

TATA
Telepresence reach ramps up as it looks for resale partners

SUB CABLES
New Taiwan Strait cable planned by Taiwan Mobile, China Unicom

TELENOR
Global mobile operator says still committed to Asia market

ALSO MAKING NEWS

DOT LAYS DOWN LINE TO INDIAN MILITARY

The Indian military is entitled to just 10MHz of 3G spectrum according to the Department of Telecom. The edict is likely to throw an already delayed licensing process into disarray as telecoms and defense officials wrestle over airwaves. The military already controls all 60MHz of the nation's valuable 2.1GHz spectrum and has so far refused to vacate those airwaves despite DoT pleading. Authorities have ordered the defense ministry to migrate to an alternate fiber network, enabling the DoT to sell up to 10 WCDMA licenses. The standoff threatens to unravel an already contentious 3G spectrum sale, especially if officials fail to hammer out an agreement by the January auction. The pair previously inked a memorandum of understanding transferring a 45MHz slice to the DoT

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Cloud computing not yet a reality, says event panel

With all the hype surrounding cloud computing only about 5% is a reality. The remaining 95% is all an illusion or forward-looking statements of what are to come, Fanfare software VP of marketing David Gehringer told CommsDay International in an interview.

Though the interest for cloud computing remains very real, it seems to have become a victim of its own somewhat out-of-control hype cycle. Since so much has been written and discussed about the cloud, there is now a growing impatience for actual results, Gehringer said.

Speaking at this year's NetEvents Singapore, Yankee Group VP for global service strategies Camille Mendler said that the cloud vendor community remains adolescent in its approach. It is cliquy as it squabbles about service definition and standards; geek-led, focusing more on the technology than the consumer; and immature as it lacks consistency in process.

Moreover, ECI Telecom's VP for managed services Ami Nissimov told CommsDay that the business model for cloud computing is not quite there yet. It should become more stable before it becomes a viable business. "Also, in a network design platform, I do not recommend taking your business to the clouds yet," said Nissimov.

One big issue with cloud computing is the blurred understanding on who is accountable and where the responsibility lies, said Nissimov.

This puts the risk on the end user.

Mendler also presented several examples of that accountability issue making a real presence in the market. In some contracts with cloud computing service providers, it is indicated that a client can get around 1,500 hours of free credits in cases of disruptions or disturbances to their service, which sound good in theory. However, these contracts also state that they could only get a maximum of two months worth of free credits. Other examples include contracts showing that clients cannot get any liquidated damages.

These may sound contradictory or even outside normal practice but the fact is that governments did not anticipate cloud computing, hence, regulatory application tends to be unclear, said Mendler.

Just recently, Portio Research conducted a survey of 350 IT heads across Europe for communications supplier Colt. The study revealed that over half of European IT heads within businesses do not understand cloud computing, despite the hype around it in the IT industry. The public sector was the least informed about cloud computing, with only 37% of IT decision-makers saying they are familiar with cloud computing.

According to the research, if this changes the take-up of cloud computing will explode because those that are familiar with cloud computing are usually already implementing it.

Spirent Communications director global services Angus Robertson also mentioned that there is dramatically more complexity in scale in cloud computing environments.

Nevertheless, interest in this technology is not expected to fade. Sooner or later there would be more businesses in the cloud, said Robertson. "I am sure cloud computing will be the future. We are not there yet but cost reduction coupled with efficiency will drive the technology into reality," added Nissimov.

Pamela Perez

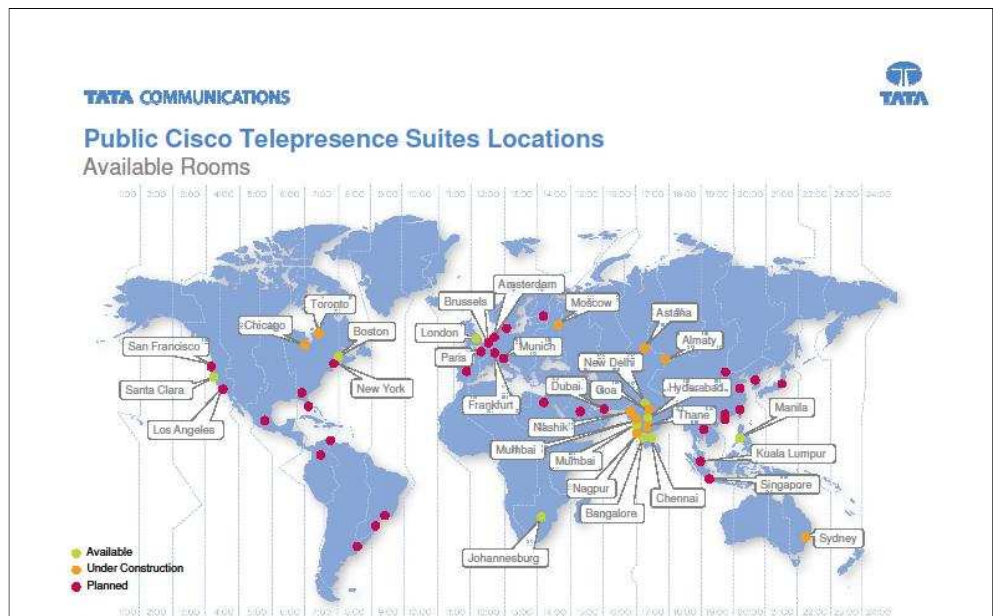
within three years, although this has apparently fallen by the wayside, according to the Economic Times of India.

