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1:1 Connected

Innovating Since 1952

VTX1 Companies

MESSAGE from our CEO

Hello, everyone – thank you for reading our newsletter. Last issue I talked about schools and broadband – this issue I want to focus on businesses and broadband.



When I was a newcomer to this industry, telephone service was the lifeline of the business community – whether you were a small mom and pop business or a huge international conglomerate.

Other means of communication, such as mail, faxes, telegrams, and Telexes were

used for the less urgent, day-to-day business affairs.

The world moves much faster today, and so does business.

With today's technology, businesses are not limited to their physical locale but can do business literally world-wide. The way this happens is by businesses using broadband Internet services. Today's businesses use the Internet to:

- **Find customers.** Having a good web site is now a prerequisite to building a business. Being able to be found online and to disseminate product and service information and pricing is a necessity if a business wants to be taken seriously.
- **Sell to customers.** Having an e-commerce capability on a business web site enables a potential customer

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VTX1 Companies Acquires

RANCH WIRELESS, INC.

Acquisition will extend VTX1's service area by 17,000 square miles



From left to right front row: Charlisa Garner, Dominique Guerra, Cheyenne Griggs, Connie Hester. From left to right back row: Braxton Baker, Steve Shed, Chris Serna, Shawn Snow, Trey Atkins, Randall Fussell, Joseph De La Cruz

VTX1 Companies has announced the acquisition of Ranch Wireless, Inc. based in Seguin, TX. Ranch Wireless, established in 1998, is a provider of fixed wireless internet service as well as residential and business phone systems in the area east of Austin to Kingsville. They also offer digital land mobile radio systems for remote two-way communication.

"This acquisition is important for VTX1 in that we overlap approximately 4,000 of their 17,000 square-mile service area through our northern exchanges," said Dave Osborn, CEO of VTX1 Companies. "Their coverage area extends from east of Austin to Kingsville and includes San Antonio, San Marcos, New Braunfels and Corpus Christi. They have towers in these areas that we can use immediately to provide better broadband services to many of our existing customers. And adding Ranch Wireless customers to our existing customer base will give us close to 20,000 total customers – making us one of the largest rural service providers in Texas."

"At Ranch Wireless, our mission is, and always has been, to furnish our clients with superior products and services with exceptional value for their communication investment," said Allen Pooley, President of Ranch Wireless, Inc. "With the melding of both companies, we are ensuring that our customers will continue to receive the best service possible."

VTX1 has begun the process of integrating Ranch Wireless services into their operations. "The integration of both companies will take place over the next 8 - 10 months. Our newly acquired clients will continue to receive the same high-quality products and services they have come to expect," stated Dave Osborn, "and we look forward to getting to know them better."

