ORIGINAL

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August 20, 2001

### BY HAND

Clerk's Office United States Bankruptcy Court Thomas P. O'Neill Federal Building 10 Causeway Street Boston, MA 02222-1074

> Re: Essential.com, Inc.

> > Chapter 11 Case No. 01-15339-WCH

Dear Sir or Madam:

Enclosed for filing please find the following documents:

- 1. Debtor's Supplement To Motion To Implement Key Employee Retention Program;
- 2. Debtor's Objection To Motion By Cummings Properties LLC For An Order Directing The Debtor To Pay Administrative Rent; and
- 3. Certificates of Service.

Kindly file these documents and return a time-stamped copy to the awaiting messenger. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

COM CTR **ECR** LEG CND/js OPC Enclosures PAL 310702 RGO SEC SER

APP

CAF CMP

Xathan Dee

Very truly yours,

DOCUMENT NUMBER-DATE

10487 AUG 23 a

FPSC-COMMISSION CLERK

# UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS EASTERN DIVISION

		)	
In re:		)	
		)	
ESSENTIAL.COM, INC.,		)	Chapter 11
	-	)	Case No. 01-15339-WCH
Debtor.		)	
		)	

# DEBTOR'S SUPPLEMENT TO MOTION TO IMPLEMENT KEY EMPLOYEE RETENTION PROGRAM

To the Honorable William C. Hillman, Chief United States Bankruptcy Judge:

Essential.com, Inc., the debtor and debtor-in-possession (the "Debtor"), respectfully submits this supplement to the *Debtor's Motion for Authorization to Implement Key Employee*Retention Program ("KERP") and for Authority to Reject Employment Agreement (the "KERP Motion") originally filed August 6, 2001. Due to the Debtor's sale of its customer base, aggressive collection of its accounts receivable post-petition and rapid winding down of its affairs, the Debtor estimates a distribution to unsecured non-priority creditors of approximately 50% of claims, without consideration of certain causes of action, including preference actions. In light of this potential recovery, the proposed KERP payment of \$334,555 to employees who remained with the Debtor after the bankruptcy filing to effect the asset sales and wind down the operations is both reasonable and in the best interests of the estate.

In further support hereof, the Debtor states as follows:

#### I. BACKGROUND

1. On June 29, 2001 (the "Petition Date"), the Debtor filed a voluntary petition for relief under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code ("Bankruptcy Code") in this Court.

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FPSC-COMMISSION CLERK

- 2. The Debtor continues to operate as a debtor-in-possession pursuant to Sections 1107 and 1108 of the Bankruptcy Code. On July 18, 2001, the United States Trustee appointed an official committee of unsecured creditors (the "Committee").
- 3. The Debtor was in the business of reselling telecommunications services. As of the Petition Date, the Debtor had approximately 70,000 active subscribers in its customer base ("Customer Base") consisting predominately of households and small businesses.
- 4. On August 9, 2001, the Court approved the private sale ("Private Sale") of all of the Debtor's Customer Base, its trade names and URLs to United Systems Access, Inc. ("USA") for \$1,300,000. The Private Sale closed on August 10, 2001.
- 5. Pursuant to the Private Sale, the Debtor will also receive payments from USA for receivables generated, billed and unbilled, by the Debtor prior to the closing of the Private Sale.

  Since the Petition Date, the Debtor has collected in excess of \$2,500,000 from accounts

  receivable existing as of the Petition Date or generated postpetition.
- 6. On August 8, 2001, the Debtor filed a motion to auction ("Auction Motion") certain of its personal property including computer equipment and furniture and to solicit bids for the assignment of the lease for its Burlington headquarters. A hearing on the Auction Motion is scheduled for September 5, 2001. The Auction is scheduled to take place on September 6, 2001, at the Burlington headquarters.
- 7. Through the Private Sale and the Auction Motion, the Debtor is proceeding with the rapid and orderly liquidation of its Estate. The Debtor anticipates that its operations will substantially cease after the Auction. The Debtor has continued to reduce its staff as appropriate.
- 8. The Debtor anticipates filing a liquidating plan of reorganization in September 2001.

#### II. LIQUIDATION ANALYSIS

- 9. The Debtor currently projects a potential distribution to unsecured creditors of approximately 50% of claims. A copy of the liquidation analysis is attached as Exhibit A.
- 10. This material dividend is only possible as a result of the employees' efforts in the Private Sale, Auction and processing and collection of accounts receivable after the Petition

  Date.

