



# **Community Service Provider**

## **Request for Expression of Interest**

**Fort Smith**

**May 7, 2009**

**Deadline – Until Position is filled**

**SSI**

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## 1 Overview

A Community Service Provider to support the AirWare Network is needed in your community. If you have an interest in providing Internet support please review Section 3 – CSP Qualifications. If you wish to respond, please follow the instructions in Section 5 – CSP Expression of Interest.

## 2 Role of the Community Service Provider (CSP)

### ***Sales and Support Role***

The Community Service Provider's role is to provide first level sales and support for the local community using staff resident in the same community as the customers as follows:

- a) Maintain a community-based inventory of modems to ensure that a new customer can be installed quickly and that a failed modem can be replaced without waiting for modems from outside;
- b) Seek out potential new customers in a community;
- c) Register new customers and update existing customer records as required;
- d) Assist new and existing customers in installing the required modem and in dealing with any related technical problems that may arise;
- e) Collect and bank cash and cheques provided by customers for payment of services.

### ***Role in Customer Payments***

The role of the Community Service Provider in customer payments is critical to the success of the overall system. The pricing model is based on pre-payments by the customer, ensuring that clients do not have the ability to accrue large debt by ensuring that they pay for services prior to receiving them. At the end of the pre-paid month, if the account is not refreshed with a recurring credit card charge or another one-time credit card payment, the customer account will be automatically disabled until another customer payment is made and recorded in the system. Email for disabled customers will be held pending payment. When they restart the service, customers will only pay for the use of the modem during the disabled period.

For a customer with a credit card they need only enter their credit card information once and the card is automatically charged every month, one month in advance. While not all customers will have a credit card, it is a condition of being a CSP that the CSP have a valid credit card. In the case of a customer paying by cash or cheque, the CSP will accept payment in cash or cheque, bank the payment in his or her own account in a local bank or by mail if no bank is available in the community and enter his or her own credit card number against the customer account for the period pre-paid by the customer. For the most part, this will be an entirely automated process, and will follow these general steps:

- (1) Customer decided to purchase service;
- (2) Customer visits local CSP, fills in appropriate paperwork and acquires his account information;
- (3) CSP creates the customer account in the management system. At this time, the CSP credit card will be billed for the service he has just sold;
- (4) While the customer will be reminded by email to make a payment, it is up to the customer to ensure that the CSP is paid for his next month of service. If the customer is using his own credit card, this will be an automated process. If not, it is up to the customer to make a payment to the CSP prior to the following months billing. If the CSP does not receive a customer payment and enter this payment into the management system, the customer account will automatically be suspended.

This overall process ensures that all revenue is collected so that the overall system is properly financed, ensures that the local CSP is not blamed when the customer account is disabled for non-payment while at the same time providing for payment by cash and cheque.

### ***Role in Service Issues***

Typically a customer question or problem will be reported by the customer via the management system (the portal/web page where the customers can check usage, etc.). Once a problem/service request is logged a copy will be sent to the CSP or agent who works for a CSP.

The CSP or his agent will be able to log in, see the issue and respond via the management system (if it is a simple question). The response will be logged and the issue ticket closed when the customer is satisfied.

If the CSP does work on the customer site or has some interaction not through the web interface they will be required to update the ticket and close it when the problem is resolved.

The system will track the time from ticket opening to response and closing. Tickets that are not resolved in a timely fashion will be escalated to SSI Micro for attention. Statistics on the timely resolution of customer issues will be a part of the evaluation of CSPs. CSPs that consistently show poor customer support will be replaced as a last resort.

### **3 CSP Qualifications**


The AirWare Network depends on local Community Service Providers selling and supporting customers in every community. CSP's and their staff may have access to customer data, may attend customers in their home and will have access to financial and administrative processes in the overall system. CSP's are expected to support a number of customers, not just their own family or friends and to meet market penetration rates that are similar to other CSPs in other NWT communities.