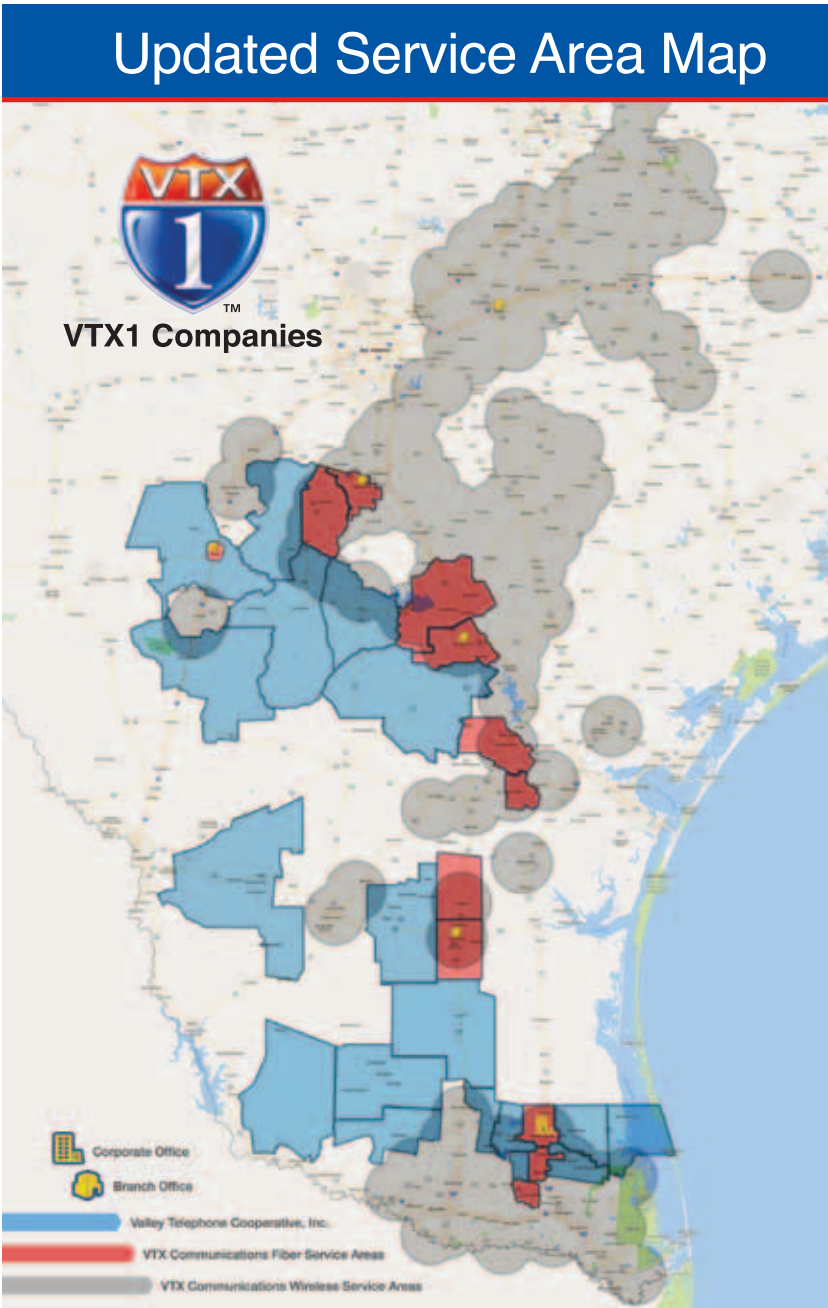
Updated Service Area Map

Continued from page 1

to become an existing customer with just a few clicks. With today's options on shipping, the Amazon model is becoming the preferred way to do business with consumers. Fewer and fewer people want to go to a mall unless there is a compelling reason to do so.

- **Bill and invoice customers.** Lots of businesses send out their monthly bills and invoices by email with links to immediately pay online. Not only is this very convenient for customers, but it greatly accelerates incoming cash for businesses that can bill and collect online.
- **Service and maintain customers.** When inevitable problems occur, using the business web site's "contact me" portal enables a quick means to get problems to people that can solve them – either for returns, exchanges, or refunds. Again, the Amazon model has become the standard for this – there is no easier company with whom to handle problems.
- **Upgrade and expand customers.** Once a business has an email address for customers, they can easily make them aware of new products, new services, and new lines of business being offered. A business customer email list is essential in today's world for a business to expand, grow, and prosper.
- **Protect their property.** Camera surveillance and activity alerts on business premises are now as popular and cost effective as traditional security threshold monitoring. Being able to see and record videos of who is coming and

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1489 W. FM 117
Dilley, TX 78017

Falfurrias Office

300 N. St. Mary's St.
Falfurrias, TX 78355

Jourdanton Office

511 Main Street
Jourdanton, TX 78026

George West Office

510 Bowie Street
George West, TX 78022

Raymondville Corporate Office

881 E. Hidalgo Avenue
Raymondville, TX 78580

Sales & Customer Service Call Center

Monday - Friday; 8 am – 7 pm
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Monday- Friday; 8 am – 5 pm

Technical Support

Monday-Friday; 8 am – 9 pm
Saturday & Sunday; 10 am – 7 pm
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Habitat for Humanity and VTX1 Companies

ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP

VTX1 Companies to sponsor first Habitat for Humanity home in Willacy County

VTX1 Companies announced on May 9 that they are partnering with Habitat for Humanity of the Rio Grande Valley to build the first Habitat for Humanity home in Willacy County. Habitat is responsible for building over 120 new homes for low to moderate income families across the Rio Grande Valley.

