Via Satellite Announces Matthew Desch Executive of the Year 2011

Matthew Desch, Chief Executive Officer, Iridium Communications [1], has been named *Via Satellite*'s Satellite Executive of the Year for 2011. Iridium boasted a strong performance in 2011 that exceeded estimates on nearly every metric. Financially speaking, the MSS operator grew in areas where it was not expected to grow, driven by its service, its technological innovation and its ability to be a catalyst to its ecosystem of development partners in an increasingly competitive sector and in new sectors, as well.

The company performed solidly from a financial perspective in 2011. In the nine months to the end of September, the operator generated close to $290 million in revenues, an increase of just under $30 million compared to the same stage last year. Its net income for the nine months ended September 30, 2011 was also up reaching more than $31 million, more than double when compared to the same period last year. In areas such as equipment revenue, it significantly outperformed expectations.

But, there is more to the Iridium story than just the numbers. There were also many operational highlights for Iridium in 2011. In July, Iridium announced that Desch was appointed to serve on the U.S. National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (NSTAC). Desch now advises and provides recommendations to U.S. President Barack Obama and other government leaders on the security of the nation's telecommunications systems.

In September 2011, Iridium saved up a month's worth of new mobile satellite products and services announcements and packaged them into Iridium ForceSM – an initiative that involved the opening of its core Iridium technology licensing, the launch of a new handset (the Iridium Extreme™) and the expansion of capabilities under its existing portfolio. The Iridium Force strategy includes allowing connectivity to Wi-Fi enabled devices such as smartphones, tablets and laptops through the new Iridium AxcessPoint™ suite of products as well as for applications beyond the reach of terrestrial networks.

"There's no denying that Matt Desch has charted a considerable change of course for Iridium since its days focused on a completely different business model back in the early portion of the previous decade," said Mark Holmes, associate editor of *Via Satellite*. "Many satellite industry watchers saw the Iridium NEXT Coface financing deal in 2010 as the catalyst that solidified its comeback. Iridium's performance under Desch's leadership in 2011 is a testament to the operator's progress in recent times. We are proud to recognize Matt Desch as the 2011 Satellite Executive of the Year."

“I am honored to join such an elite roster of satellite executives in accepting this award,” said Desch. “I feel very fortunate to work with the best and the brightest minds in the industry, and this is a testament to the hard work and dedication of all Iridium employees, our partner ecosystem and our customers. Since joining Iridium more than five years ago, we have been committed to advancing our leadership position in MSS just as much as we’ve strived to be a vital contributor to the global communications infrastructure as a whole. Through a commitment to relentless innovation, supported by our unmatched global network, we are uniquely positioned to enable some of the most innovative companies to develop better ways to help people and organizations communicate anywhere, at any time.”

For more than 20 years, *Via Satellite* magazine has been honoring the satellite executives who made a lasting business impact on the global satellite market during the previous calendar year.

Via Satellite magazine will showcase Desch in its “Satellite Executive of the Year” cover feature in the March issue. Desch will be presented with his award at the Satellite Executive of the Year luncheon on Wednesday, March 14, and at a reception in his honor will be held that evening. Both events take place during the SATELLITE 2012 Conference and Exhibition, which runs March 12-15 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center at 801 Mount Vernon Place, NW, Washington, DC.

For more information or to register, visit www.SATELLITE2012.com [2].

Posted by Ron M. Seidel, Editorial Intern

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