



USA PR contact:

Richard Williams
Zonic Group PR
rwilliams@ZonicGroup.com
+1 919-554-3532 or +1 919-523-0621

EMEA:

Mark Fox
Zonic PR EMEA
mfox@ZonicGroup.com
+44 (0) 870 760 9248

Asia Pacific:

Shirley Yeh
Zonic PR Asia
syeh@ZonicGroup.com
+8621 5115 4551 x 1221
or +44 7836 248110

GMI 2006 Makes Major Step Towards IMS-compliant NGNs

BT Centre, London, Oct 24th, 2006 – It was announced today that the eagerly awaited Global MSF Interoperability event – GMI 2006 – was off to an auspicious start with over 500 test engineers and support staff engaged around the clock in a massive 'real network' trial spanning 3 continents and 4 countries. GMI 2006 – the third in a series of major interoperability events organized by the MSF in the past four years and building on the success of GMI 2002 and GMI 2004 – marks the culmination of 18 months of intensive planning and preparation. BT/ Vodafone, Verizon, Korea Telecom/ETRI and NTT Japan together with the University of New Hampshire Interoperability Labs (UNH-IOL) are hosting this globally networked major event. GMI 2006, which is sponsored by Nortel, is recognized as critically important to carriers and vendors committed to implementing IMS-based infrastructure elements in real world networks.

"All eyes are now on the results of GMI 2006," commented Camille Mendler, VP, Telecommunications Strategies, Yankee Group. "GMI 2006 is the world's first global interoperability event for IMS and Fixed Mobile Convergence. Leading industry players are signaling their commitment by contributing thousands of man hours to this multi-vendor endeavor. There's no doubt that the outcome of GMI 2006 will accelerate the cost effective deployment and procurement of new network technologies such as IMS. Key to this is the MultiService Forum's insistence on global co-operation and practical test scenarios."

"It will take time to distill the conclusions of a test as complex as this," commented Roger Ward, President of the MSF and Office of the CTO, British Telecom. "However, using a new real time test data capture tool developed by the MSF specifically for this event, we are confident that we will be able to release the full report on Dec 1st 2006 at NetEvents Global Press Summit in Hong Kong – right before ITU World Telecom."

Kari Revier from UNH, the Project Coordinator for this global test, gave some additional facts on the scale of this operation: "We have 26 participating vendors who have submitted 197 network devices to a total of 98 test cases spread over 8 distinct scenarios, ranging from a nomadic subscriber in a single domain to a full scale test including value added services and roaming over multiple domains, including both MSF R3 and 'pure IMS' networks. And with each deployment scenario having its own documentation, this all adds up to nearly one thousand pages of detailed test specifications to be worked through in the 288 hours before October 27th."

The host sites at BT/Vodafone, KT, NTT, Verizon and UNH-IOL provide facilities for participating companies to install, test and monitor their products performance. In the case of BT's Adastral Park Laboratories in the UK, 40 to 50 test engineers are on-site from 16 companies – even though in some cases the equipment is simply installed on-site and managed remotely. The test engineers at the various sites are typically supported by R&D staff at their parent companies, bringing the total estimated involvement in this event to well over 500 staff worldwide.

"Finding out what works well, and equally importantly what doesn't work so well, allows the industry to focus its efforts and accelerate the development of IMS compliant NGNs. You can't

beat the value of learning from a live globally networked testing environment such as this," concluded Roger Ward. "As GMI 2006 draws to a close, I'd like to thank all the people and organizations who have put so much into this project; the engineers working 18-hour days in the GMI labs; the R&D teams supporting the onsite engineers; the project administrators; Nortel, for their sponsorship; and BT Global Services and the global academic networks Abilene, APAN-JP, GEANT, GEMnet, JANET and KOREN, for their generous provision of network connectivity. Without this support, GMI 2006 would not have been possible."

About The MultiService Forum

The MultiService Forum 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/>.

About GMI 2006

GMI 2006 is the industry's only multinational, distributed, interactive test bed to verify key interoperability aspects of NGN/IMS implementations. It brings together a global network of carriers and vendors to test the interoperability of IMS-based infrastructure components in a real-world setting. Providing a test-bed for the full spectrum of hardware, processes and services needed to assemble an effective next-generation delivery platform, GMI 2006 amounts to a massive 'real network' trial of the MSF IMS (IP Multimedia System)-compatible Release 3 architecture announced by the MSF on September 12th. The test program embraces such topics as roaming across multiple network types (including cellular and WiFi), QoS issues (including session border control and bandwidth management), and interoperability with 3GPP release 4 in real-world deployment scenarios that explicitly include first-generation VoIP SoftSwitches, PSTN interworking and evolution to a true IMS network.