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MULTISERVICE SWITCHING FORUM ANNOUNCES 2004 DEMO EVENT, MAKES SECURITY, QoS TOP PRIORITIES

Forum Incorporates Voice-over-Broadband Work Into Technical Specs

Fremont, Calif., February 5, 2003 – The Multiservice Switching Forum (MSF) today announced plans to conduct a second Global Multiservice Interoperability (GMI) event in 2004. The announcement comes just two months after the completion of GMI 2002, which was conducted simultaneously in Europe, North America and Asia. The intent of GMI 2004 will be to demonstrate a deployable and operationally ready IP telephony network with Network Management, enhanced Quality-of-Service (QoS) and security features.

“The overwhelming success of GMI 2002 made our decision to host another event in 2004 easy,” said Roger Ward, MSF president. “Our goal of demonstrating a deployable IP telephony network by 2004 is aggressive. Our focus over the next year will be on refining specifications and executing a strategic plan that will put our members in a position to participate in GMI 2004.”

The MSF's most recent interoperability demonstration, GMI 2002, was conducted over the course of 10 days in November. Fifteen participants including carriers, system suppliers and test equipment manufacturers demonstrated the MSF Release 1 Architecture utilizing MEGACO/H.248, Bearer Independent Call Control (BICC) and Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) as the main control and signaling protocols. The MSF expects even more participants in 2004, as the telecom industry rebounds and as more companies announce MSF architecture-compliant products. Several major carriers, including BT and NTT, announced their desire in 2002 for vendors to comply with the MSF architecture to enhance the interoperability of the Next Generation Network (NGN).

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White Papers Define Key Issues

In support of the Forum's plans for GMI 2004, the MSF announced the publication of two new white papers that specifically address QoS and management issues in a multiservice switching environment. Entitled Quality of Service for Next Generation IP Telephony and Next Generation IP Telephony Network.

In other news, the MSF announced that it has incorporated the work of the Open Voice Over Broadband Forum (Open VoB) into the work of the MSF's own Technical Committee. The technical specifications included support of MCGP as specified within the MSF Release 1 Architecture, which enabled the control of Customer Premises Equipment (CPE) products as demonstrated during the GMI 2002 trial. The Open VoB Forum recently completed its technical mission and has disbanded.

Gallant Headlines Telephony/Data Convergence Panel

Network World President and Editorial Director John Gallant headlined a panel session at MSF's recent quarterly technical meeting in Orlando, Florida. Gallant, guided Mark Carroll, Director Marketing Carrier Systems Group MSSBU/Voice Gateway at Cisco Systems and Chris Gallon, Senior Network Architect at Fujitsu through a question and answer session that examined whether IP and the "big I" Internet can be "re-engineered" to support all the applications and traffic types demanded of them.

About Multiservice Switching Systems

A Multiservice Switching System (MSS) is a distributed switching method – frame, cell or packet-based – designed to support voice, video, private line and data such as ATM, Frame Relay and Internet Protocol (IP) services. MSS may use a broad range of access technologies, including traditional Time Division Multiplexing (TDM), Digital Subscriber Line (xDSL), wireless data, and cable modems. MSF Implementation Agreements (IAs) define the requirements of the interfaces between components of a MSS.

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About the MSF

The Multiservice Switching Forum (MSF) is a global association of service providers and system suppliers committed to developing and promoting open-architecture, multiservice switching systems. 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, and encouraging input to appropriate national and international standards bodies. For more information about the MSF and its members, visit the MSF web site at <http://www.msforum.org>.

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