PAETEC CEO: ‘We Need to Work Better Together’

“We need to work better together,” said Arunas Chesonis, CEO of PAETEC Communications Inc., in his keynote yesterday, addressing an audience of competitive providers.

“We are just a small part of the telecom universe,” he said. “We should do more work together. ... We are not each other’s real competition.”

Chesonis, who has been in the spotlight lately because of PAETEC’s pending merger with US LEC, said CLECs should sell networks to each other to help strengthen the competitive market as a whole.

He also encouraged competitors to step back and “look at the big picture.” He said this is particularly true of lobbying efforts. “We need to focus at a macro level,” he said. “The only way it can happen is by being engaged as officers” of the companies.

He challenged competitors to educate and mobilize customers and employees to help send a message to Congress that access to incumbent networks is key to long-term survival for competitors.

He said leaders must resist the urge to gloss over their challenges in trying not to dampen renewed enthusiasm for competitive business models among the investment community.

“The last mile is what’s going to prevent a lot of us from doing what we want to. One thing that would help us is if we are going to ask incumbents for access, we need to provide that same unbundled access to them.”

Earl Comstock, president and CEO of COMPTEL, said Chesonis’ comments in a high-profile forum reflected discussions at yesterday’s CEO Council meeting and were a “tremendous help” to the association’s efforts on behalf of the competitive industry.

“It’s indicative of a conversation that’s going on among senior executives,” he said, noting that the “co-opetition” concept is beginning to be put into practice as it becomes socialized more and more. “It’s a dialog that needs to take place.”

As reported earlier, Comstock has said one of the goals for COMPTEL is to develop proactive messaging for the membership’s lobbying activities in the coming years.

COMPTTEL Elects New Board Members

COMPTTEL members elected new representatives to its board of directors at its annual meeting yesterday.

The association re-elected three directors in the small member category, including Homisco/Voicenet, Remi Communications Inc. and Vox Communications Corp. Fones4All was elected to a first term representing the small member category, which includes companies of annual revenue of under $25 million.

In the medium-sized member category, which includes companies of annual revenue of $25 million to $300 million, three board members were re-elected. They include Echelon Telecon Inc., Pac-West Telecom Inc. and TDS Metrocom. Two new board members were added, including FPL, Fibernet and Globalcom Inc.

In the large member category, which includes companies with annual revenue over $300 million, all four board seats remained with the incumbents. These included Broadway Communications LLC, ITC-DeltaCom Inc. and Navon Communications.

Casino Night Rocks and Rolls

Casino Night sponsored by Vanco.

Samantha Ocampo of telX tries out the one-armed bandit at Casino Night sponsored by Vanco.

Show attendees try their luck at one of the Vanco-sponsored Casino Night tables.

Earl Comstock, president and CEO of COMPTEL, cuts the ceremonial ribbon as COMPTEL Chairman Sherm Henderson of Lightyear Network Solutions welcomes attendees to the show.

(See story on Page 15)
**C-CAMS Opens New Office in Costa Rica**

C-CAMS Inc. (Booth 1004) has opened a new office in Costa Rica, which the company said is the first of several moves to establish international offices that will broaden its range of insourcing and outsourcing back-office support to the telecommunications industry.

C-CAMS has been assessing various international offices, joint venture and outsourcing opportunities to expand into new markets, improve service and augment design capabilities.

“Given the nature of our products, Costa Rica provides us with a host of unique expansion and support advantages,” said Rod Wilson, president of the Irvine, Calif.-based C-CAMS. “We are also focusing on [an] division of service offerings for emerging and mature international telecommunications companies through our C-CAMS/COMPTEL offering.”

The company’s C-CAMS product is a telecommunications billing, control and management software system for a range of applications including customer care, account maintenance, service order processing, providing client front-end, workflow management, rating, commissioning, billing, point of sale and accounts receivable.

From left to right, Earl Comstock, president and CEO of COMPTEL; Patrick Thompson, vice president of legislative affairs for Covad Communications Inc., and Comstock, added that CLECs were not a barrier to their growth. They were also more research-oriented, while the reseller partner is responsible for all other sales, installation and service-related activities.

Nextlink Offers Turnkey, Self-Serve Wireless Reseller Options

Nextlink Wireless Inc. (Booth 1102), one of the nation’s largest wireless spectrum holders, launched a new reseller program for their customers “medium-mile” and “last-mile” network connectivity requirements.

The launch of this program follows the recent announcement that its sister company, XO Communications Inc., has initiated sales of Nextlink’s offerings in nine major markets across the United States.

Now, the company has opened up the opportunity to other providers, enabling them to sell DS3 and OC3 broadband wireless access as well as Metro Ethernet at speeds up to 100mbps.

Nextlink will offer two options to resellers. The first is a turnkey plan, whereas the reseller partner focuses on marketing, sales and customer site acquisition while Nextlink takes care of everything else required to enable a customer to become operational, including site selection and structure analyses, zoning and permitting, and civil work; hardware and installation, system test and acceptance; and ongoing monitoring, repair and maintenance.

A second option is the Self-Serve Plan, wherein Nextlink manages equipment sourcing, spectrum coordination and engineering, while the reseller partner is responsible for all other sales, installation and service-related activities.

“Nextlink’s reseller program makes it simple for partners to immediately begin offering broadband wireless service as a high-quality, economical and easy-to-deploy local alternative,” said Nextlink CEO Bob Bean. “Carriers of all types, as well as cable companies, ISPs and power companies, can extend their network and market reach using Nextlink broadband wireless services, eliminating the high cost and slow installation times typical of fiber-optic deployments.”

Atlantic ACM Delivers Carrier Excellence Awards

Research firm Atlantic-ACM announced its first metro wholesale awards and its global wholesale awards to carriers yesterday at the COMPTEL PLUS Convention.

The metro carrier awards are based on the company’s 2006 Metro Carrier Report Card, which evaluates the performance of metro-carriers by their wholesale and enterprise customers and is based on more than 5,000 individual evaluations of carriers.

