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DIRECTV and Viacom Reach Agreement for Return of Viacom's 17 Channels Including Extensive New Digital Rights for DIRECTV Customers

EL SEGUNDO, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- DIRECTV has reached a new long-term agreement with Viacom to restore 17 channels (including Nickelodeon, Comedy Central, MTV, BET, Spike, CMT, TV Land and ten other channels) that Viacom had taken away from DIRECTV customers on July 10. Viacom has returned all affected networks.

Financial terms were not disclosed.

In addition to the channels' return, DIRECTV customers will also gain the ability to see Viacom programming on tablets, laptops, handhelds and other personal devices via the DIRECTV Everywhere platform. Carriage of the EPIX movie channel is not required as part of the new agreement.

"We are very pleased to be able to restore the channels to our customers and thank them for their unprecedented patience and support," said Derek Chang, executive vice president of Content Strategy and Development for DIRECTV. "It's unfortunate that Viacom took the channels away from customers to try to gain leverage, but in the end, it's clear our customers recognized that tactic for what it was."

Chang added, "The attention surrounding this unnecessary and ill-advised blackout by Viacom has accomplished one key thing: it serves notice to all media companies that bullying TV providers and their customers with blackouts won't get them a better deal. It's high time programmers ended these anti-consumer blackouts once and for all and prove our industry is about enabling people to connect to their favorite programs rather than denying them access."

The dispute helped generate significant public support from hundreds of thousands of customers and also, surprisingly enough, many high-profile DIRECTV competitors. The 850 small and independently owned local cable systems that make up the American Cable Association joined the anti-blackout chorus, as did Cox Communications, Time Warner Cable and Mediacom.

About DIRECTV:

DIRECTV (NASDAQ: DTV) is one of the world's leading providers of digital television entertainment services delivering a premium video experience through state-of-the-art technology, unmatched programming and industry leading customer service to 33 million customers in the U.S. and Latin America. In the U.S., DIRECTV offers its 19.9 million customers access to more than 170 HD channels and Dolby-Digital® 5.1 theater-quality sound, access to exclusive sports programming such as NFL SUNDAY TICKET™, Emmy award winning technology and higher customer satisfaction than the leading cable companies for 11 years running. DIRECTV Latin America, through its subsidiaries and affiliated companies in Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Venezuela, Colombia, and other Latin American countries, leads the pay-TV category in technology, programming and service, delivering an unrivaled digital television experience to 12 million customers. DIRECTV sports and entertainment properties include three Regional Sports Networks (Northwest, Rocky Mountain and Pittsburgh) as well as a 60 percent interest in Game Show Network. For the most up-to-date information on DIRECTV, please visit www.directv.com.

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