioned by the Telecommunications Act of 1996," said Parella. "Our direct interface with Ameritech systems is another major step toward reaching our goal of achieving electronic bonding with all incumbent local

phone providers."

Currently, many competitive local exchange carriers (CLECs) have unique electronic systems that may not adhere to various industry standards. Therefore, many CLECs depend upon faxing customer orders to the incumbent local telephone company, which then must manually input this information into their systems for processing. Allegiance, however, developed its electronic interfaces to conform with Ameritech standards.

By adopting this process, Allegiance is able to receive from Ameritech a "firm order commitment" - confirmation that an order has been received - much more rapidly. Using electronic interfaces, this confirmation is typically sent within six hours, and on many occasions, it is sent almost instantaneously. Using the manual system, it took approximately 5 to 7 days on average to complete this step. This process reduces the sales cycle from selling new customer service to actually installing and billing by the company to 15 days or less.

Allegiance is a facilities-based CLEC headquartered in Dallas, Texas. The Company's web address is [www.allegiantele.com](http://www.allegiantele.com). Allegiance's common stock is traded on the Nasdaq National Market under the symbol ALGX.

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### Buckeye TeleSystem Launches Voice, Data, And Video Services In Bowling Green, Ohio

**Bowling Green, OH** - Buckeye TeleSystem, a northwest Ohio owned and operated provider of competitive telecommunication solutions, announced today the launch of voice and data services in Bowling Green to business, corporate and institutional customers.

Buckeye TeleSystem's local focus in northwest Ohio ensures that every level of business is located close to the customer premise. From decision-makers to customer service representatives, a local presence translates into faster response times and more customized solutions.

"Launching service in Bowling Green is a natural extension of our business offering of quality services to Southeast Michigan and Northwest Ohio," said John E. Martin, Director of Sales & Marketing, Buckeye TeleSystem. " With our partnership with WCNet we feel that we can offer the greatest quality of service in Bowling Green."

Buckeye TeleSystem's modern, state-of-the-art network operations center is monitored 24 x 7, ensuring that a network anomaly never goes unnoticed.

Buckeye TeleSystem offers competitive pricing for a full portfolio of the most current technologies, including business phone lines, high-speed data services, ISDN PRI circuits, Digital Trunks, Voice Mail, and national (long distance) services to businesses in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan.

#### **About Buckeye TeleSystem**

Founded in 1994, Buckeye TeleSystem ([www.buckeye-telesystem.com](http://www.buckeye-telesystem.com)) is a facilities-based provider of voice, video and data telecommunication services headquartered in Toledo, Ohio.

## Media Center : Press Releases : Press Release

### ICG Communications, Inc. and American Electric Power Enter Agreement to Add 45-Mile Fiber Optic Network in Columbus Metropolitan Area Plus 138-Mile Link to Canton

**DENVER (August 6, 1996)** -- ICG Communications, Inc. (AMEX: ICG), a leading national competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC), has entered into a long-term contract with Columbus, Ohio-based American Electric Power (NYSE: AEP) to build a 45-mile network addition in metropolitan Columbus, plus a 138-mile long-haul link to Canton, Ohio.

The agreement between ICG's subsidiary, ICG Telecom Group, Inc. and AEP's subsidiaries, Columbus Southern Power Company and Ohio Power Company, will allow ICG to more effectively address a local serving-area population of about 1.4 million. The agreement also provides AEP value-added fiber-optic facilities to further enhance its energy monitoring systems and internal communications.

"This is an opportunity for both ICG and AEP to strengthen our respective network infrastructures," said J. Shelby Bryan, president and chief executive officer of ICG Communications. "Specifically, it allows us to quickly and cost-effectively expand our market presence and customer base in the Ohio Valley and introduce choice in local telecommunications services to more consumers in Columbus."

"Working with ICG helps AEP cost-effectively upgrade its communications backbone to support growing voice and data communications needs, while providing the capability for expanded customer communications and energy management services," said Bruce Renz, AEP's vice president of Energy Delivery Support.

ICG currently operates Lucent Technologies 5ESS<sup>®</sup> central office switches in its networks in Columbus and Cleveland.

Bill Maxwell, president of ICG Telecom Group, said construction of the joint build will begin in this calendar quarter and will require six to nine months to complete. The build will include additional fiber loops in the southern business district of Columbus and a 138-mile connection between Columbus and Canton, putting ICG at the doorstep of another 400,000 local consumers in the greater Canton metropolitan area. ICG plans to begin connecting commercial buildings in the metropolitan Columbus area to its network over the next six months.