LEVEL 3 FLASH UPGRADE

Level 3 Communications integrated Flash Media Server 3.5 into a unified content delivery network platform based on its own proprietary HTTP technology. The backbone operator said the move would accelerate migration to HTTP as the ubiquitous standard for Web content delivery and ensure its international CDN was ready to support Flash 3.5 delivery. Level 3 product delivery vice president Mark Taylor said the integration was an obvious step. "Since more than 75% of online video is delivered via Adobe's Flash Media platform, the decision to partner with Adobe to unify our broadcast-delivery platform was easy," he said in a statement.

MOTOROLA BUILDS MUNIWIRESLESS NET IN SPAIN

Motorola deployed a municipal wireless network for the Spanish city of Alovera. The rollout provides Internet access in the metro center and some outlying housing estates. The Wi-Fi build features 42 access points, with local operator Nostracom Telecomunicaciones supplying capacity. Motorola provided its Motomesh Duo hardware for the mixed municipal and consumer network. "The reduced size and improved features of our technology provide high quality Internet access for the people of Alovera as well as enhanced municipal services," noted Motorola EMEA wireless broadband director Massimo Gotti.



Tata eyes resale deals with regional partners for telepresence

Tata Communications is in talks with its regional partners for resale agreements that would further extend its telepresence business.

Tata's director for telepresence public room services Christopher Steffens revealed to CommsDay International that it currently runs 10 public Cisco rooms and plans to expand with 15 new rooms by year-end 2009.

Another 10 are planned by mid-2010.

Tata manages several public rooms available on a pay-per-use basis in the United States, England, India, South Africa and the Philippines. In Asia-Pacific, it has partnered with Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company and Neotel in South Africa and has established public rooms in these countries.

Undertaking a new tactic, Tata is now looking to leverage these regional partners to have them resell the construction of telepresence rooms in their respective areas. This would allow Tata to reach deeper into these markets without having to do all the leg work itself.

The firm recently signed deals with business travel management firm Carlson Wagonlit Travel and American Express Business Travel to help clients make bookings in Tata's network of public Cisco TelePresence suites.

CWT said last week it would help in determining if and when a virtual meeting meets customer business needs, manage the reservations process and provide reporting on adoption and related cost savings.

Through the deal, CWT clients will also have access to Tata Communications' Global Meeting Exchange: designed to conveniently support business-to-business sessions on a global basis between any Cisco TelePresence rooms (public or private), irrespective of the network service provider. This global service will grow in reach over time and will enable subscribers to expand the use of telepresence from an internal meeting solution to one that reaches their global business partners outside their company, said Tata.

Moreover, American Express Business Travel has a deal with Cisco TelePresence distributor Regus, an executive suite and office space provider. Amex recently concluded a pilot program with one large client in which it offered a dedicated desk taking TelePresence room reservations by phone. Amex now is offering that service to other clients and expects next year to integrate with online booking tools to bring TelePresence arrangements directly to travelers.

Steffens also said that telepresence helps boost the Green IT initiative by lessening carbon emissions. He said that with five employees putting off traveling and instead spending 14 hours on telepresence conference, a tonne of carbon emission is saved.

QUALCOMM, MEDI- ATEK PATENT PACT

Qualcomm and MediaTek announced a mutual patent swap, allowing each supplier to use the other's CDMA and WCDMA technology for integrated circuit products. The agreement does not extend to the signatories' OEM customers, which must still obtain individual licenses. MediaTek is best known for its Taiwan fabless semiconductor operations.