Winners included AT&T Inc. for best-in-class business for SONET products, facilities; XO Communications Inc. for wholesale VPI products; Cheyenne Communications for retail business PRL products; BellSouth Corp. for retail business local voice products; Cox Communications for retail business local access and direct Internet access; Time Warner Telecom for retail business Ethernet products; and PAETEC Communications Inc. for best wholesale PRL product. Level 3 Communications Inc. won multiple awards for best wholesale local access, Ethernet, direct Internet access, business transport and dark fiber products.

“Given the nature of our products, Costa Rica provides us with a host of unique expansion and support advantages,” said Rod Wilson, president of the Irvine, Calif.-based C-CAMS. “We are also focusing on [an] division of service offerings for emerging and mature international telecommunications companies through our C-CAMS/COMPTEL offering.”

The company’s C-CAMS product is a telecommunications billing, control and management software system for a range of applications including customer care, account maintenance, service order processing, providing client front-end, workflow management, rating, commissioning, billing, point of sale and accounts receivable.
27,000 route miles of long haul and metro fiber for door-to-door service nationwide

XO—We’re in it for the long haul!

XO is upgrading its nationwide long-haul network with the industry’s most advanced digital fiber optic technology to offer customers a broader range of competitively priced high-capacity transport services. With 18,000 route miles of long-haul fiber and 9,100 route miles of metro fiber, XO has the network assets to meet the needs of carriers small and large. Plus, we have a staff dedicated to serving our carriers from order to delivery. So whether you need reliable coverage close to home or across the country, you can count on XO to be there.
Climbing the Value Chain

While much has been said and written about how CLECs are struggling to reach customers due to a string of regulatory decisions that have put them on the losing end of the access stick, we’re hearing a lot less about what CLECs can and should do with those connections and customers once they have them.

As we’ve heard for some time now, service providers of all stripes need to figure out a way to offer at least service parity with, as well as differentiation from, other players in a market — a market in which incumbent service providers are catering an ever-larger shadow.

From what I can tell, CLECs, as a group, have done a reasonably good job at differentiating based on the service — or customer responsiveness — they deliver. Now CLECs need to maintain that positioning while at the same time building their service portfolios both with and against larger rivals and to supercharge the most value out of such customer they have.

Key areas CLECs should consider expanding into, if they’re not already there, are Web hosting and related services, managed services, and applications hosting.

While hosting generally is considered a low-margin business, particularly related to the small and medium business space that CLECs tend to target, there are plenty of opportunities to sell Web hosting customers. Web site creation services and customer responsiveness — they deliver. Now CLECs need to maintain that positioning while at the same time building their service ever-larger shadow.

In an indication that this is the wave of the future, AT&T Inc. last month announced plans to acquire privately held applications service provider USI. Interworking Inc. USI provides software and outsourcing services for popular business software from companies like Ariba, IBM WebSphere, Microsoft Corp., Oracle Corp., PeopleSoft and Siebel. The company also develops, hosts and manages custom e-commerce solutions.

Offering such applications on a hosted basis makes them more affordable and manageable for businesses, particularly for SMBs — the CLEC sweet spot — that don’t have large IT departments.

Delivering personal care along with the specific applications SMBs need could be a winning combination for CLECs.

Paula Bernard
Editor in Chief, schogen

---

**Agenda**

**Tuesday, Oct. 11**

8:30 - 9:30 a.m.
Voice Printing Track
Voice Printing Hardwares & Software Elements
Presented by the UFP

Crystal J1
To understand the voice printing fabric in order to understand its underlying infrastructure. Discuss how various techniques and media gateways are used to support voice printing. Understand the available options in technologies for in-1991 and future investments.

Session Leader:
Scott Park, President and CEO, Stealth Communications

Presenters:
Don Needing, Vice President of Marketing, Next-Generation Communications
William Kaye, Director of Strategic Planning, Lucent Technologies Inc.
Chris Longoni, Market Development Manager, Callway Technologies
Jim Wibeck, Director of Systems Engineering, Sarancy

9:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Scaling the Wireless CLI: Solutions and Automation for Real-time Applications
Presented by UCP Media

Crystal J2
Wireless network operators need scale to survive in the long term against entrenched competition from incumbent carriers. Systems and networks provide the key for maintaining a level growth curve for these operators. This session focuses on solutions that will scale, including design parameters, subscriber acquisition and technology adoption that increases only when new customers are added.

Session Leader:
Vi Nhung, Head, Cisco Systems Inc.

Presenters:
Mark Richards, President and Founder, VoX Communications
John Macario, CEO, Savatar
Chris Reese, President and CEO, i3 Networks
Mark Richards, President and Founder, New Paradigm

9:45 - 10:45 a.m.
Technology Forum: The IP NGN Architecture
The Service Convergence Layer
Presented by Cisco Systems Inc.

Crystal J3
The service convergence layer permits service continuity across multiple forms of network access, while utilizing the most cost-effective and efficient access means possible. This session will discuss how service providers can successfully exploit for service convergence.

Session Leader:
Noel Chand, President, Cisco Systems Inc.

Presenters:
Chris Fost, President, Network Insight
Mike Simon, Director, Distributed Systems Engineer, Cisco Systems Inc.

10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Business Track
The New Ecosystem: Strategic Considerations
Presented by the UFP

Crystal J4
The communications marketplace is evolving into an entirely new ecosystem — one where emerging players, old-standing players and everything in between must co-exist. What is the new community’s value, and how can you participate? Look beyond the players, the value chain, and how to partner with appropriate partners to deliver value in this new environment.

Session Leader:
Raul Hernandez, Group Editor, Telecom Division, Virgin Publishing

Presenters:
John Galluzzo, Vice President, Sales and Marketing, New Global Telecom
Jim Johnson, Director of Product Management, Pan-Net
Peter DeFusco, Vice President, Product Management, Xceed Communications
Craig Schograph, Vice President, Level 3 Communications Inc.

9:45 - 10:45 a.m.
Session Leader:
Mike Neill, Vice President and Group Publisher, The Telecom Publishing Group

Presenters:
Archit Rathi, President, Vice President, Sales and Marketing, New Global Telecom
John Macario, CEO, Savatar
Chris Reese, President and CEO, i3 Networks
Mark Richter, President and Founder, Tel Communications

11 a.m. - Noon
Technology Forum: The IP NGN Architecture
The Application Convergence Layer
Presented by Cisco Systems Inc.