ICG also is constructing a 331-mile long-haul network, connecting its networks in Cleveland, Akron, Columbus and Dayton and its network under development in Cincinnati. "The strategy is to establish a facilities-based, statewide telecommunications system reinforced by two large SONET (synchronous optical network), inter-city rings," Maxwell said. "Our current SONET ring between Cleveland and Akron will be complemented with another ring connecting our networks and switch sites in Cleveland and Columbus."

ICG's operations in the state of Ohio include 213 miles of operational fiber network and an additional 480 miles under construction.

"In conjunction with the regulatory progress we've made in Ohio and the interconnection agreement we signed with Ameritech, this network build is consistent with our ambitious fiber deployment plan and fundamental to our regional

'clustering' strategy," Bryan added.

Earlier this month, ICG received certification by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio to provide local exchange telecommunications services within all 62 counties served by Ameritech in Ohio. In June ICG entered into an interconnection agreement with Ameritech in Ohio which will allow ICG to connect with Ameritech's network. The agreement, which covers all aspects of interconnection and unbundling, was subsequently submitted to the PUCO for approval pursuant to the federal Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Columbus, recognized for its economic diversity, has emerged as an important center for banking, insurance, manufacturing, high technology, retail, service, and educational organizations.

AEP, one of the nation's largest investor-owned utilities, provides electric energy to 7 million people in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky. In addition, wholly owned subsidiaries provide power engineering, consulting and management services throughout the world.

ICG Communications, Inc. is the new public holding company for IntelCom Group Inc., now known as ICG Holdings (Canada), Inc. The company's operations consist of ICG Telecom Group, ICG Fiber Optic Technologies and ICG Satellite Services. Telecom Group is ICG's competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) and enhanced services business, which includes CLEC networks in 59 markets with four additional markets under construction. Fiber Optic Technologies provides network integration and support services. Satellite Services provides maritime telecommunications network and international end-to-end voice and data services, and operates VSAT (very small aperture terminal) private data networks.

Note: Lucent Technologies 5ESS switch is a registered trademark of Lucent Technologies, Inc.

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## Media Center : Press Releases : Press Release

### ICG Communications Expands Network to Serve Cincinnati

Provides Competitive Alternative for Commercial, ISP Customers Company Switch Site has Historical Significance as Location of First Ohio Telephone Exchange

**CINCINNATI, April 12, 1999** -- At the same location where telephone service began more than 120 years ago in Ohio, competitive local telecommunications provider ICG Communications, Inc. (NASDAQ: ICGX) announced today it has placed in service network switching equipment for Cincinnati and surrounding communities.

ICG, based in Englewood, Colo., has activated a Lucent 5ESS® switch at its facility at Fourth and Walnut streets in downtown Cincinnati. The enhanced switch provides data networking capabilities to the circuit-switched network. ICG also is installing a synchronous optical network (SONET) that will link with other markets in the Ohio Valley.

Customers in the greater Cincinnati region will be able to take advantage of ICG's suite of bundled services for the commercial and the Internet service provider (ISP) business segments. These services include local, long distance and enhanced telephony, data communications, Digital Subscriber Line and network management for ISPs.

The original Cincinnati telephone exchange - the first in Ohio and tenth in the nation - went into service on Sept. 1, 1878, on the same city block where ICG now operates its equipment.

"The location of our switch site is historically significant to the development of telecommunications in Ohio. We intend to build on this tradition by ushering in a new era of commercial local telephone and ISP service, an era that will give Cincinnati consumers competitive alternatives," said John Humphries, ICG's regional president.

Humphries noted that the Cincinnati market has more than a quarter million business access lines, with an emphasis on the retail, manufacturing and health care industries. He added that ICG plans to compete aggressively for market share in Cincinnati as it has in other Ohio cities. ICG also operates local switches and SONET networks in Akron, Cleveland, Columbus and Dayton.

ICG's presence in Cincinnati also will help further develop the city's information highway infrastructure, and will create additional employment opportunities for telecommunications employees in the market, Humphries said.

