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Leading Carriers sign up for GMI 2008

BT/Vodafone, Verizon, China Mobile, NCS, and UNH-IOL join forces to create global multi-vendor test environment

Fremont, CA, May 15th 2008 – The MultiService Forum (MSF) today announced the full list of carrier, government, and academic laboratories that will host the latest Global MultiService Interoperability (GMI) 2008, a worldwide interoperability test event for next generation networks (NGNs). In Q4 this year, Verizon, NCS and UNH-IOL in the USA will work with BT/Vodafone in Europe and China Mobile in Asia to create a “real world” global network to verify the interoperability of critical NGN elements in a range of practical scenarios.. Building on the success of GMI 2006, this year’s event includes additional test laboratories, enhanced test scenarios and a wider range of service capabilities including end-to-end Quality of Service (QoS), Location Management, IPTV, and Service Oriented Architecture (SOA).

“We are delighted to welcome onboard China Mobile and US Government’s National Communication System (NCS) for GMI2008” commented Roger Ward, Office of the CTO, BT Group and President of the MSF. “As NGN technology matures, carriers are increasingly focused on the details of multi-vendor interoperability and GMI2008 will provide a unique opportunity for suppliers to demonstrate their ability to develop products that meet this challenge in real world networks”.

At a time of accelerating change in the telecommunications industry, GMI 2008 is eagerly awaited as an industry showcase demonstrating emerging NGN architectures that deliver converged services across a range of wireless and wireline access network technologies, from the traditional baseband to the emerging broadband technology such as WiMax. It will also provide key proof of concept for multi vendor interoperability across a managed end-to-end global network environment. Building on previous GMI events, GMI2008 is based on the MSF R4 architectural framework that encompasses an IMS network along with NGN components such as call agents/softswitches for handling earlier VoIP infrastructures. The open interface reference points within the MSFR4 architecture are documented as MSF Implementation Agreements, which are based on, and are endorsements of, the relevant specifications from 3GPP and other international standards organizations.

Six key scenarios, defined by the MSF Technical Committee, will be validated in the GMI 2008 event. Scenario one will focus on end-to-end session control across all supported access networks. Scenario two will test end-to-end QoS in both the access networks and across the core architecture. In scenario three, IPTV is added as a highly demanding IMS based application – the first such industry demonstration of its kind. Scenario 4 builds on Scenario 2 by adding location-based services and incorporates work done in TISPAN NASS and IETF to enable precise location information to be used with emergency calls, location based routing and prioritized call queuing. Scenario 5 adds a Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) service layer to demonstrate how a SIP/IMS-core would interoperate with Web based services. This SOA layer would enable rapid service creation by independent service developers utilizing service enablers provided by the core network including third-party call control, presence, and multimedia messaging. The sixth and final scenario focuses on the

performance management of IPTV services and remote management of the IPTV CPE devices.

As successful deployment of IPTV services is dependent upon the network providing end-to-end QOS, the ability for the operator to be able to deliver and monitor QOS related metrics in a multi-vendor environment is essential. As Jack Douglass, Director of Video Technology at Spirent Communications pointed out: "A comprehensive system for analyzing IPTV quality should take into account both video and audio quality and should have a close correlation to perceptual quality. It is essential that the system measure IP network impairments, content metrics and ETSI TR101-290 parameters and include these attributes when calculating the video and audio MOS scores."

About GMI 2008

GMI 2008 – the Global MSF Interoperability event – will link major carrier, government, and academic labs on three continents in a major demonstration of multi-vendor interoperability between a significant number of NGN elements supporting Implementation Agreements developed in support of the MSF Release 4 Architecture and practical deployment scenarios of interest to major carriers.

About the MSF

The MultiService Forum (MSF) is a global association of service providers, system suppliers and test equipment vendors committed to developing and promoting open-architecture, multiservice Next Generation Networks. Founded in 1998, the MSF is an open-membership organization comprised of the world's leading telecommunications companies. The MSF's activities include developing Implementation Agreements, promoting worldwide compatibility and interoperability of network elements, and encouraging input to appropriate national and international standards bodies.

<http://www.msforum.org/>