Crystal J5
Real-time services don’t stop at NPI applications. Application convergence enables service providers to combine many different services over the same connection to the same end devices. With this capability they also can offer revenue-generating “all-media” services. Most important, application convergence enables cost effectively. Case studies will demonstrate how to successfully engineer application-converged services.

(Agenda cont. on Page 4)
What's the New Look of Competition?

Visit www.xchangemag.com/ebooks for both installments of COMPTEL VELOCITY eBooks

Read how competitive carriers are reinventing their businesses in anticipation of technological changes, regulatory changes and market demand, as well as the move to broadband wireless networks and updates on current legislative and regulatory hot buttons like net neutrality.

Visit the xchange booth #104 to learn more about the xchange eBook Series!

In this second installment, next-generation VoIP service providers discuss the emergence of a VoIP ecosystem and how best to survive in it. This eBook also focuses on how competitors are embracing network, service and applications convergence to remain a viable force.
Today’s market demands highly-customizable solutions.

The small and medium business world is no different. Our foundation is superior VoIP technology integrating total program support with low cost entry. Build your business as flexible, customized solutions for your needs. Technology is one thing; technology applied is quite another.

Visit COMPTEL PLUS Booth 620 to explore what’s next in VoIP.
AFS Takes Over USCarrier’s Daily Operations, Gets Board Seats

American Fiber Systems (AFS), a provider of data networks to carriers and large enterprises, has acquired equity interest in USCarrier Telecom LLC (Booth 799), a wholesale provider in the southeastern United States. The transaction makes AFS the single largest shareholder in USCarrier, and gives the company the ability to gain majority ownership within a few years.

AFS now manages the daily operations of USCarrier. It also holds two seats on USCarrier’s board of directors; it will be able to make more appointments in the future. AFS senior managers Dave Rusin, president and CEO, and Dave Danchak, vice president of business development, hold the initial seats.

Danchak will assume the role as president of USCarrier and Gita Ramachandran of AFS now is CFO. USCarrier will maintain its corporate identity, management team, and personnel and will continue to operate from its Atlanta headquarters.

“We are delighted with Cellular One’s decision to license Equinox’s Collector and TeleLink products. The platforms will integrate with Cellular One’s Ericsson AXE10 and Nokia switches. Collector provides real-time delivery of usage records to a carrier’s local area network, while TeleLink facilitates the delivery of usage records to downstream processes by filtering and converting usage data to compatible formats for OSS.”

“Equinox’s reputation in the communications industry was a key decision-making process,” explained Ryan Shepherd of Cellular One. “Between these two software applications, Cellular One has greatly advanced in terms of simplifying our billing processes and improving overall efficiency.”

“TeleLink streamlines operations by automating the flow and ensuring the integrity of usage data as it travels from the switching platform to billing and other downstream OSS processes. The application reduces the complexity of multi-switch networks by managing proactively the transmission and transformation of usage records.”

“Equinox’s Collector product allows us to maintain our corporate cultures, similar customers, and highly reliable engineering and customer service,” said Dave Rusin, president and CEO of AFS. “AFS provides metro solutions to both enterprise and carrier customers in the Atlanta market, and USC provides regional long-haul solutions to carrier customers across the Southeast.”

“This transaction positions the combined companies as leading providers of metro and long-haul telecommunications services,” said Teddy Solomon, chairman of the board of USCarrier. “Working together enables us to provide a comprehensive solution to meet the growing demands of our customers and allows us to pursue significant new revenue opportunities.”

Vero Systems Announces International Expansion

OSS provider Vero Systems Inc. (Booth 806) announced it has expanded its AcuSIT product suite to include more capabilities for the international market. The AcuSIT suite now contains a new, dedicated module called AcuWorld. The module is the next generation of advanced least-cost routing using dial code and rate management, combined with easy-to-use routing screens.

“After running international voice businesses for many years, it is absolutely fantastic to apply all the valuable lessons learned in order to build a truly industry-leading set of software modules,” said Frank de Bloois, senior vice president of international operations at Vero Systems. “Responses to our software have been very, very positive and we’re rapidly reaching out to carriers of all sizes around the world to show them how our solution can help them improve the performance of their international voice businesses.”

Cellular One, Equinox Ink Deal

Equinox Information Systems (Booth 718) has announced that Cellular One of East Central Illinois has licensed Equinox’s Collector and TeleLink products. The platforms will integrate with Cellular One’s Ericsson AXE10 and Nokia switches. Collector provides real-time delivery of usage records to a carrier’s local area network, while TeleLink facilitates the delivery of usage records to downstream processes by filtering and converting usage data to compatible formats for OSS.

“This agreement reinforces our commitment to deliver the industry’s most comprehensive mediation platform and supports our goal of becoming a recognized leader in the integration of operational support systems for the communications industry.”

“Equinox’s Collector product allows us to maintain our corporate cultures, similar customers, and highly reliable engineering and customer service,” said Dave Rusin, president and CEO of AFS. “AFS provides metro solutions to both enterprise and carrier customers in the Atlanta market, and USC provides regional long-haul solutions to carrier customers across the Southeast.”

“We are delighted with Cellular One’s decision to license Equinox’s Collector and TeleLink products. The platforms will integrate with Cellular One’s Ericsson AXE10 and Nokia switches. Collector provides real-time delivery of usage records to a carrier’s local area network, while TeleLink facilitates the delivery of usage records to downstream processes by filtering and converting usage data to compatible formats for OSS.”

“This transaction positions the combined companies as leading providers of metro and long-haul telecommunications services,” said Teddy Solomon, chairman of the board of USCarrier. “Working together enables us to provide a comprehensive solution to meet the growing demands of our customers and allows us to pursue significant new revenue opportunities.”

Covad Taps OSG for Direct Billing

OSG Billing Services (Booth 215) will manage invoice presentment and distribution services for Covad Communications, a nationwide provider of integrated voice and data communications, located in San Jose, Calif.