“VTX1 Companies is honored to participate in the first Habitat for Humanity home project in Willacy County,” said Dave Osborn, Chief Executive Officer for VTX1 Companies. “We are excited to work in partnership with Wayne Lowry and his team as they bring this project to Willacy County. This project highlights the true spirit of our employees and our corporate mission to serve those around us; it’s a great opportunity for us to give back to the community we call home. Building a home for a deserving family is a humbling honor. It’s where love lives, children grow, family values develop and pride of home ownership become the cornerstone for prosperity.”

“We are excited to partner with VTX1 to provide hope for a deserving family in Raymondville,” said

Wayne Lowry, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of the Rio Grande Valley. “This partnership will boost our ability to serve other low-income families in Willacy County through our New Construction and Aging in Place programs. In 2015, the Rotary Club of Harlingen provided the funds to build the first home in Cameron County; however, this home will represent the first Habitat house built in Willacy County. With the support of VTX1 and this great community, we hope to copy that success in Raymondville. I want to personally thank Dave Osborn and the entire staff at VTX1 for supporting this partnership. We are blessed to work side by side with this great organization.” Habitat has now completed seven homes in Harlingen, six homes in Primera, three homes in San Benito, and four more are expected to be completed in Cameron County by the end of 2018.

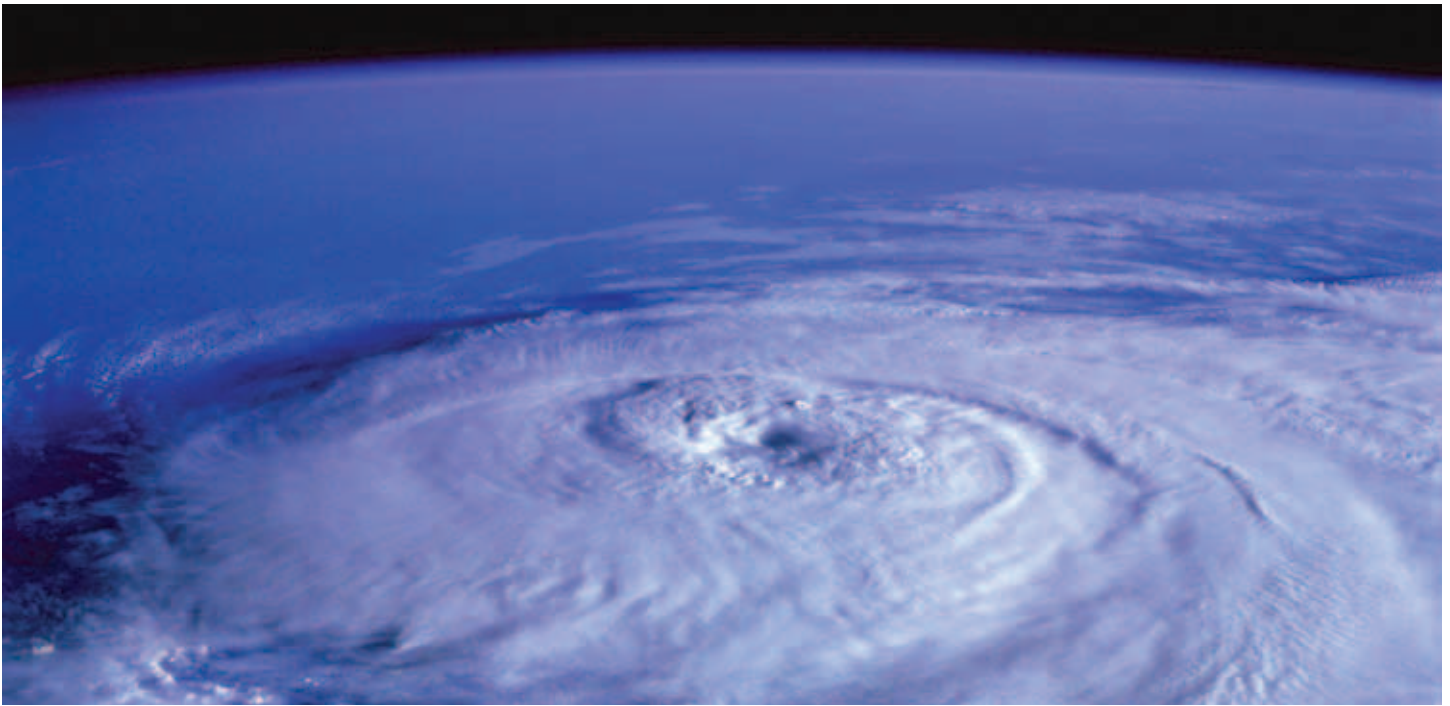
Habitat for Humanity encourages residents in Willacy County to apply for the home by calling 956-686-7455 or by visiting www.habitatrgv.org. Construction for the home will begin in Fall 2018.

