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## **Windstream Introduces Enhanced Partner Strategy for Cloud Solutions at Channel Partners Conference**

### **New Sales Enablement Program for Tiered Partners Offers Enhanced Cloud Solutions, Marketing Support and Training Options**

LAS VEGAS, Feb. 26, 2014 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Windstream (Nasdaq:WIN), a leading provider of advanced network communications, introduced today at the Channel Partners Conference & Expo in Las Vegas its new enhanced partner strategy to determine the cloud readiness of its current network partners.

Developed in response to channel partner feedback regarding cloud readiness, this innovative program allows Windstream to cater training and sales enablement tools to its partners, based on their "cloud ready" or "cloud motivated" status. In January, more than 200 of Windstream's top partners completed a cloud readiness assessment. Both the "cloud ready" and "cloud motivated" categories offer insight into how participating partners are positioned for growth in selling cloud solutions. Windstream can provide uniquely designed training and support options based on the partners' level of skill and readiness.

"At Windstream, we're committed to helping our channel partners understand the cloud space, to supporting their advancement and success, and to building solid relationships with their customers," said Matt Preschern, Windstream's senior vice president and enterprise chief marketing officer. "Whether our partners are 'cloud ready,' with strategies firmly in place, or 'cloud motivated' and recognize their need to tackle the cloud solutions suite, Windstream is going beyond typical provider certification by establishing specific training and support paths to foster the continued and sustained success of our channel partners."

"According to Ovum's global small and mid-size business survey findings, nearly 40 percent of those not using cloud services today are planning to deploy a cloud service within the next year," said Mike Sapien, principal analyst at Ovum. "Our survey verified that telecommunication service providers are also in a very strong trust position with small to mid-sized customers, and key to customer adoption of cloud services is having strong sales resources including channel partners who can provide the required support including training and on-going service management for customers."

In building this new strategy, which is poised for growth in 2014, Windstream added an additional 10 channel managers who are focused on cloud and data center services. These channel managers will recruit new VAR and cloud-focused partners and will serve as subject matter experts to better support network channel managers and partners. Cloud channel managers will be the partners' dedicated cloud resource, thus strengthening their relationship with Windstream. Some of the training opportunities include:

- Computer-based training
- Instructor-led webinars
- In-person seminars

"By helping our partners become more comfortable with cloud solutions, we are strengthening our position in the cloud market, ensuring our partners' success, and extending the cloud product suite to even more customers and prospects," said Preschern. "Our partners are accustomed to Windstream's 'smart solutions, personalized service' brand promise, and offering these enhanced sales enablement tools provides even more opportunities for them to win in the marketplace."

Windstream offers a full suite of advanced network communications and technology solutions, including voice and data services such as VoIP, SIP trunking, MPLS, and dedicated high-speed Internet. Windstream also offers Unified Communications, managed services, cloud computing, disaster recovery and networking services designed to help businesses increase productivity and improve operational costs. For more information, visit [www.windstreambusiness.com](http://www.windstreambusiness.com).

**About Windstream:** Windstream (Nasdaq:WIN), a FORTUNE 500 and S&P 500 company, is a leading provider of advanced network communications, including cloud computing and managed services, to businesses nationwide. The company also offers broadband, phone and digital TV services to consumers primarily in rural areas. For more information, visit [www.windstream.com](http://www.windstream.com).

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