Covad has chosen OSG Billing Services to reduce costs associated with invoice production and distribution, and to improve overall efficiency. The provider also is seeking to enhance customer communications through the printed invoice by employing OSG Dynamic Messaging, a product that will allow Covad to add messages with graphics and photographs in the front of the invoice.

Additionally, Covad now employs OSG View, a customer service tool that provides the customer service representative with an instant view of a PDF of the invoice, so they can expedite the resolution of customers’ billing concerns.

“By selecting OSG Billing Services, we ensure that our customers receive accurate, timely and understandable invoices,” said Minds Crotch, billing manager for Covad. “We also gain the ability to present customers with targeted communication in a more efficient and cost-effective way, helping us grow our business and improve the customers’ experience.”

WE’RE DRIVEN BY SOLUTIONS THAT CONNECT ANYTHING TO EVERYTHING.

Introducing ConnectStream Virtual LAN Service (VLS) from Windstream. VLS interconnects your company’s multiple LAN locations using fiber backbone and transport facilities. It is a highly reliable, flexible bandwidth solution that supports any network layer protocol between business locations. A simple fiber- or copper-based Ethernet user connection makes it easy to use and removes the need for costly staff to manage networking equipment and wide area connectivity. Call or log on to find out more about our comprehensive business solutions.

Visit us at Comptel Booth #314.
COMPTEL wishes to thank the following sponsors for their support of the Fall 2006 Convention & EXPO:

**Platinum Sponsors:**
- Cisco Systems
- Nortel
- VANC

**Gold Sponsors:**
- Edison Carrier Solutions
- InterF particular Omni
- Sprint
- Verizon

**Silver Sponsors:**
- Embarr
- Georesults

**Premier Media Sponsors:**
- PHONE
- xchange

**Additional Media Sponsors:**
- America's Network
- Broadband Wireless
- Business News Americas
- Capacity

**Facsimile**
- Pipeline
- Telecommunications Magazine
- Telecommunications 
[Image 101x489 to 781x815]
Come and see the point for yourself.

Vanco is demonstrating NetDirect on the exhibition floor during opening hours, and in the NetDirect suites at all other times. Please see a Vanco staff member to schedule your demonstration time.

You cannot leave CompTel without understanding the potential Vanco NetDirect offers your business.

✈️ The biggest network in the world, the optimal technology solution, the best prices, are now just a click away.

✈️ Extend your reach and deliver on your customers’ US and international network requirements through a single source.

✈️ Design and purchase network infrastructure online to extend outside your network footprint within the US or anywhere, quickly and easily.
BeQuick Software Offers IVR Service to QuickTel Users

BeQuick Software Inc. (Booth 906) said it now offers IVR service that integrates with its hosted OSS and billing product called QuickTel. The IVR tool allows customers to check their balance, receive information on their last payment and hear when their next payment is due. The IVR service also allows customers to make real-time payments via a credit card over the phone anytime of day. “This is an affordable way for our customers to manage their inbound service calls and take the pressure off customer care call volumes by handling all their common, non-complex customer service calls via the IVR,” said Steve McNamee, vice president of operations for BeQuick Software. “The best part is that it can be easily integrated with our customers’ existing phone systems.” The next phase of the IVR service will allow customers to request payment extensions and check the status of a repair or order. Future phases will include features such as an agent-specific IVR system for accepting phone payments from the carrier’s agent base, a bilingual system for Spanish-speaking customers and outbound IVR calls for alerts such as bill due reminders, suspension notices, etc.

BeQuick Software provides its services under an ASP model to Tier 3 CLECs. BeQuick owns and manages all the necessary infrastructure required to deliver real-time order entry, provisioning, billing and care operations systems.

Citynet Takes Unconventional Approach to Service Delivery

By taking an unconventional approach to service delivery and network planning, where provisioners do more than just provisioning and design are not limited to network design, Citynet (Booth 821) executives said the company is reducing standard service intervals. Utilizing multiskilled professionals, Citynet offers wholesale customers one contact who provides the entire package of design, provisioning and testing services. Consolidating those operations optimizes service delivery and streamlines the customer experience, the company said.

“Being the customer’s problem-solving resource and providing comprehensive solutions is vital to success in this business,” said Citynet Director of Sales and Marketing Tom Payne. “Each member of our service-delivery team can provide design, provisioning and testing services. As a result, we are able to step outside the box and combine these operations, which are typically separated into three different departments within our organization.”

Citynet provides its wholesale customers with a single contact who can answer all questions and understand all elements of services they are requesting. This, in turn, speeds service deployments and facilitates proactive problem solving, the company said.

Citynet Wholesale offers private lines, optical waves, Ethernet, colocation, and local access to secondary markets across the Midwestern and mid-Atlantic states, including Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

Profitec Announces New Support for Integrated VoIP/Telephony Resellers

Profitec Billing Services (Booth 906) now offers a host of billing and support service enhancements specifically designed to meet the growing needs of resellers of integrated IP and telephony portfolio products.

“Communications marketers selling from multiple product areas face a number of interesting challenges,” said Randy Minervino, Profitec’s vice president of sales and marketing. “In addition to the normal telephony activation processes, which are batch or slow-transactional in nature, IP-based services usually require a more sophisticated approach. For example, a provider may require a real-time activation process directly into the switching equipment, which can then send back programming instructions for the IP phones or ATA devices. We have expanded the capabilities of both our master OSS and the associated Web-based e-commerce platforms that handle the initial orders.”

While our new billing sales remain strong, our menu of outsourced offerings grows in direct relationship to the billing, workflow and other OSS requirements for more than two dozen voice, data and IP-based services with individualized rating, taxation and service charge capabilities. Complemented reviewing and account-level management are designed to make a complex convergence task a manageable administrative capability. Some of the traditional billing services also have been redesigned to accommodate the current environment such as advance or arrears billing for equipment leasing and other important revenue items. In addition, through the provision of Net-developed Web applications, activation workflows and installation site-enabled system access allows the updating of work tickets and access to important information such as site survey results and other critical technical data which can reduce turn-up timeframes and implementation expenses.

