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GMI 2006 MARKS FIRST GLOBAL TEST OF THE IMS SERVICE FRAMEWORK

GlobalComm, Chicago, USA, June 5th, 2006 – Roger Ward, Office of the CTO, BT and President of the MSF, today presented his update on GMI 2006, the world's first massive 'real network' trial of multi-vendor interoperability of the IMS service framework. GMI 2006 scheduled for Oct 16-27, will test multi-vendor interoperability to achieve Fixed Mobile Convergence supporting the IMS service framework. The event will validate MSF Release 3 Implementation Agreements covering: roaming services across multiple network types; QoS (Session Border Gateway and Bandwidth Manager); IP Carrier Interconnect/Interworking; security interoperability; 3rd party applications and service brokering; open Media GW Control interface relevant to 3GPP BICN architecture; and IPv4/6 Interworking.

IMS has moved beyond the stage of speculative hype, and is now thoroughly grounded in its development stage, with all the challenges that entails. GMI 2006 is all about meeting those challenges, not papering over the cracks – and the outcome will be of critical importance to any carrier or vendor committed to implementing IMS. "Let me give you some idea of the scale of what the MSF will deliver to the industry" says Roger Ward. "We began this year with a major commitment from five of the world's top carriers – BT, KT, NTT, Verizon and Vodafone - and the world class test facility of the University of New Hampshire Interoperability Lab to work with the MSF and host this event in world-class networked test facilities spanning 3 continents. As a result, GMI 2006 will be a massive global interoperability event with 26 MSF member companies currently contracted to commit their systems to proving out practical Implementation Agreements developed collaboratively over the last 15 months by MSF members."

GMI2006 is already bigger than the very successful GMI2004 - an event that also spanned 3 continents with over 200 NGN network elements tested in meaningful carrier defined test scenarios. GMI 2006, with its focus on key interop aspects of NGN/ IMS implementation has built on this successful base, with thousands of man hours of further collaboration put in by MSF members to deliver the detail to support 17 MSF Release 3 new Implementation Agreements and over 1000 pages of supporting test plans. As for the event itself this October, it will involve hundreds of development & test engineers performing 24/7 test activity over an intensive two week period, to deliver the most extensive IMS interoperability trial ever.

The participating members to date include: Acme Packet, Alcatel, Cisco Systems, Empirix, Ericsson, ETRI, Huawei Technologies, IP Unity, Leapstone Systems, Lucent Technologies, MetaSwitch, Mitsubishi Electric Corporation, NCS, NEC, Newport Networks, NexTone Communications, Nortel Networks, Operax, Samsung, Siemens, Softfront, Sonus Networks, Spirent Communications, Starent Networks, Tekelec, and ZTE Corporation. The MSF in particular would like to express its thanks to Nortel for sponsoring the event, and to acknowledge also the

unstinting support of the six host site providers - BT, KT, NTT, Verizon, Vodafone and UNH-IOL, and BT Global Services in providing the high quality network that links the host test laboratories together.

"IMS does indeed represent the best – and perhaps the last – chance for incumbent service providers to avoid becoming dumb pipe operators" said Joe McGarvey, Principal Analyst, Current Analysis, Inc. commenting on GMI 2006. "This massive interoperability experiment is a must-do event for any vendor or carrier that has committed resources to building or implementing infrastructure gear based on the IMS architecture.."

Helmut Hoffmann, Director of Global Networks, Vodafone, added: "GMI2006 provides a unique opportunity for mobile vendors to test the open interoperability of their 3GPP Release 4 and IMS implementations. GMI2006 will accelerate the introduction of new enabling capabilities such as presence and group management and the seamless blending of these new capabilities with IP-based telephony and video communications. When these are integrated with roaming, users will be able to enjoy rich media communications uninterrupted as they move between locations."

About The MultiService Forum

The MultiService Forum is a global association of service providers, system suppliers & 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. For more information about the MSF and its members, visit the MSF web site at <http://www.msforum.org/>.