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# Global MSF Event Puts IMS Standards to the Test

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Top standards groups, carriers and vendors at the [Verizon Communication Inc. \(VZ\)](#) lab here in Waltham, MA today detailed testing efforts made as part of the Global Multiservice Interoperability (GMI) 2008 Test Event.

Verizon is one of five major carriers and test labs worldwide hosting the biennial event, which features in- and inter-lab testing spanning products from 22 vendors and some 225 devices, according to the Multiservice Forum (MSF).

As of today, day 10 of the 12-day event, the combined forces have run through some 1,000 tests, up from 200 when the event was last held, in 2006.

In a nutshell, the event has evolved from testing the elements of the IMS core, the focus of the event two years ago. This time around, much of the spotlight is on testing interoperability of standards.

“We’ve signed up for IMS as the convergence media of the future,” began Mark Wegleitner, senior vice president of technology for Verizon. “IMS has been a long road and there’s still some road ahead. But,” he added in reference to this the 4th GMI event, “every time we move the ball a little further down the field.”

“Our overall objective,” he continued, “is to reduce service delivery cycle times.” The event has also proved productive in putting standards to the test to determine how they have actually been implemented – or not – in products tested.

During GMI, a total of 42 implementation agreements are being put to the test, with 26 of them new. An implementation agreement spells out how a standard should be implemented, with one goal being to foster interworking rather than proprietary interpretations of standards.

“A standard without interoperability is like a cake without icing,” remarked Wegleitner.

Depending on perspective, the observations from the event, given by Verizon execs, the MSF and ATIS, are either a glass half-full or half-empty situation. Some problems from

2006 have not yet been fixed, but important progress has been made since – and the focus of the event hugely broadened, since then.

The international event also marks a milestone for IPTV evolution, with the MSF working with ATIS to test standards specific to the management of devices in an IPTV network. A total of six networked test scenarios have been defined and checked out.

But the focus is not exclusively on IPTV. The first two physical scenarios test End-to-End Session Control with QoS, for access technologies including 3GPP, WiMAX, 3GPP2 and TD-SCDMA, over a converged core network.

The third scenario addresses IPTV, with an emphasis on specs developed by the ATIS Interoperability Forum (IIF). The MSF claims this is the first time standardized IPTV is being put to the test in a network context to validate automatic configuration of set-top boxes and to deliver quality of experience.

The fourth scenario addresses location-based services, including routing and privacy issues. The fifth scenario covers Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA), and integrates IMS with web-based services.

The last scenario addresses management issues, specifically the online management of IPTV STBs and the collection of IPTV-related stats, “without the cost and delay that the MSF contends results from the service truck rolls of today’s TV systems.”

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