

REGULATORY, TELECOM & MEDIA NEWS – XPLORNET ACQUIRES MANITOBA’S SWIFT HIGH SPEED

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Xplornet Communications has announced the acquisition of Swift High Speed, a rural broadband service provider headquartered in Steinbach, MB. Swift High Speed provides fibre-to-the-home and fixed wireless services to over 6,000 customers across rural southeastern Manitoba. Through the agreement, Xplornet has acquired all of Swift High Speed's customers and operations including 218 km of fibre optic network and 119 broadcast tower locations. As part of the acquisition, Swift High Speed is splitting off its employees and equipment and will launch a new service-based fibre optic installation business, Swift Underground, with the same ownership group. Xplornet has retained the new organization to operate the existing network and build out its new fibre-to-the-home network in the region. Xplornet says the acquisition is a cornerstone of its fibre-to-the-home and 5G rollout in the province with this phase seeing the company invest \$40 million to bring high-speed broadband to over 14,000 homes in the region.

Babbl Communications has launched an early release of its home internet offering to residents of Richmond, Parksville, and Nanaimo, BC. Advertising a contract-free service, the third-party internet service provider is based in Richmond, founded by telecom entrepreneur Jason Speers, who was formerly a Sales and Retail Manager with Shaw Communications.

Media Technology Monitor (MTM) has undertaken its first annual study looking at how newcomers to Canada consume news and their perceptions of Canadian media. Focused on those who've arrived in Canada in the last five years, the study found that newcomers are more likely to cite social media as their main source of news content than Canadian-born news consumers, 18+. Facebook was the most commonly mentioned source, with Twitter also one of the top sites mentioned. Newcomers are also less likely to subscribe to a linear TV service (21% vs. 39% of those Canadian born). They're also less likely to tune into radio news (six per cent vs. 10%). Read more here.

Global News anchor Farah Nasser and actor Victor Garber will host World News Day: The Climate Crisis, a virtual event on Sept. 28 highlighting the vital role journalism plays in providing the public with facts about the climate emergency. Now in its fourth year, World News Day celebrates the power of journalism to effect change, presented by the Canadian Journalism Foundation (CJF) and the World Editors Forum (WEF). Registration for the 90-minute event is free, open to a global audience and available in all time zones. Outlets featured include Al Jazeera English, BBC, CBC News, Deutsche Welle, Global News, The Globe and Mail, The Guardian, National Observer/Indigenous Leadership Initiative, The New Yorker, Reuters, The Sacramento Bee, The Straits Times, South China Morning Post, Thomson Reuters Foundation and Univision.

The 2021 Webster Awards finalists have been announced, recognizing excellence in journalism in B.C. One winner in each category will be announced during the Nov. 3 online awards ceremony.

The 2021 Pattison Media Prairie Equity Scholarship, which recognizes Broadcast/Digital Media students in underrepresented groups in the industry (Indigenous persons, Women, Persons with Disabilities and Members of Visible Minorities), will award two \$2,000 scholarships in November. The deadline to apply is Oct. 8. Applicants must be a resident of Alberta, Saskatchewan, or Manitoba and be attending a recognized Broadcast or Digital Media program on a full-time basis, at a post-secondary institution in one of those provinces. [Learn more here.](#)