Profitec’s OmniBill.net, and the rest of the OmniSuite components, all have been enhanced to accommodate the billing, workflow and other OSS requirements for more than two dozen voice, data and IP-based services with individualized rating, taxation and service charge capabilities. Complemented reporting and account-level management are designed to make a complex convergence task a manageable administrative capability. Some of the traditional billing services also have been redesigned to accommodate the current environment such as advance or arrears billing for equipment leasing and other important revenue items. In addition, through the provision of Net-developed Web applications, activation workflows and installation site-enabled system access allows the updating of work tickets and access to important information such as site survey results and other critical technical data which can reduce turn-up timeframes and implementation expenses.

Profitec’s back-office division also has expanded to provide services including activations, site survey management, end-user bandwidth orders, third-party requests, fulfillment and other critical support services.

While our new billing sales remain strong, our menu of outsourced offerings grows in direct relationship to the customers we are fortunate enough to land,” said Matthew Sosnowski, Profitec’s customer service manager. “During the implementation process, we often find a specific set of needs required to support our client’s business plan which cannot be properly handled internally, at least at certain stages of our clients’ business cycle. That is where we can really provide value over and above the billing and support systems.”
Cisco Focuses on Convergence

Imagine transforming a video-on-demand order from the television to a Sony PSP for an airplane ride, or the ability to download music only once, but being able to stream it through a home theater, mobile device or PC at a whim. Compelling services like these are what service providers are banking on for future revenue—but enabling the anytime, anywhere, any-device world takes planning and an understanding of what “convergence” really means.

That’s the message behind the Cisco Systems Inc.-sponsored three-session forum on next-generation IP networking at the COMPTEL PLUS Fall Convention & EXPO.

Each of today’s three sessions will tackle an architectural layer: network, service or applications, and interactive sessions will feature speakers from Cisco and other market leaders to provide explanations, analysis and case studies of what service providers need to do to successfully implement an IP next-generation convergence strategy.

It’s time for service providers, particularly those competing against large incumbents in cable and telecom, to begin strategizing. The day’s first installment, “Building a Next-Generation IP Network,” will feature Mike Koons, senior director of systems engineering at MetaSwitch, and Mike Squire, CTO at Hatteras Networks, among others.

“The most profound impact of IP convergence is that for the first time, the service provider can support many services over one IP backbone. This provides the capability to dramatically reduce capital expenditures and operating expenditures,” said Squire. “In the future, service providers will be using the same equipment for both voice and data services.”

According to Infonetics Research, competition will remain fierce as the industry as a whole looks to upgrade networks and enable service flexibility—worldwide spending on equipment will grow 33 percent to $143.5 billion by 2009.

The service provider market will double by 2009, driven by the move to IMS and by fixed-mobile convergence, while the IPv4 equipment market will see a dramatic compound annual growth rate of 99 percent.

“Three major trends are driving the growth we’re seeing in the telecom and datacom market,” said Jeff Wilson, principal analyst at Infonetics. “People worldwide are communicating over networks and the Internet via broadband. Carriers are moving to a single converged data network incorporating voice and video along with traditional data. And mobile and fixed-wireline networks of data, voice and video are converging.”

The second session will cover the service convergence layer, which enables end users to tap into applications regardless of access method (DSL, say, or 3G wireless). It also determines how endpoints should be treated, what kind of traffic is flowing, how that traffic should be billed and what the price should be. It also determines how endpoints should be treated, what kind of traffic is flowing, how that traffic should be billed and what the price should be. It also determines how endpoints should be treated, what kind of traffic is flowing, how that traffic should be billed and what the price should be.

“The most profound impact of IP convergence is that for the first time, the service provider can support many services over one IP backbone. This provides the capability to dramatically reduce capital expenditures and operating expenditures,” said Squire. “In the future, service providers will be using the same equipment for both voice and data services.”

The third installment in the track will look at applications convergence. According to Infonetics, everyone knows about VoIP, but the ability to mash up and blend other types of siloes, like video and data (IPTV), video, voice and wireless (portable video conferencing) translates into innovative service offerings with real-end-user appeal. The trick is doing this cost effectively and with the right engineering.

“By converging on all these layers, providers can bring multiple applications to multiple access technologies at a low cost, and will have the flexibility to innovate faster as the market demands it,” said Northrop. “We look at the network as a platform, and providers need to map the NGN architecture to commercial enterprise and consumer needs. How will you deliver the right services, support them and interact with your customer? That will be the differentiation.”

Qwest Unleashes Qwest Local Service Platform

Qwest Wholesale (Booth 701) has introduced Qwest Local Service Platform (QLSP), a “feature-rich” local exchange service that allows CLECs to offer businesses and consumers the TDM features end users have come to expect with standardized installation rates and extremely fast provisioning times.

QLSP services are the functional equivalent of Qwest Platform Plus (QPP), and include aggressive growth and retention incentives that allow CLECs to modify rates based on their volume trajectories, according to the company.

Cisco’s Via Northrop

“Three major trends are driving the growth we’re seeing in the telecom and datacom market.

People worldwide are communicating over networks and the Internet via broadband. Carriers are moving to a single converged data network incorporating voice and video along with traditional data. And mobile and fixed-wireline networks of data, voice and video are converging.”

— Infonetics Research’s Jeff Wilson

By converging on all these layers, providers can bring multiple applications to multiple access technologies at a low cost, and will have the flexibility to innovate faster as the market demands it,” said Northrop. “We look at the network as a platform, and providers need to map the NGN architecture to commercial enterprise and consumer needs. How will you deliver the right services, support them and interact with your customer? That will be the differentiation.”
Discover Your Place in the New VoIP Ecosystem

Biology’s concept of the ecosystem is being applied to the emerging VoIP environment, which participants say is hard-pressed to exist at all without a number of specialized providers working together to deliver service to end customer and return to its contributors a “win-win” profit.

“Clearly, no single player has in any scale the key elements to do it on his or her own,” said Rich Grange, rather plaintly explaining the emergence of the new VoIP ecosystem. Grange is CEO of New Global Telecom Inc., a wholesale provider of VoIP services and a panelist in today’s discussion about The New Ecosystem. As part of the conference’s Business Track today, The New Ecosystem comprises three sessions, beginning with "Strategic Considerations" at 8:30 a.m. and continuing with "Unlocking the Margins in the Business Marketplace" at 9:45 a.m. and "Over-Delivering the Customer Experience" at 11 a.m.

