

Southern Light Ranks # 2 in Alabama and # 433 Overall As Fastest Growing Private Company in Recent Inc. 500 List

MOBILE, Ala. — Southern Light, a locally owned fiber network company headquartered in Mobile, Ala., ranks 433rd on the 2008 Inc. 500 list of fastest growing private companies in America. Based on revenue growth over the last three years, Southern Light is the second-ranked fastest growing private company in Alabama. Last year the company was recognized as 151st overall, 1st in Alabama, and 10th in the telecommunications industry.

In generating this year's Inc. 500 list, Inc. magazine analyzed revenue growth from 2004 through 2007, required U.S.-based privately-held ownership, and set a minimum annual revenue. Since January 2004 Southern Light's annual revenue grew over 732% — testament to the company's reliable service across its optical network, even through multiple hurricanes, and the growing demand for high-bandwidth applications such as wireless and high-speed Internet, video-on-demand, and Voice-over-IP.

"Southern Light's rank among the Inc. 500 further validates our commitment to offering innovative fiber optic communications solutions with superior customer service," said Andy Newton, CEO of Southern Light. "Southern Light's team is the best in the business; they are our most valued asset. We are fiercely committed to serving our customers' dynamic communications needs. As technology rapidly changes, Southern Light will maintain its firm grasp on the most innovative solutions available."

Southern Light provides over 2,000 miles of fiber across the Gulf Coast, covering markets in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Florida and lighting over 1,000 buildings along its network. Founded in 1998, Southern Light has grown to serve some of the largest employers in the service area in a wide range of industries — government, telecommunications, education, healthcare, and others.

Its all-fiber infrastructure allows customers to move massive amounts of data at very high speeds between office buildings, schools, cell towers or telecommunications facilities, without entering the traditional public switched telephone network. Customers lease specific amounts of bandwidth from Southern Light, as Ethernet transport scalable from one Megabit per second to 10 Gigabits per second or as traditional transport scalable from DS-1 up to a full OC-192 circuit.

Further growth is expected as government, private enterprise and telecommunications carriers look for more weather-resilient networking options in both metropolitan areas and smaller communities inland. With lit fiber service across its entire network, Southern Light has built one of the most extensive high-bandwidth fiber transport networks in the Gulf Coast region, spanning multiple territories of local telephone companies and Local Access and Transport Areas. It maintains 24-hour visual monitoring and constant emergency support.

While fiber optic transport comprises the majority of the company's business, Southern Light also offers colocation and fully managed services. On an exceptional basis, Southern Light leases dark fiber to customers who have equipment and expertise to light the fiber and carry their own information.

Southern Light's colocation centers provide a hardened facility for mission critical equipment and disaster recovery solutions that connect via fiber to customer locations. Customers save time and money by sharing a data center infrastructure instead of building their own telecommunications-grade space for network, server and storage gear. Southern Light can take the offer a step further and manage those networks on behalf of the customer with skilled networking specialists.

Southern Light is a fiber-optic based telecommunications company focused on delivering affordable, high-bandwidth transport over our own fiber optic networks to customers along the Gulf Coast. By offering next generation, reliable fiber optic solutions Southern Light can improve customers' networking capabilities, productivity and profitability.