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going will help with the identification of pedestrian and vehicular traffic and provide valuable evidence in the case of an intrusion, problem, or other difficulty.

So, today’s businesses would be “out of business” without stable, reliable, broadband Internet connections. This is where the choice of where a business gets its Internet service becomes one of the most important decisions a business makes. VTX1 Companies takes this responsibility very seriously and works very hard on a 24/7 basis to ensure that the Internet service we provide our business customers is fine-tuned and working well so that their prospective and existing customers can reach them 24/7.

We work hard to earn your trust for reliable service, and we are committed to helping our business customers grow and prosper.



Hurricane Season is Here; **BE PREPARED**

The Atlantic hurricane season extends from June to November, with the peak season from mid-August to late October. Residents of Texas Gulf Coast evacuation zones should **BEGIN NOW** by making an evacuation plan, preparing an emergency kit and learning evacuation routes well in advance.

If you have a disability or medical needs, you can register in the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR) online at <https://STEAR.dps.texas.gov> or by dialing 2-1-1. If you do not have a car or other vehicle, and you cannot get a ride with friends, neighbors or family, register **IN ADVANCE** for assisted transportation by dialing 2-1-1. Gulf coast residents with additional needs (including those who are disabled or medically fragile) who live in evacuation zones and do not have friends or family to help in an evacuation should register in advance online at <https://STEAR.dps.texas.gov> or by dialing 2-1-1. Registration should be completed in advance of an emergency event. **DO NOT WAIT, REGISTER NOW!** Information collected is confidential.

Hurricane Preparedness tips online:

- Texas Division of Emergency Management Website: www.dps.texas.gov/dem
- FEMA Website: www.Ready.gov
- American Red Cross Website: www.redcross.org

VTX1 offers these additional safety tips to assist you:

PREPARE

- Unplug your appliances and power cords from outlets to protect them from power surges.
- If you plan to use a portable generator, ESFI recommends a licensed electrician install it to ensure it will operate safely.
- Test your home's carbon monoxide detectors and smoke alarms to ensure they're functioning.

WEATHER

- Stay indoors during the hurricane and away from windows and glass.
- Use flashlights as a source of light. Candles are a fire hazard.
- Never operate a generator inside your home or in other enclosed or partially enclosed spaces, including garages.
- Use a battery-operated radio to stay informed about important safety updates.

RECOVER

- If flood waters reached the level of electrical outlets, contact a licensed electrician before attempting to use electricity.
- Prior to use, have a qualified service repair dealer determine what electrical equipment should be replaced and what can be reconditioned.
- Never touch a fallen power line or drive through standing water if a downed power line is nearby. Report downed power lines to local authorities.



Okay Google: Ask Alarm.com TO SECURE MY HOME!

