



# News Release

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## **CAPTEL<sup>SM</sup> NOW AVAILABLE FROM SPRINT FOR HARD-OF-HEARING COMMUNITY IN NORTH DAKOTA**

**BISMARCK, N.D. – Jan. 24, 2006 –** The State of North Dakota has awarded Sprint (NYSE: S) a new contract to offer *CapTel*<sup>SM</sup> Relay Service (captioned telephone) to its state residents effective Jan. 1. *CapTel* is an assistive technology aimed at easing communications for the more than 24 million Americans who are hard of hearing, have experienced hearing loss later in life or are deaf individuals with good vocalization skills.

"The State is looking forward to providing *CapTel* Service for our customers. This service will greatly benefit the hard of hearing community." Roxy Ennen, telecommunications analyst, information technology department, state of North Dakota.

Developed by Ultratec, Inc. of Madison, Wis., *CapTel* is a leading-edge technology that requires a special *CapTel*<sup>TM</sup>-equipped phone in order to place a call through the *CapTel* Relay Service. The *CapTel* phone works like any traditional phone with callers talking and listening to each other, but with one very significant difference – captions are provided live for every call. The captions are displayed on the *CapTel* phone's built-in screen so the user can read the words while listening to the voice of the other party. This allows conversations to flow more naturally, allowing for normal interruptions and expressed emotions. *CapTel* services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

"*CapTel* provides a natural, comfortable way for many deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals to communicate with their family, friends and business contacts," said Mike Ligas, director of Sprint Relay. "At Sprint, we are committed to providing more choice and flexibility for all of our customers, and we appreciate the opportunity to bring this option to the deaf and hard-of-hearing community in North Dakota."

*CapTel* is available through Sprint in 26 other states, including Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont and Virginia. Hard-of-hearing active and retired federal government employees (civilian, military and federally recognized U.S. Tribal members) also can take advantage of *CapTel* services through Federal Relay.

For more information on *CapTel* services provided by Sprint, please visit [www.sprintrelay.com](http://www.sprintrelay.com) or refer to Ultratec's Web site at [www.captionedtelephone.com](http://www.captionedtelephone.com).

### **How *CapTel* works**

As users dial the phone number of the person they wish to call, the *CapTel* phone automatically routes their call through the *CapTel* call center and connects them to their called party. At the call center, a specially trained operator uses a customized voice-recognition computer and re-voices whatever is said by the called party. The voice-recognition software transcribes the operator's voice into captions that appear on the bright display screen on the *CapTel* phone for the users to read. The users also hear the other party's voice on the phone to the best of their ability, just like any other amplified phone.

### **Sprint Relay Portfolio of Services**

Sprint has more than 15 years of experience in providing relay services to persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or deaf-blind or who have a speech disability to communicate with hearing persons on the phone. Sprint offers relay services through an intelligent platform to the federal government, 32 states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and New Zealand. Sprint's experience in the field provides the assurance that all Sprint Relay services will meet or exceed Federal Communications Commission requirements for telecommunications relay services (TRS). Relay service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with no restrictions on the number of calls placed or call length. For more information, visit [www.sprintrelay.com](http://www.sprintrelay.com).

### **About Sprint Nextel**

Sprint Nextel offers a comprehensive range of wireless and wireline communications services to consumer, business and government customers. Sprint Nextel is widely recognized for developing, engineering and deploying innovative technologies, including two robust wireless networks offering industry leading mobile data services; instant national and international walkie-talkie capabilities; and an award-winning and global Tier 1 Internet backbone. For more information, visit [www.sprint.com](http://www.sprint.com).

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