The "key elements" Grange refers to range from distribution channels and network infrastructure to back-office and customer care to applications to CRM installation.

Each service provider — which can be thought of as the integration point for these elements — comes to the table with various components in hand. Because there are a range of delivery models and disparate core competencies among companies at various stages of development, the VoIP environment is ripe for ecosystem dynamics, said Grange.

This "num is greater than the parts" approach is gaining momentum within the competitive community. While market-driven and organically grown, the VoIP ecosystem also has its champions in vendors that are assembling complementary technology and service partnerships around their own offers. The idea here is to make sure their systems can integrate or interoperate or less out-of-the-box or that their business processes are compatible to shorten service providers’ go-to-market steps.

By creating similar alliances, service providers are seeking to deliver a high-quality service on a repeatable basis to help drive end-user adoption, said Craig Schlagbaum, vice president of Level 3 Communications Inc. and a panelist in today’s discussion about The New Ecosystem. "With that, the whole thing falls apart."

COMPTEL PLUS conference attendees can find out more about The New Ecosystem, how they can participate, drive ARPU, reduce attrition and provide end-to-end service delivery to today’s seminars, which also feature Jim Johnson, director of product management for Pac-West Telecom Inc.; Don MacNeil, vice president of carrier services for XO Communications Inc.; Mike O’Neill, vice president and group publisher of The Telecom Intelligence Group; John Guillaume, vice president of sales and marketing for New Global Telecom; John Macario, CEO of Savviant; Mark Richards, president and founder of IXVoX Communications Corp.; Chris Reese, founder and CEO of i3 Networks; Geoffrey Drayton, vice president of sales for DecisionOne Corp.; David Norman, CEO of Edgewater Networks Inc.; Frank Peregine, chairman of CustomCall Data Systems Inc.; and Ron Whaley, vice president of sales for OSG Billing Services.

International Capacity Panel to Examine Opportunities for CLECs

While the overall market for international bandwidth appears to be improving, challenges remain depending on the markets being served. How can U.S.-based service providers successfully operate internationally, either directly or through partnerships? That’s just one of the questions panelists will explore during “It’s a Small World: The Future of International Services.”

The event will be moderated by Guillaume Boyer, publisher of Capacity magazine in the U.K., who noted traditional CLECs’ “can enjoy increased revenue opportunities if they are able to sell international services. To do that they need to partner with an international carrier (or VNO) in the same way that they would partner with a domestic carrier in order to provide services outside of the CLEC’s respective footprint.”

The panelists — Eric Gilchrist, director of service provider intelligence for Telais, and vice president of carrier solutions for Deutsche Telekom; Anthony Rosault, director of VNI, International, and Allen Timpany, CEO of Vanco PLC — will discuss their views on the matter of international capacity as well.

For his part, Boyer explained that CLECs, especially those that are small and serve specific ethnic markets, can provide international dialup services to customers by buying international switched minutes and/or entering into bilateral agreements with other carriers. “However, on the data/IP side, many larger carriers (e.g. RBOCs and IXC) will have retail and enterprise customers with sophisticated requirements, and in order to service their (customers’) international connectivity requirements, will need to enter into partnerships with global and regional (international) carriers,” he said. “This is particularly important when you consider end customers’ QoS expectations at the application level, for example.”

Meanwhile, carriers such as Cogent Communications, Level 3 Communications Inc. and Global Crossing are making their mark on the international side by acquiring metro providers and networks in Europe, Boyer pointed out. “These companies clearly have an international strategy from the perspective of acquiring new markets outside of the U.S.” he said. “AT&T wholesale is another example of a U.S.-based company with a strong international strategy with local presence in every region. Also, by acquiring MCI, Verizon has been able to position itself as a global player.”

The opportunities are growing then, especially as more European and Asian carriers look to terminate traffic in the United States, said Boyer. “This is a major opportunity for U.S.-based carriers to partner with these carriers and terminate their traffic,” which also increases revenue, he said.

Boyer said the panel likely will include a discussion on how to choose an international partner, as well as an overview of the different types of scalable partnerships, such as outsourcing, acquisition and single, rather than multiple-partner.

DSET Launches Enhanced Gateway Product Suite

Building on its service bureau operations and legacy gateway products for competitive service providers, DSET Corp. (Booth 719) has launched an enhanced gateway applications product suite that electronically bridges the CRM and order management systems of different trading partners.

The applications are capable of handling access and local services, special services that include E911, calling card, caller ID and long-distance, and number portability solutions. They are based on databases from players such as Oracle Corp. and server platforms such as Solaris and Linux. The underlying architecture is a J2EE-compliant framework that has been in operation for more than seven years; the applications have been designed for scalability and built using open-source industry standard tools such as Weblogic and Eclipse.

They also have several trading partner interfaces that handle specific deviations and take care of change management. The applications have the ability to transact business using different protocols — CORBA, EDI, Mech Specs and SOAP/XML. A number of transport mechanisms are supported, including FTP/FPTP, NDM and Interactive Agent. Most applications offer upstream interfaces to send and receive data from CRM and order management systems, as well as a standard Web services interface.

**IT’S A SMALL WORLD: TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL SERVICES**
Tuesday, Oct. 10
11 a.m. - Noon
Crystal K/L

**DSET Launches Enhanced Gateway Product Suite**

The DSET gateway applications product suite...
Thermo Credit Rolls Out Contract Financing, Funds CentricVoice

Thermo Credit LLC (Booth 1006) is funding VoIP services provider CentricVoice Inc. with up to $1 million in receivables financing, said Seth Block, executive vice president of external operations for Thermo Credit. "With its quality product and outstanding management team, CentricVoice fits that bill." The $1 million replaces a credit facility CentricVoice had with Silicon Valley Bank. We always look for A+ companies to work with whenever we roll out a new service offering," said Block. Other slated participants include Dave Baker, vice president of law and public policy for EarthLink Inc.; Edward Cadieux, vice president, senior regulatory counsel for NetVox Communications Inc.; Chris McKenney, vice president and assistant general counsel for Covad Communications Inc.; and Joe Sandri, senior vice president of FiberTower Corp.

