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Gov. Edwards and Venyu Solutions President Joshua Descant Dedicate Tier III Data Center in Shreveport

Following \$20 million capital investment, historic former department store becomes Louisiana's first Tier III data center

SHREVEPORT, LA — Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards and Venyu Solutions LLC President Joshua Descant announced the completion of Venyu's new Tier III data center – the highest certification for any data center in Louisiana – following the historically faithful \$20 million preservation of the former Selber Bros. Department Store, built 60 years ago in downtown Shreveport.

Venyu, a division of integrated technology leader EATEL, will provide cloud-based computing, data and other managed IT services for dozens of customers in the health care, banking, legal and IT sectors. Since 2012, it has operated a data center in Northwest Louisiana at the National Cyber Research Park in nearby Bossier City. The acquisition of the 87,000-square-foot building in Shreveport enabled the company to expand its data services, upgrade performance for clients, co-locate with future technology tenants, place a historically significant property back into commercial service and operate in a downtown setting conducive to cultural opportunities and work/life balance.

With the project, Venyu will retain 10 employees and create 15 new direct jobs over the next decade at an average annual salary of \$55,000, plus benefits. Louisiana Economic Development estimates the project will result in another 19 new indirect jobs. During the yearlong construction phase, the Venyu project generated 80 construction jobs in downtown Shreveport. Beyond Venyu's direct employment, the four-floor data center building will include two floors of commercial space available for lease, providing the potential for another 50 jobs associated with tenants.

“We continue to see the advancement of significant technology projects in Northwest Louisiana and throughout our state that are attracting many exciting career opportunities for our citizens,” said Gov. Edwards. “From the Cyber Innovation Center, to the Global Strike Command at Barksdale Air Force Base, to the 800-job CSRA Integrated Technology Center at our National Cyber Research Park, Shreveport and Bossier City are blazing a new technology corridor that extends to Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, CenturyLink in Monroe and to other points along Interstate 20. Venyu Solutions’ preservation of this significant Shreveport property is an exciting enhancement to that corridor.”

Louisiana-based EATEL Corp., an integrated data and digital services provider, operates its headquarters in Gonzales and employs 362 people across the state. EATEL acquired Venyu in 2013 and employs more than 70 people through the Venyu division, including data center facilities in Baton Rouge and operations in Gonzales. Recently, Venyu received the Tier III designation for the Shreveport data center after rigorous testing of its redundant power circuits, structural integrity, extensive security systems, and network backbone, routers and switches. The global Uptime Institute certified the Venyu Shreveport site as one of only 46 Tier III data centers in the U.S.

“We are proud to unveil our new Tier III Data Center in the revitalized historic Selber Bros. Department Store building in downtown Shreveport,” Descant said. “Our mission is to help businesses utilize world-class technology solutions to facilitate, protect and expand their business in our region.”

To facilitate the project, LED’s Business Expansion and Retention Group, or BERG, assisted Venyu in securing performance-based incentives through the state’s Restoration Tax Abatement and Quality Jobs programs.

“We are excited to have the expansion of Venyu Solutions LLC, an EATEL company, right here in Shreveport,” Mayor Ollie Tyler said. “This \$20 million capital investment not only helps to bring jobs to our community, but also plays a huge part in the revitalization of our downtown area. This is the type of economic growth we like to see in our city.”

The Caddo Parish Commission sold the Selber Bros. building in early 2015 to pave the way for the Venyu project and the economic impact it would bring downtown Shreveport.

“The Caddo Parish Commission is excited to welcome Venyu into their new space in the Selber Building,” said President Matthew Linn of the Caddo Parish Commission.

“We strongly believed that our initial investment of over \$1 million dollars in this downtown building project would spur economic growth in the heart of our parish. Caddo Parish commissioners are eager to see the additional development and potential that Venyu will bring through job creation, with further utilization of the Selber Building. It is the Caddo Parish Commission’s view that in building a community, the central downtown area must thrive. On behalf of the citizens of Caddo Parish, we are very grateful to Venyu for their shared vision for a vibrant downtown.”

Venyu and Caddo Parish worked to revitalize downtown Shreveport by installing 26 historically accurate window frames and 13 different clothing and accessories images illustrating the concept of how the Selber Bros. Department Store front would look if it were in operation today.

“I love the fact that Venyu Solutions’ goal is to save businesses by preserving crucial data, and in doing so they are preserving and saving a historic landmark in downtown Shreveport,” said Executive Director Liz Swaine of the Shreveport Downtown Development Authority. “The former Selber Brothers Department store – the place people once came for suits and overcoats – now has new life, a new outlook, and provides downtown and the region with new opportunities.”

About Venyu

Venyu is a division of EATEL Corp. and a premier provider of data center, managed hosting, cloud, virtualization and data protection solutions. By leveraging Venyu’s portfolio of innovative, ROI-focused solutions, including VenyuCloud and VenyuBackup within secure, highly available data centers, organizations reduce IT costs while increasing security and scalability. For more, visit Venyu.com.

About EATEL

EATEL was the first company in Louisiana to provide phone, Internet and TV over an all-fiber network that offers a broad array of integrated digital services, including its newest service, LightWave TV, which provides advanced features such as Multi-Room DVR, remote DVR scheduling, and more HD channels. Founded in 1935, EATEL is currently in its 80th year as a service provider and business leader in Ascension and Livingston parishes. For more, visit EATEL.com.

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