Fremont, Calif., March 12, 2002 – The Multiservice Switching Forum (MSF) announced today the debut of the MSF Global Interoperability Program to demonstrate switching devices and protocols that support MSF Architecture and Implementation Agreements. The Forum, which concluded its annual meeting last week, plans to sponsor an interoperability trial in the 3rd quarter of 2002 and an open, public demonstration event in Q4. Specific details about dates and locations will be announced later this spring.

“The scheduling of these interoperability events is a clear sign that the MSF’s technical work is reaching critical mass, said Roger Ward, MSF president. “Our Global Interoperability Program, combined with the impending launch of the MSF Release 2 Architecture, will make 2002 the busiest year that the Forum has ever had. The work coming out of the MSF will be one of the brightest stories in the telecom switching industry in 2002.”

The trials scheduled for Q3 will be focused on proving MSF Implementation Agreements (IAs) relating to the specific protocols necessary to achieve multi-service, multi-technology, multi-vendor solutions. The interoperability demonstration planned for Q4 will be a more broadly-scoped, global event open to the media and public and will highlight evaluate the interoperability of devices compliant with a variety of network scenarios including VoIP, VoATM and MPLS. A program management team, headed by Richard Seager of WorldCom, has been formed to define testing profiles and oversee the logistical plans for the two events.

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“The MSF Global Interoperability Program will be a major event in the telecommunications switching industry,” said Seager. “This will be an opportunity for the MSF and its member companies to show the world how cooperation can benefit competitors.”

**New Board, Technical Leaders Elected**

In other news from the MSF annual meeting, the Forum elected several new members to the board of directors and to committee chair positions. New MSF board members include Jim McEachern of Nortel Networks, Kelvin Steeden of Mitel Networks, Davis Francisco of Siemens and Kou Miyake of NTT were reelected to the board. Worldcom’s Seager was elected technical committee chair and Mike Kallas of VocalData was elected chair of MSF’s Architecture Working Group.

**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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