

## **Two Major South Dakota Technology Companies reach strategic agreement**

*EarthBend announces strategic agreement to enhance its offerings by acquiring SDN's phone/data equipment division, cloud contact center platform.*

June 6, 2016 – SIOUX FALLS – Two South Dakota based companies who have, for years, been providing information technology systems and solutions, have reached a strategic agreement that includes EarthBend acquiring SDN's phone/data equipment division and cloud contact center platform.

EarthBend is offering jobs to 22 SDN employees who support the above business units. They will join EarthBend's growing team, of over 70 information technology experts serving the upper Midwest region. SDN will maintain 160 employees on its core broadband, managed and cybersecurity services serving businesses in South Dakota and surrounding states.

"This is a strategic opportunity for both companies," says EarthBend CEO Rob Beyer. "We see this as a way to grow our customer base and expand our IT solutions and services portfolio. We are particularly excited to add SDN's Cloud Contact Center Solution, expanding our managed services cloud based offerings. This acquisition is the best way to continue to accomplish our growth objectives, add key skilled IT resources and serve our customers and market."

EarthBend has been helping businesses to solve their technology challenges since 1982. The company provides a full suite of technology solutions in combination with a robust portfolio of professional and managed services offerings. EarthBend's team of in-house IT experts works closely with customers to understand their business needs, developing a detailed plan for implementing, integrating, launching and maintaining an appropriate solution set to address those concerns. With many collective years of business, technical and industry experience, EarthBend leverages core competencies across key IT areas such as infrastructure management, security services and training, network assessment, unified communications and others to ensure successful customer deployments.

Helping keep hackers out of business data has become a major focus for SDN. In recent months it has lead the region in cyber protection events for businesses. One recent event attracted 165 attendees from as far away as Ohio. Last year it successfully developed and launched the region's only Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) Protection product.

"Our DDoS Protection recently kept a major, internet-reliant organization up and running when hackers were actively flooding the organization's internet connection with garbage traffic, hoping to take down their service," says SDN CEO Mark Shlanta. "We're finding increased customer demand for that kind of cybersecurity offering on our network, and we are focusing on that growth in addition to our core business broadband products."

SDN is launching more cybersecurity tools for customers this year. SDN has also increased its offering of managed services, a growing IT practice where SDN owns, maintains and provides automatic security updates and patches to routers and firewalls, so customers don't have to.



**About EarthBend:**

For over 34 years, EarthBend has been dedicated to helping customers in the upper Midwest seamlessly deploy and integrate technology solutions that will fuel their business success. As a trusted information technology provider, EarthBend supports organizations across a wide range of industries, from companies with dedicated IT teams, to those with little or no IT resources. In every case, EarthBend provides the appropriate technology-related services and solutions to reliably address their unique business challenges. EarthBend is privately held and operated from its corporate headquarters in Sioux Falls, SD, with regional offices located in Brookings and Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN. For more information, please visit [www.earthbend.com](http://www.earthbend.com).

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**About SDN Communications**

SDN is the business broadband service provider. Its fiber optic network of 30,000 miles reaches into eight states. SDN's ownership is a coalition of South Dakota's independent telephone companies – cooperatives, family, municipal, and tribal-owned companies. They joined their independent networks in 1989 and created SDN as a hub to deliver long distance choice to the telephone companies' largely rural customer base. Today that same fiber footprint provides Internet and connectivity for businesses with multiple locations. SDN specializes in solutions for banking, health care, manufacturing, government and education. SDN also offers Managed Services including routers, firewalls, DDoS Protection, and remote network monitoring. Learn more at [www.sdncommunications.com/what-we-do](http://www.sdncommunications.com/what-we-do)

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