

MSF – We Make Next Generation Networks Work

February – March 2009

www.msforum.org

In this issue

Letter from the President

MSF 2009: building on success

IMS as a converged services framework

Membership renewal

Leadership elections

Upcoming events

MSF Q2 Meeting, April 28-30, 2009 in Budapest.

MSF MAE Vice Chair, Mitchell Wu from ZTE will speak at <http://www.bbwwfunwired.com/schedule/F2.asp>

Letter from the President

Dear MSF Member,

This edition of the newsletter looks at some of our recent successes and outlines the key components of the 2009 programme. I do hope you will find that the collaborative opportunities and deliverables we envisage will continue to provide significant value to you and your company as a result of MSF membership.

Looking back, 2008 was a very successful year for the MSF. There was widespread industry recognition that GMI 2008, our globally networked event hosted by major carriers in Europe, North America and Asia, has advanced the state of NGN interoperability. The MSF White Paper that detailed the event has been downloaded over 2000 times, indicating just how positively our work has been received.

Around the globe, we are witnessing the rapid deployment of increasingly complex NGN technology. Successive GMIs have focused on key aspects of these deployments, which have inevitably increased in scope and complexity. For example, in GMI 2008 the scale of each of the three individual service scenarios approached the totality of earlier events. Whilst we can quite rightly congratulate ourselves on another wide-ranging success, this is also a time for the MSF to critically consider how to best focus its efforts in the future.

The GMI brand is second to none, but we have concluded that there is also a significant opportunity for more frequent, balanced, flexible interoperability events. These will focus on key technology “hot topics” that are critically important to MSF members and the wider industry. As a result, we are already planning for interoperability LTE/EPS and IPTV events in 2009 and more events may be added as the interests of our members develop.

For the MSF to deliver any programme, we of course need the enthusiastic support of our members. At our recent meeting in San Jose, California, I was delighted to be able to recognize just some of the incredible volunteer efforts that make the MSF such a success with the award of the 2008 MSF Senior Fellowship to Wayne Cutler of Ericsson. This award targets individuals who have made an outstanding impact on the direction of the MSF at committee or working group level over a period of several years and I have no doubt that those of you who know how much effort Wayne has put into the forum over several years will agree that his award is very well deserved.



Award of MSF Senior Fellowship award to Wayne Cutler (MSF TC chair).

I look forward to seeing you all at our next meeting in Budapest, Hungary on April 28 to 30. As ever, if you have any ideas or comments on any aspect of the MSF, I will be pleased to hear from you.

Best wishes,
Roger Ward, MSF President

MSF 2009: building on success

GMI 2006 tested interoperability of the core IMS infrastructure. GMI 2008 tested services, using IPTV, SOA gateways, and location services to demonstrate the range of services that could be deployed on this converged IMS framework. This reflects deployment plans of a number of major carriers. GMI 2008 also featured an exclusive partnership with the ATIS IIF for IPTV, demonstrating the value of increasing cooperation between standards organizations. The MSF technical program for 2009 builds on this success.

The program incorporates the following principles:

- 1) IMS has been tested in 2006 and 2008. Further testing of IMS will not bring value
- 2) Core network standards are continuing to evolve, in particular with the introduction of 3GPP's Evolved Packet System (EPS). EPS introduces significant new functionality, and interoperability testing of products based on EPS forms an important part of the program for 2009
- 3) New broadband access technologies, such as LTE, continue to emerge. The MSF will validate new "access tiles" in the context of the overall MSF architecture.
- 4) Services provide an excellent "use case" to validate architectures and standards. The MSF will use services to identify new requirements for the MSF architecture
- 5) Cooperation between standards organizations is more important than ever. The MSF will build on the cooperation with ATIS for GMI 2008 to strengthen and expand cooperation with key Standards Development Organizations (SDOs)

- 6) Testing of important new functionality cannot wait for the completion of another two-year cycle. Testing must occur in 2009
- 7) As technology matures, we will move beyond proof of concept testing. The MSF will look to include robustness testing, and certification of key components in our program where appropriate
- 8) A services overlay infrastructure based on SOA standards complements the base capabilities of the IMS/SIP infrastructure, and will enable rapid service deployment. The MSF may include this in the 2009 technical program, depending on resources.

Based on these principles, the MSF is finalizing an exciting technical program for 2009. It will add an LTE access tile to the MSF architecture and introduce Implementation Agreements for the Evolved Packet System (EPS) based on 3GPP R8. Proposals are being prepared for an interoperability event to test this infrastructure in Q4 2009.

The second major theme for 2009 is services, with the MSF formally chartering a Services Working Group to analyze new services, and to identify requirements derived from use cases built around these services. The MSF also recognizes that IPTV testing in GMI 2008 was based on incomplete specifications. These specifications will be completed, and interoperability testing conducted in cooperation with ETSI and ATIS.

All of the above will be targeted toward further interoperability testing in 2009, rather than waiting for another full GMI event in 2010. The testing in each area will be done in separate interoperability events, rather than in a combined GMI event. This will allow each area to proceed independently, with progress matching the maturity of the specific standards and products.

As the MSF architecture continues to evolve, with carrier-sponsored interoperability events for critical technology components, these will be incorporated into the MSF architecture on an ongoing basis. These separate threads can then be woven together in the next full-blown GMI, allowing the MSF to demonstrate how the various technologies come together. This has always been a key role of the MSF, and it will continue to be the case. But now, it will be able to benefit from detailed testing within a given technology from events such as the Vodafone led testing of EPS.

We believe this is an exciting technical program, leveraging the proven strengths of the MSF, and meeting the priorities expressed by the MSF membership.

IMS as a converged services framework

In some ways, GMI 2008 was a departure from the approach taken in previous GMI events. GMI 2008 did not add a new network technology to the IMS infrastructure that was at the core of GMI 2006. Instead, the MSF chose to test the services that could be deployed on this IMS infrastructure. This was definitely a success. GMI 2008 validated the principle of IMS as the “*foundation for a converged services architecture*”, by using IPTV, SOA gateways, and location services to demonstrate the range of services that could be deployed on this converged services framework.

In 2009 establishing that message in the media and analyst minds will be a key component of our marketing program.

Membership renewal

The 2009 Membership Renewal Period will end on March 31. Final notices have been sent. Any questions about membership renewal should be directed to Ashley Wright at awright@msforum.org

Leadership elections

The Board approved the following leadership election schedule:

March 25 Call for Nominations

April 8 Nominations Due

April 9 Ballots Out

April 23 Ballots Due

April 24 Announce Results

April 29 New Term Begins/Annual Meeting

The following leadership positions are up for re-election:

Board of Directors:

5 Director positions

Technical Committee

TC Chair & Vice Chair

Interop WG Chair & Vice Chair

Protocol Control Chair & Vice Chair

Marketing Committee

Marketing Committee Chair & Vice Chair

Anyone interested in seeking a leadership position should contact Julianne Fitzpatrick at jfitzpatrick@msforum.org