CSP's are expected to meet the following minimum criteria:

- Have a place of business in the community they serve (could be in their home), a business phone, a fax, a bank account, a valid credit card, a computer and a broadband account;
- Have the appropriate business licenses and be registered with Worker's Compensation, CCRA for a Business Number, GST, etc, all depending on the requirements of your community and your circumstances;
- Be financially stable (e.g. not bankrupt in the previous 3 years);
- Be able to pass a police reference check similar to that required for an education or health care worker;
- Be prepared to commit to selling and supporting a reasonable percentage of the customers in their community;
- Be prepared to undertake and complete training that is offered by SSI Micro from time to time to ensure required levels on technical and customer service skills;
- Be prepared to be monitored in terms of service and response levels related to customer questions and issues.

The above guidelines are common across the NWT and will be used to qualify new CSPs and to monitor and measure existing CSPs in a similar fashion across all communities.

Applicants may express an interest without having all items listed above already in place (e.g. business phone or computer) but all applicants should understand that they will not be introduced as a CSP until they meet the minimum requirements. Applicants should



further understand that falling below the minimum requirements after beginning as a CSP could result in loss of the CSP status. Should this happen, the client base of the CSP will be transferred to another CSP or to the network operator.

Additional credentials and skills that will be considered include the following:

- Technology skills and experience that will improve broadband customer service and will encourage the use of the AirWare Network. These skills and experience could be in computer and communications technology or in broadband applications such as distance education, geosciences, digital and video cameras, web page development, Internet banking and related services, etc.
- Business, financial or marketing experience to ensure a well-managed CSP and to assist broadband customers;
- Other lines of business that could provide synergy with broadband (e.g. sale of computer or electronic equipment, production or sale of digital content).

## 4 CSP Commitments and Compensation

### 4.1 CSP Commitments

Organizations or individuals wishing to be named as a CSP must make an overall commitment to continue meeting the minimum requirements for a CSP as outlined in a previous section. Falling below the minimum (e.g. no phone, no computer, and no credit card) may result in withdrawal of the CSP status.

In addition to the minimum requirements, the CSP must make the following commitments:

- **Customer Service Commitments** – All interaction with customers must be logged in the management system, and published service levels to deal with customer's questions and problems must be met. These service levels will be defined by SSI Micro, will be published to all CSPs and will be common across the NWT. Repeated breach of the service levels by a CSP may result in loss of the CSP status.
- **Sales Quota** – An annual quota for the number of customers in a community will be negotiated for each CSP based on the population of the community and other factors such as the unemployment rate and the number of businesses and other employers in the community. The quota will be expressed in the form of the number of customer modems active in a community at any point in time. CSPs will be expected to pay a nominal charge per month for each customer modem that was planned to be active but has not been taken up by a customer. This payment will be deducted from revenue earned from paying customers. The intent is to encourage the CSP to sell the planned number of customers as soon as possible so that revenue is earned by the system as quickly as possible.

CSPs do not require any other investment or commitment.

### 4.2 CSP Compensation

Individual customers in a community are allocated to the CSP that sold and installed the customer. All communication with the customer by the network

will be in the name of the customer's CSP. When a customer has a problem the customer's CSP is expected to handle the problem.

CSPs will receive a percentage of the revenue paid by the customer on a monthly basis. The payment due to the CSP will be deposited into the CSP's bank account after receipt from the customer (less any charges resulting from missing the CSP's sales quota as described above).

## **5 CSP Expression of Interest**

**If you do not have all the expected skills and want to apply, please do so.**

We need as much information as you can give us.

At a minimum, write us a letter covering the following items:

- Your name (and the name of your organization if appropriate) and how we can contact you (community, your address, phone, email, etc.);
- Your skills and background (and the capabilities of your organization if appropriate).
- Your other business or employment activities in your community that may fit in with the CSP activities (in most communities the CSP will not be a full-time position in the early years).

Expressions of Interest will be accepted until the position is filled. Please submit your application by one of the following means:

- Email – [jennifer\\_teed@ssimicro.com](mailto:jennifer_teed@ssimicro.com)
- Fax – 867-669-7510

If you have questions about this document or the process please contact:

Jennifer Teed      867-669-7500      [jennifer\\_teed@ssimicro.com](mailto:jennifer_teed@ssimicro.com)