Consolidated Upgrades Network With Cisco’s Gear Multi-Service Transport Platform

Consolidated Carrier Services (Booth 621) recently upgraded the infrastructure of its Texas-based network with the deployment of the Cisco Systems Inc. Multi-Service Transport Platform (MSTP 15454) DWDM system with ROADM capability. The carrier also completed new physical routes, geographic diversity and enhanced its PoP infrastructure. "With the cut over complete, we feel we’ve established a strong and resilient foundation for future growth,” said Jack Weideman, vice president of Carrier Services. "The network upgrade will support our continued growth and drive our ability to meet the needs of our fast-growing customer base.”

FIT FOR THE FUTURE

Swarthy VoIP oversight. Megamergers. No more UNI-P mandates. Reclassification of the Bell’s DSL services. So much is happening in the regulatory landscape it can be hard to keep up. Thursday’s regulatory workshop, “New Landscape, New Challenges,” sponsored by Dickstein Shapiro LLP, will help COMPTEL members learn more about the issues affecting them, as well as what looks to be on the horizon. All registered attendees automatically are enrolled in the classes.

Dickstein Shapiro bills the workshop as a series of panels that will explore how shifts in the regulatory landscape will shape competitors’ business plans, creating both risks and opportunities. Questions to be addressed include: What options remain? What impact will new technologies, such as wireless, play in the future landscape? How is the FCC going to regulate VoIP and other IP services? Jacob S. Farber, counsel in Dickstein Shapiro’s communications practice, said he hopes attendees understand that “what’s happening in regulatory helps shape business plans,” because FCC and Congressional decisions affect more than just a company’s legal decisions.

The first event in the half-day seminar will feature FCC Commissioner Kevin J. Martin’s chief of staff, Daniel Gonzalez. He will take part in the panel, “Reaching the Customer and Hauling Traffic: The Future of UNI, Special Access and Alternative Access Methods Including VoIP, Wireless Broadband and BPL.” Other slated participants include Dave Baker, vice president of law and public policy for EarthLink Inc.; Edward Cadieux, vice president, senior regulatory counsel for NetVox Communications Inc.; Chris McKenney, vice president and assistant general counsel for Covad Communications Inc.; and Joe Sandri, senior vice president of FiberTower Corp.

"What options remain? What impact will new technologies, such as wireless, play in the future landscape? How is the FCC going to regulate VoIP and other IP services?" — Jacob S. Farber, counsel in Dickstein Shapiro’s communications practice


"The FCC’s Martin has made no secret of his desire to reform both the interstate and intrastate telephone services, creating both risks and opportunities. Questions to be addressed include: What options remain? What impact will new technologies, such as wireless, play in the future landscape? How is the FCC going to regulate VoIP and other IP services?" — Jacob S. Farber, counsel in Dickstein Shapiro’s communications practice
Connecting QoS: The Key to Quality End-to-End Networking

Customers today expect a high level of network performance and reliability, regardless of whether their services are offered by one or several communications services providers. Yet the industry just now is defining quality of service relative to intercarrier connections, said David Malfara Sr., president and CEO of Remi Communications.

During today’s Carrier Track session, Malfara and Mitch Ferro, senior director of product management IP & enhanced services at Broadcasting Communications, along with moderator Dick Tomlinson, executive vice president of New Paradigm Resources Group, will talk about intercarrier QoS as well as other quality and security issues, in the panel “Ensuring QoS and Security in a Converged World.”

If a customer in Pennsylvania has a terminating point in California, today there is no way to QoS on that connection, said Malfara of Remi, a carrier providing advanced services to medium- and large-scale enterprise customers. But the industry is defining QoS parameters at Layer 2 so companies like Remi can provide end-to-end service guarantees. That usually involves employing Layer 2 MPLS, which is MPLS service, and hierarchical MPLS, or HVPLS. Malfara notes that the IETF, MEF and VPLS.org are among the industry organizations working on such QoS challenges.

Meanwhile, Remi is building a network from Layer 1 with WDM all the way to the IMS as the application layer, he said. “We just deployed a MetaSwitch IMS platform and VoIP platform for enterprise, and once intercarrier QoS is in place, that also sets the stage for the introduction of more real-time protocol-based services like VoIP and video.”

— Remi Communications’ David Malfara Sr.

UDP Adds Customers to Roster

UDP (Booth 619) has finalized billing service agreements with a number of communication companies: Valley Telephone Cooperative, an ILEC in Ramondville, Texas; ATX Communications, a provider of voice, data and network security services; OnEighty Networks, a provider of broadband Internet, private line and hosting services out of Montana; and Tel West Network Services, a facilities-based Internet, data and voice communications provider.

UDP specializes in end-user billing, access billing and mass messaging for communications companies throughout the United States.

COMET, UDP’s end-user platform, “will allow us to manage more than two companies— it will enable us to bill video services, which are much more complex and demanding than basic telephone billing, and it will give us a head start at the user level, instead of having our IT people create and run reports,” said Valley Telephone Cooperative’s general manager, Dave Osborn.

Joel Daniels, UDP’s vice president and CTO, said the new customers all sought the same features. “[These] are the most powerful, full-bodied systems that have qualified experts standing behind them,” he said. “The platforms are only as good as the people who run them.”

Osborn said Valley Telephone Cooperative liked COMET “because it’s browser-based, secure, and it can be configured to accommodate all business partners who will also be entering orders into the system. With COMET, this can be done without jeopardizing access to privileged data in other parts of the system. It makes sense.”

VoiceLog’s URU Validates Customer Info

VoiceLog LLC (Booth 1007) has added a new feature to its third-party verification platform. URU (pronounced You are You) validates, not just verifies, a customer’s information in real time. For example, during an online sales transaction, URU obtains the name, address, phone, date of birth and last four digits of the user’s social security number. An API then returns a notification to ensure the client is who they say they are.