# III. NECESSITY AND VALUE OF THE KERP

- 11. The KERP was designed to provide the Debtor's critical employees with competitive financial incentives to, among other things, (a) remain in the Debtor's employ through proposed termination dates, (b) assume the additional administrative and operational burdens imposed on the Debtor by its Chapter 11 case and (c) use their best efforts to ensure the maximization of estate assets for the benefit of creditors. The KERP payment ranges from four (4) weeks to eight (8) weeks of qualified employees' regular salary.
- 12. In addition, the KERP provides for the release of certain claims against the Debtor's estate. Certain of the Debtor's executive management have employment agreements and incentive plans with the Debtor providing for payments based on the termination of employment or the sale of the Debtor's assets. Under such agreements, these employees are entitled to claims against the Debtor for between \$36,250 and \$260,000 and collectively exceeding \$470,000. With a projected 50% dividend to unsecured creditors, the claims of the executive management would be entitled to \$235,000. Pursuant to the KERP, however, these employees have agreed to accept payments of approximately \$150,000.

As set forth in the KERP Motion, by participation in the KERP, each employee shall waive any rights or claims arising under any prepetition agreements with the Debtor. Any employee electing not to participate in the KERP will retain any rights or claims arising under such prepetition agreements with the Debtor

- 13. A motivation of executive management in drafting the KERP was to provide those employees without the benefit of such employment agreements with severance and retention payments to, among other thing, maintain their focus and motivation throughout the Chapter 11 process. Indeed, in early June 2001, the Debtor's board of directors authorized a prior KERP providing employees retention bonuses and severance benefits in excess of \$900,000.
- 14. The projected 50% recovery to creditors in this case must be contrasted with the outlook shortly prior to the filing of the KERP Motion: the initial "stalking horse" for the Private Sale had terminated its agreement to purchase the Customer Base and the United States Trustee filed a motion to convert the Debtor's case to a proceeding under Chapter 7. Notwithstanding these issues, the Debtor's employees continued their efforts to generate a recovery for creditors.
- 15. In the context of the Private Sale, the Debtor's employees dedicated their efforts to attracting potential buyers for the Customer Base and assisting with due diligence. These efforts resulted in attracting two additional bidders for the Customer Base. Ultimately, the Customer Base was sold for \$375,000 more than the initial offers and to a bidder obtained only after the filing of the Private Sale motion.
- 16. Since the Private Sale, the Debtor's employees have worked diligently to assure the seamless transition of telephone services for customers. Certain of the Debtor's employees have also provided assistance to USA with respect to its provision of services to the Debtor's customers, and the Debtor is being reimbursed by USA for all such costs.
- 17. The Debtor's employees continue to undertake efforts with respect to the Auction including removing sensitive information from computer equipment to be sold at the Auction.

  The Debtor's employees are also assisting the Committee's accountants in winding down operations, and assessing the Debtor's liabilities and potential assets.

18. As set forth in the KERP Motion, the Debtor believes that the implementation of the KERP will accomplish a "sound business purpose." The retention and other incentive measures in the KERP Motion were designed to ensure the retention of the Debtor's key employees. The measures included in the KERP are designed to address specific employee retention needs. They are designed to keep employees focused on the overarching goals of the smooth transition into Chapter 11 and ultimate reorganization. The Debtor believes that the KERP measures are necessary to maximize the effectiveness of its remaining employees.

Respectfully Submitted,

ESSENTIAL.COM, INC.,

By its counsel

Harold B. Murphy (BBO #362610)

Alex M. Rodolakis (BBO #567781)

Hanify & King

**Professional Corporation** 

One Federal Street Boston, MA 02110 (617) 423-0400

Fax: (617) 565-8985

Dated: August 20, 2001

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# **EXHIBIT A**

# ESSENTIAL.COM, INC. LIQUIDATION ANALYSIS

Cash as of August 16, 2001	\$	2,600
Proceeds from Sale of Customer Base (Net)	\$	1,242
Other Cash Proceeds	•	450
Collection of AR by Essential - Through 8/31	\$ \$	150
Collection of AR by USA		500 250
Other Collections	\$	250 150
Released of Surety Bond Restricted Cash Reimbursement of Sundial LC	\$	340
	\$ \$	100
Public Auction net of expenses  Released of SVB/Imperial Restricted Cash	φ \$	400
•	Ф	400
(Secured by Certificates of Deposit - 40% recovery)  Total Cash	\$	5,732
i otai Casn	Ф	0,732
Projected Disbursements Thru 9/7/2001		į
Wages & Salaries (Net of USA Reimbursements)	\$	(80)
Post Petition Accounts Payable	\$	(175)
Cost of Goods Sold through 8/10/2001	\$	(150)
Exclusive of Prepaid Deposits as of 8/10/2001		` '
September Expenses Through 9/7/2001	\$	(100)
Post Petition Sales & Use Taxes	\$	(275)
Consulting - Post 9/1/01	\$	(50)
Other - Contingency	\$	(250)
Customer Refunds and charge backs -through 8/31/01	\$	(60)
Sub Total Projected Disbursements	\$	(1,140)
Estimated Admistrative Expenses		
Legal - Company	\$	(150)
Legal - Creditors' Committee	\$	(50)
Accountants - Creditors' Committee	\$	(50)
Priority Unsecured Claims	\$	(71)
Total Estimated Administrative Expenses and Priority	\$	(321)
Total Cash for Distribution To Unsecured Creditors	\$	4,271
Pre-Petition Unsecured Liabilities	\$	5,500
Employment Agreement Rejection Claims	\$	470
Lease Rejection Claims (Potential)	\$	2,200
Total Unsecured Claims	\$	8,170
B 4 A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A		50 OF
Potential Unsecured Dividend		52.3%

# UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS EASTERN DIVISION

	)	
In re:	)	
	)	
ESSENTIAL.COM, INC.,	)	Chapter 11
	)	Case No. 01-15339-WCH
Debtor.	)	
	)	

# DEBTOR'S OBJECTION TO MOTION BY CUMMINGS PROPERTIES LLC FOR AN ORDER DIRECTING THE DEBTOR TO PAY ADMINISTRATIVE RENT

To the Honorable William C. Hillman, Chief United States Bankruptcy Judge:

Essential.com, Inc., the debtor and debtor-in-possession (the "Debtor"), objects to the Motion by Cummings Properties, LLC ("Cummings") for an Order Directing the Debtor to Pay Administrative Rent (the "Rent Motion") pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 365 (d)(3) for a commercial space located at 52-D Cummings Park, Woburn, MA (the "Woburn Property"). The Debtor has filed a motion to reject the Woburn Property (the "Rejection Motion") which has remained empty and unused by the Debtor since before June 29, 2001. In further support hereof, the Debtor states as follows:

#### I. BACKGROUND

- 1. On June 29, 2001, (the "Petition Date"), the Debtor filed a voluntary petition for relief under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code ("Bankruptcy Code") in this Court.
- 2. The Debtor continues to operate as a debtor-in-possession pursuant to Sections 1107 and 1108 of the Bankruptcy Code. On July 18, 2001, the United States Trustee appointed an official committee of unsecured creditors (the "Committee").

- 3. The Debtor was in the business of reselling telecommunications services. As of the Petition Date, the Debtor had approximately 70,000 active subscribers in its customer base ("Customer Base") consisting predominately of households and small businesses.
- 4. Pursuant to the Woburn Property lease, the Debtor had occupied 1,915 square feet of office space in a non-residential office building. The Debtor formerly used the Woburn Property primarily for storage purposes but the space has remained unused and empty since before the Petition Date.
- 5. On August 8, 2001, Cummings filed the Rent Motion seeking an Order to compel the Trustee to pay administrative rent for the months of July and August and also to pay rent from the month of September forward until the lease is assumed or rejected.
- 6. On August 8, 2001, the Debtor filed the Rejection Motion seeking to reject the Woburn Property as of the date of the filing of the Rejection Motion.
- 7. The Debtor has also requested that on date of the filing of the Rejection Motion, that the Debtor be deemed to have surrendered possession of the Property and that the landlord be free to retake possession and relet the property.
- 8. This Court has scheduled a hearing on both the Rejection Motion and the Rent Motion for August 22, 2001.
- 9. In light of the Debtor's pending hearing on the Rejection Motion, the Debtor believes that Cummings is not entitled to the payment of any administrative rent from August 8, 2001 forward. The Debtor shall pay Cummings for post-petition rent through August 8, 2001.

[THIS SPACE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]

# WHEREFORE, the Debtor respectfully requests that the Court enter an Order:

- (a) Deny the Rent Motion; and
- (b) Granting the Debtor such other relief as is just and proper.

Respectfully Submitted,

ESSENTIAL.COM, INC.,

By its counsel,

Harold B. Murphy (BBO #362610) Alex M. Rodolakis (BBO #567781)

C. Nathan Dee

(BBO#646621)

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Professional Corporation

One Federal Street Boston, MA 02110

(617) 423-0400

Fax: (617) 565-8985

Dated: August 20, 2001

312036

# UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS EASTERN DIVISION

In re:	)	
	)	
ESSENTIAL.COM, INC.	_ )	Chapter 11
	)	Case No. 01-15339-WCH
Debtor.	)	
	)	
	)	
		/

# **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I, C. Nathan Dee, hereby certify that on August 20, 2001, I gave notice of the Debtor's Supplement To Motion To Implement Key Employee Retention Program and Debtor's Objection To Motion By Cummings Properties LLC For An Order Directing The Debtor To Pay Administrative Rent via first class mail, postage prepaid, to the parties listed on the attached list.

C. Nathan Dee (BBO#646621)

HAMIFY & KING

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One Federal Street Boston, MA 02110 (617) 423-0400

Dated: August 20, 2001

310698

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