SRT Chief Technology Officer Earns NTCA Innovation Award for Improved 911 Services Pilot Project

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NTCA CEO Shirley Bloomfield presents the NTCA Excellence Award in Innovation to Shawn Grosz, SRT Chief Technology Officer, during the NTCA Rural Telecom Industry Meeting & EXPO (RTIME).

MINOT, N.D. – NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association recognized Shawn Grosz, SRT Chief Technology Officer, with the 2023 Excellence Award in Innovation.

The award was presented to Grosz during the NTCA Rural Telecom Industry Meeting & EXPO (RTIME) in February. Grosz earned the Innovation Award for his transformative work on 911 services in North Dakota.

SRT was the pilot telecommunications company involved in deploying North Dakota's first end-to-end Internet Protocol (IP) 911 service in support of the state's transition to Next Generation 911 (NG911). The North Dakota Association of Counties (NDACo), Dakota Carrier Network (DCN), and SRT collaborated to deliver end-to-end 911 calls from SRT subscribers to seven 911 call centers – known as Public Safety Answering Points or PSAPs.

"Not only does Shawn's work on the 911 deployment benefit SRT's subscribers; it's the blueprint for replicating improved services for all North Dakotans as IP-based 911 is deployed statewide," said Cassidy Hjelmstad, SRT CEO/General Manager. "That's an outsized impact for community good, and one example in Shawn's accomplished career of why he is valued and revered as a telecommunications champion across our industry."

Leading SRT's role in the project, Grosz collaborated with statewide partners and brought the telecommunications company perspective to discussions about IP-based 911 network design.

"Collaboration was key to our success with the Next Generation 911 initiative. I am grateful to NDACo, DCN, and DCN's other member owners, for their partnership and shared common goal for the people of North Dakota," said Grosz. He added, "We also could not have fulfilled our role as the pilot telecommunications company without SRT's exceptional engineering and operations staff, who worked diligently to make this critical service available to our members and first responders."

The faster, more flexible and efficient NG911 system offers benefits to callers and first responders alike. Callers can get help quickly from any device at any time, and first responders can share life-saving information instantly.

Grosz joined SRT in 1997 and has been SRT's Chief Technology Officer for the last 10 years. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Minot State University. Grosz serves on NTCA's Technical Committee and DCN's Technical Committee, and routinely speaks in leadership groups and public forums about cybersecurity, streaming technology, and the future of broadband.

The NTCA Excellence Awards recognize broadband providers who have exceeded expectations to support their customers and community members and to advance communications services in rural America. Winners are selected by the association's Awards Committee comprising NTCA members.

SRT Communications, headquartered in Minot, North Dakota, is the state's largest telecommunications cooperative. Established in 1951, SRT employs roughly 160 people and serves more than 26,000 customers across north central North Dakota. SRT earned the distinction as a Certified Gig-Capable Provider in 2017. Services include high-speed fiber internet, phone, and security/surveillance systems for home and business. Learn more at www.srt.com.

NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association is the premier association representing over 850 independent, community-based telecommunications companies that are leading innovative change in smart rural communities across America. In an era of transformative technological developments, regulatory challenges and marketplace competition, NTCA members are advancing efforts to close the digital divide by delivering robust and high-quality services over future-proof networks. Their commitment to building sustainable networks makes rural communities fertile ground for innovation in economic development, e-commerce, health care, agriculture and education, and it contributes billions of dollars to the U.S. economy each year. Visit www.ntca.org.

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