The merchant queries URU via an API, sending VoiceLog the consumer’s name, address, phone number, date of birth and the last four digits of a social security number. The VoiceLog system authenticates the information and returns a response indicating whether the data match.

The application also can determine whether someone is 18 or older. One of the fields entered is date of birth. Once the data are authenticated, the merchant can determine age by comparing the date of birth entered to the current date.

URU also can be used in phone sales and VoiceLog intends to roll it out to online retailers as well. Larry Leikin, general manager of VoiceLog, said URU is especially apt at validating users in telecom, energy and financial services. “By asking for and validating information that is not available through public sources—name and address information is in the phone book for example—merchants can have a much higher degree of certainty that the end user is who they say they are,” Leikin said.

Intelliverse Program Helps Service Providers Bring VoIP to SMB Market

Intelliverse (Booth 629) has enhanced its private-label program to enable service providers to bring their own private-label residential or SMB VoIP service to market in as little as 14 days, said the company.

Intelliverse’s Talking Planet line of VoIP services now can be configured and sold to customers under a service provider’s own brand.

With solutions designed for residential and SMB end users, the Talking Planet suite of services provides a platform and total customer support structured for rapid deployment as a private-label service.

Talking Planet Business VoIP service also enables service providers to offer SMBs Class 5 and Centrex features as well as self-serve auto attendants, hunt groups, extension dialing, call transfer, faxing services, video calling, virtual PBX dashboard and softphones.

Martin Group Enters Agreement With Harris Corp.

Martin Group (Booth 614) has partnered with the NetBoss business unit of Harris Corp. to bundle and resell Martin Group’s OMNIA and OASIS integrated software solution with the NetBoss suite of network management and service assurance solutions. The bundled offering will provide telecommunications, utilities and government service providers with network and service management, plant management, provisioning, billing and customer care, and will expand market opportunities for both companies.

The bundled offering gives us the opportunity to expand into government and international markets using Harris as the distribution channel. Martin Group provides an excellent channel opportunity into the North American ILECs for NetBoss,” said John Koenig, vice president of Harris NetBoss business unit.

OMNIA provides billing, ordering, provisioning, marketing, sales automation, and customer care while allowing service providers to manage their revenue streams. OASIS is an OSS suite with a framework to automate provisioning processes in network assignment and activation.

The NetBoss end-to-end service assurance solution for broadband, wireless and converged networks enables users to proactively manage and maintain their entire network from legacy to next generation, from a single Web-enabled view.

ILD Announces Revenue Growth in Payment Processing Services Division for 2006

ILD achieved 67 percent growth in its payment processing services division this year. The increase is a result of growth in its core LEC billing base, expansion into alternate channels (direct and proxy) and the emergence of IETF.

The strong gains we’re experiencing in payment processing are largely due to success in new market penetration, large client acquisitions and our ability to quickly deliver settlement funds to our customers,” said CEO and Chairman Mike Lewis.

Highlights of ILD’s payment processing include billing more than 7 million transactions each month, invoicing via 1,300 local phone companies across the United States and Canada and deploying IP technology to support its San Antonio customer care facility, resulting in improved redundancy, flexibility and efficiency for increased customer satisfaction.
COMPTEL Exhibitors Adapt to New Competitive Environment

Dozens of exhibitors and 2,200 attendees converged on the world’s largest Marriott Hotel this week to champion a new era in the competitive carrier community— an era of rebirth characterized by mergers and acquisitions, and the introduction of new technologies. Up to 2,500 people were expected to participate in the Fall 2006 COMPTEL PLUS Convention & Expo by Wednesday.

“Today there has been a lot of consolidation but we have a full show floor nonetheless, which is a positive sign for the industry,” said Earl Comstock, COMPTEL’s president and CEO. “The industry is energetic and vibrant, and it really comes across in the show floor.”

As one example, Henderson cited Adaption Technologies (Booth 608), a new exhibitor at the event and a new entrant in the competitive market. The company, which boasts former founder and CEO of WiTel Roy Wilkens as its “honorary” chairman, is about four months old and has developed a platform for delivering hosted PBX services under private label to service providers, such as CLECs, ISPs and cablecos, seeking to get into the VoIP business.

“We are coming back,” Henderson said. “We are a changing, adapting industry and association.”

He added the “entrepreneurial spirit” continues among the COMPTEL numbers. “There are a lot more gray hairs, but there are a whole lot of young companies. ... Also, there are a number of financial institutions here that we haven’t seen in a few years.”

He said he is encouraged to see support coming back to the competitive carrier industry. More than 310 CEOs attended yesterday’s CEO Council meeting—another good indicator of an engaged competitive industry, he noted.

“The big question is who has the solution for the last mile,” he said, claiming there are some alternatives to cable and telco infrastructure being offered on the show floor.

Indeed, a number of bypass landline providers are among the exhibitors. In addition, there are fixed wireless service providers, such as Netlink Wireless Inc. (Booth 3101), that are providing wholesale access alternatives. Even Henderson’s own company, Lightyear Network Solutions (Booth 318), is exhibiting FirstSpeed, its new MPLS offering, set to roll out to wholesale customers in select markets, such as Akron, Ohio, in November.

Underscoring new energy in the competitive telecom world, activity was rampant in the expo hall on Monday morning. “We only need to find one or two large customers to get a return on the show,” said Keith Hopwood, vice president of marketing for Phibong USA Corp., which makes equipment such as midspans and endspans. “If those pan out, it will be a great show for us.”

Dan Lowden, vice president of business development and marketing for Wayport, a Wi-Fi provider, said the show was “phenomenal” for his company. “We’re making a lot of great contacts. We see a strong need for the services Wayport brings,” he said.

Vertek, too, was “getting good traffic,” said Mauricio Rosales, director of engineering and provisioning. “It’s targeting the right audience—that makes it easier to deliver a message.”

On the Expo Show Floor ...
A vision of where you could go. The tools to help you get there.

AT&T offers a full spectrum of wholesale voice capabilities; flexible, reliable and scalable data applications; world-class IP networking; and a global network that extends your reach around the block or around the world. Now imagine where your business could go. Visit: att.com/wholesale.