#### About ICG Communications

With headquarters in Englewood, Colo., ICG Communications, Inc. (NASDAQ: ICGX) is a competitive telecommunications provider of high-quality, integrated communications solutions. ICG offers local, long distance and enhanced telephony, and data communications to small and medium-sized businesses in California, Colorado, Ohio, Texas and the southeastern United States. The company also provides high-speed data network capabilities and services to Internet service providers throughout the U.S., using ICG's nationwide network. Through other subsidiary operations, ICG designs and installs copper, fiber and wireless

infrastructure for buildings and campuses; ICG also offers international satellite voice and data services. For further information on ICG, visit the company's web site at <http://www.icgcom.com>.

Editor's Note: ICG will hold a switch dedication ceremony at 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 14, at the site, located at Fourth and Walnut streets. For news media seeking information about the ceremony, please contact (303) 414-5529.

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Media Center : Press Releases : Press Release

**IntelCom Group Inc. Announces 331-Mile Fiber-Optic Network Build in Ohio, More Than Doubling Current Network in the State**

**DENVER (February 22, 1996) --** IntelCom Group Inc. (AMEX "ITR"), the nation's leading competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) in tier II/tier III markets, announced that it will invest \$8.8 million for construction of a major 331-mile fiber-optic network in Ohio.

This extensive network expansion will provide a direct fiber link between ICG's existing networks in Cleveland, Akron, Columbus and Dayton and a new network under development in Cincinnati. The combined MSA (metropolitan statistical area) population of these five markets exceeds 6.3 million. At the end of January 1996, the four existing markets had 191 fiber-optic route miles in operation with an additional 86 route miles under construction.

According to J. Shelby Bryan, president and chief executive officer of IntelCom Group, the Ohio region has become an even bigger part of ICG's planned growth in light of the recently passed federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. ICG has AT&T 5ESS central office switches operating in Cleveland and Columbus which have the port capacity to service the other markets. "Consequently, we are able to more efficiently deploy capital by clustering these major population centers," Bryan said.

Construction of the network is expected to be completed by year-end.

ICG's operations consist of Telecom Services, Network Services and Satellite Services. Telecom Services is ICG's competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) and enhanced services business, including CLEC networks in 32 markets with one additional network under construction. Fiber Optic Technologies, Inc., the company's wholly owned network services subsidiary, provides network integration and support services through regional headquarters located in Dallas, Denver, Portland and San Francisco. Satellite Services provides maritime telecommunications network and international end-to-end voice and data services, and operates VSAT (very small aperture terminal) private data networks.

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## **TALK AMERICA COMPLETES SYSTEMS TESTING FOR LOCAL SERVICE ROLLOUT IN OHIO**

**RESTON, VA**-June 8, 2001-Talk America (Nasdaq NM: TALK), an integrated communications provider of bundled local and long distance services to residential and small business customers, today announced completion of its provisioning, billing and customer service testing in the Ameritech region of Ohio. The expanded coverage increases the Company's potential market of addressable residential subscribers to approximately 75 million lines and initiates Talk America's fifteenth statewide launch of bundled phone services, since May of 2000. Ohio marks the second state in the Ameritech region where Talk America is fully integrated with Ameritech's network and facilities and operationally ready to receive orders.

"We are pleased with performance levels in our provisioning and billing systems in Ameritech territory demonstrating our readiness to enter the Ohio market," said Gabe Battista, Chairman and CEO of Talk America. "Our operational systems are now prepared to provide quality along with seamless service for future Ohio customers."

Battista concluded, "Since the FCC landmark 1999 order began to pave the way for an open market in residential telecommunications services, Talk America's mandate has been to capture market share in the lucrative residential market. We believe the positive results of our current operations in Ohio coupled with thriving success in the fourteen existing states positions us for growth and reaffirms consumer demand for bundled telecommunications offerings."

### **About Talk America**

Talk America is a rapidly growing integrated communications provider marketing a bundle of local and long distance services to residential and small business customers utilizing its proprietary "real-time" online billing and customer service platform. Talk America has added local service to its offerings, after ten years as a long distance provider, serving up to 1.5 million customers nationwide. The Company delivers value in the form of savings, simplicity and quality service to its customers based on the efficiency of its low-cost, nationwide network and the effectiveness of its systems that interface electronically with the Bell Operating Companies.

For further information, visit the Company online at: [www.talk.com](http://www.talk.com).

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Please Note: "Safe Harbor" statement under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995: Statements in this press release regarding Talk America's business that are not historical facts are "forward-looking statements" that involve risks and uncertainties. For a discussion of such risks and uncertainties, which could cause actual results to differ from those contained in the forward-looking statements, see the discussions contained in its Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year-ended December 31, 2000.

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