



May 18, 2004

Novatel Wireless Announces New Orders for over \$7 Million of Market Leading Merlin UMTS PC Card

New UMTS PC Card in Development for North America

SAN DIEGO - May 18, 2004 - Novatel Wireless, Inc. (Nasdaq: NVTL), a leading provider of wireless broadband access solutions, today announced the receipt of over \$7 million in new orders from existing customers for Merlin U530™ Wireless PC Card Modems. These orders are all scheduled for delivery in 2004. Additionally, Novatel Wireless today announced the development for trial of a Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS) wireless PC Card modem for the 1900 MHz band in North America.

To date, seven operators - Hutchinson's 3, E-Plus, O2, Telecom Italia Mobile, Telefonica Moviles Espana, and T-Mobile - have announced selection of the Merlin U530™ to support the commercial rollout of high speed data services on 3G UMTS networks in Australia, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Shipments of the Merlin U530 began in late December and to date, Novatel Wireless has received orders totaling over \$57 million.

The market leading Merlin U530, jointly developed with Lucent Technologies, is a high speed wide area PC Card for laptops designed to enable mobile users to access email, the Internet and corporate databases over Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM), General Packet Radio Services (GPRS) and Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS) networks in Asia, Australia and Europe.

By inserting the Merlin U530 into a laptop computer and installing the accompanying modem manager software, subscribers on 3G UMTS networks in Asia, Australia and Europe will be able to stream audio and video content, send and receive email, browse the Internet, and download large attachments such as photos, presentations, and spreadsheets at speeds of up to 384 kilobits per second. Compatible with virtual private networks (VPN), the Merlin U530 enables secure wireless access to important corporate applications and files stored behind firewalls. The combined solution allows business professionals to access crucial information, stay in touch with clients and remain productive while away from the office, ultimately providing them with a critical competitive advantage.

"We believe these new orders offer evidence of increasing demand and an expanding market for our UMTS products," said Peter Leparulo, chief executive officer of Novatel Wireless. "In addition, we are excited about our new UMTS development effort which will further expand our broadband offerings to address the needs of mobile operators in North America."

ABOUT NOVATEL WIRELESS

Novatel Wireless, Inc. is a leading provider of wireless broadband access solutions. Novatel Wireless' Merlin™ PC Cards, Expedite™ Embedded Modems, Freedom Box™ Ruggedized Modems enable ~~high~~ wireless access to personal, corporate and public information via portable computers, handheld devices and vertical market applications. The company delivers innovative 2.5G and 3G solutions to operators, distributors and vertical markets worldwide. Headquartered in San Diego, California, Novatel Wireless is listed on NASDAQ: NVTL.

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This release may contain forward-looking statements, which are made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the United States Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended to date. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties. A number of important factors could cause actual results to differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements contained herein. These factors include risks relating to technological changes, continued acceptance of Novatel Wireless' products and dependence on intellectual property rights. These factors, as well as other factors that could cause actual results to differ materially, are discussed in more detail in Novatel Wireless' filings with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (available at www.sec.gov) and other regulatory agencies.