It's great using your Alarm.com mobile app to control your home when you're out of the house. Back at home, though, voice control is a popular option that homeowners love.

Now, you can keep your home more secure and comfortable by talking to Google Home, our newest voice-control integration.

Our new Alarm.com Action for Google Home enables you to control your Alarm.com-powered home with intuitive voice commands for your smart security system, lights, thermostat, locks and garage doors.

Okay, Alarm.com user – here's what you can do.

Arm your security system

Kids in bed for the night? Finally sitting down for a movie? There's no need to get up again – or even reach for your phone – to arm your security system for the night.

“Okay Google: ask Alarm.com to arm the security system.”

Control access to your home

Our Action makes it easy to secure your home's perimeter, with voice control for smart locks and garage doors.

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com to close the garage.

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com to lock the front door.

Check the status of devices

Sometimes, you just need to know the status of things around your home. We've made it easy to ask:

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com: is the security system armed?

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com: what's the thermostat temperature?

Change the temperature

Knowing the temperature is good, but when you're too hot, you just want to cool down. So, we included the ability to voice-adjust your thermostat by value or comfort level.

Adjust by value:

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com to turn down thermostat by three degrees.

Adjust by comfort level:

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com to turn the temperature down.

A comfort level command will adjust the thermostat by two degrees Fahrenheit.

Of course, you can always specify a temperature:

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com to set the temperature to 72.

Control whole groups of devices

For your home's smart lights, which you likely have in several locations, you can interact with them by calling out a single device, group or general device type. For example:

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com to switch on the living room lamp.

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com to switch on the office lights.

And, at bedtime:

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com to turn off the lights.

The same goes for your smart locks, with the ability to lock the house down with a single command:

Okay Google: ask Alarm.com to lock the doors.

Instructions for getting started

Already have Google Home and Alarm.com and raring to go? Here's how to get started.

First, enable the Alarm.com action by telling your Google Home:

“Okay Google, talk to Alarm.com.”

Next, open the Google Home application. Enter your Alarm.com account login and password to sync your account.

You'll have the option to create your PIN as part of the setup process.

Don't have Alarm.com yet? Get connected with an Alarm.com system by calling VTX1 Companies today at 1-800-446-2031.

CONNECTING in our COMMUNITIES

Meet Youth Tour Attendee Celeste Carrera



I would like to start off by saying thank you to VTCI and the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) for sponsoring and taking care of me. This trip was possible because of you all, I learned so much in such a short amount of time in Washington. It made me realize how lucky I am to have a rural telephone company. If this opportunity to go to Washington was not brought to my attention, I wouldn't have realized what truly real telephone companies are. These companies help us stay in touch with family, friends and other people. Before rural telephone companies existed, people in our community had to deal with bigger telephone companies that were overpriced or not able to give them good

phone service. As time went on, small rural towns depended on telecommunications, and this is where the Foundation for Rural Services comes in. These companies helped the little towns do what the big companies couldn't. They made the rural town telecommunications better, making it possible to reach others across the world. My time in Washington, D.C. was a great experience. I learned that if it wasn't for FRS, the communications that need to be made in my small town and others wouldn't be possible without them. So, I would like to say a huge thank you to the FRS, VTCI and Carmen Kolenda for giving me an amazing lifetime experience.

Congratulations to our Lasara & San Isidro Scholarship Recipients!

Congratulations to our 2018 scholarship recipients from the Lasara and San Isidro school districts! We wish them all the best as they head to college in the Fall.



(Lasara HS) Left to right: Alistair Tamez, Jordyn Kiefer, Sofia Alvarado-Valdez and Alfredo Huitron



(San Isidro HS) Left to right: Marlen Soto, Anaissa Diaz, Alma Estrada, Jovany Muniz, Andrew Rodriguez, Amy Solís, Eduardo Soto

CONNECTING in our COMMUNITIES



Young Life Invitational



*Harlingen Humane Society
Wine & Whiskers Fundraiser*



Willacy County Young Farmers Fishing Tournament



Raymondville Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Banquet

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