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Channel Chiefs Provide Valuable Feedback to TCA at Second Summit

TCA hosted its second exclusive vendor member Channel Chief Summit in Washington D.C. on September 20 in conjunction with the Channel Partners show. The meeting included thought leaders from companies such as Global Crossing, Level 3, XO, Intercall, Megapath, Quest, Salestream, Telnes Broadband and US Signal, as well as TCA Board members who are committed to improving the quality and reputation of the indirect sales channel community.

Reflecting the rapid evolution of the indirect sales channel, the attendees generally discussed the industry's current size and discussed how the term "The Alternate Channel" is truly becoming simply "THE Channel," due to equipment distribution being roughly two-thirds indirect. The agent community's desire to become more standardized and professional is reflected in the results of recent membership drives, which have led to the recruitment of 139 new agent members since July.

Among other important topics facing the telecom industry, the group discussed the impending launch of TCA's Certified Telecommunications Professional (CTP) program, the first industry trade association-sponsored certification program designed specifically for indirect sales agents. TCA board members emphasized that vendor support would be a very powerful avenue for the program's success. Vendors agreed that the certification would help ensure agents are selling "solutions" instead of just viewing a sale as a transaction.

Both carriers and agents will continue to work together on projects such as CTP to increase the level of professionalism in the industry overall. CTP is expected to be available to agents in November.

The meeting also focused on ways to utilize TCA to provide unbiased training, and how members can update themselves on current trends such as cloud computing. The association will begin to reach out more to Value Added Resellers (VARs) and hopes as a result, TCA can be looked at as a way to leverage the gap between the IT and telecom industries.

The following vendor channel leaders attended the Summit: Michael Jerich of Global Crossing, Scott Mull of Level 3, Garrett Gee of Level 3, Jo Ann Kendrick of Intercall, Darren Chamberlain of MegaPathm, Howard Huerta of Qwest, Jeff Fraser of Salestream, Jason Ness of Telnes Broadband, Brett Alexander of US Signal, Amanda Regnerus of US Signal and Tom Gorey of XO.

The following TCA Board members attended the Summit: Dany Bouchédid of COLOTRAQ, Vince Bradley of World Telecom Group, Ian Kieninger of Avant Communications, Jack Knocke of MicroCorp, Geoff Shepstone of TBI and Emmet Tydings of AB&T Telecom.

For information on joining TCA, call (609) 799-4900 or email info@tcasite.org.

About the Technology Channel Association (TCA)

The Technology Channel Association (TCA) is the first-ever non-profit trade association for the indirect telecommunications sales channel. Their mission is to promote the growth and success of the indirect sales channel by addressing industry challenges, delivering value-added programs and services to meet the needs of agents and vendors alike and to identify and develop industry-wide best practices to empower individual businesses. More information about the association is available at www.tcasite.org.