HSPA NETWORK NUMBER SURGES TO 300

The number of commercial HSPA mobile broadband networks now stands at 300 in 128 countries worldwide, stated 3G Americas president Chris Pearson. According to forecasts by Informa Telecoms & Media, there will be 458 million UMTS-HSPA mobile broadband connections worldwide by the end of 2009. This number is expected to exceed 1 billion by 2013. Forecasts by Informa Telecoms & Media indicate that there will be 3.2 billion mobile broadband connections by year-end 2014. At that time, UMTS-HSPA and LTE combined will comprise 84 percent share of market with 2.8 billion subscriptions, compared to 528 million EV-DO connections and 89 million WiMAX connections. HSPA will total 1.76 billion of the 2.8 billion subscriptions.

NORTEL DELAYS GSM SALE

Nortel is delaying the auction for the sale of its GSM/GSM-R business, which was previously scheduled to take place on November 20, 2009, and that it is continuing in discussions with interested parties. Nortel will provide an update on matters relating to the sale of the GSM/GSM-R business during the week of November 23, 2009.

Taiwan Mobile, China Unicom confirms subsea cable

Officials at Taiwan Mobile, the second largest mobile operator in the country, and China Unicom, have formalised their plans to jointly construct a subsea cable linking the two countries.

According to report by Taiwan's Commercial Times newspaper, executives from the two companies, including Taiwan Mobile president Harvey Chang and China Unicom chairman Chang Xiaobing met in Hong Kong this week to discuss the plans to lay a cable between Tamshui in northern Taiwan and China's Fujian province.

The two operators are expected to spend NT\$1 billion on the project, which may also include additional links from Tamshui to Shanghai and from Fangshan in southern Taiwan and Hong Kong, the report said.

The subsea cable is the second such proposed project to link the two countries with high speed connectivity. In June, Chunghwa Telecom and China Telecom announced plans to spend NT\$476 million to build a similar cable linking the Taiwanese town of Kinmen and China's Xiamen.

Efficiency and network optimisation key to mobile sector growth: Huawei

With the number of mobile subscribers projected to surge in the next 5 years, mobile operators will have to drive further efficiency into their network infrastructure in order to keep pace, said executives at Huawei Technologies.

According to Huawei's chief branding officer of Huawei Wireless Product Line, Robert Fox, one of the key challenges for the mobile industry is the explosive growth of the mobile broadband users and traffic, resulting in the need for operators to squeeze more productivity out of their infrastructure investments.

Citing figures presented by research firm Informa at the company's CTO Forum on the sidelines of the GSMA's Asia Mobile Congress, Fox noted that operators will be faced with a disproportionate growth in traffic verses revenue.

"We've currently got about 500 million mobile Internet users worldwide, Huawei predicts that by 2013, we will have 2 billion," Fox said. "Fuelling that growth is something that is very interesting. We are going to see a growth in traffic of 17 times. The challenge for operators is that while the traffic goes up, the revenue will only increase by 1.8 times."

The trend is driving operators towards network efficiency and network convergence, he added.

But that doesn't mean 2G networks will be going away any time soon, said Huawei president, LTE Product Line, Ying Weimin. Despite the fact that several operators around the world have completely upgraded the equipment on their networks, 2G will be around for many years, Weimin said.

One such operator, Telenor in Norway, recently announced that it will put in a brand new radio access network with Huawei equipment. However, the new network will continue to support both 2G and 3G.

"I believe 2G and 3G will co-exist for many years. Every country and every operator will have different requirements. I believe operators will choose the right path to replace the older base stations. I think sometimes they find the technology is not good enough anymore and will make the decision to replace them," Ying said.

Telenor reiterates focus on Asia, India

Its investments in Asia have buffered the impact of the financial crisis for the Telenor Group. According to Telenor executive vice president and head of Asia operations Sigve Brekke, growth continued over the past year in its operations in Pakistan and Bangladesh despite the global financial downturn.

"Our markets are doing quite ok, especially Pakistan and Bangladesh. Thailand and Malaysia is struggling a little bit more, kind of flattish, while Pakistan and Bangladesh have been growing quite healthily," Brekke said. "What we saw was that there was a bigger impact for these economies when we saw the spike in

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oil prices and food prices, which came prior to the global financial crisis – that impacted our customer base much more.”

Telenor now has some 70 million subscribers in Asia, out of the Group total of 170 million, with a third of the Group revenue coming from operations in the region, including Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand and Malaysia.

“Right now, the financial crisis has had a much more negative impact in Eastern Europe, than it has had in Asia. In Asia, it is kind of flat-tish, or slightly positive, while Eastern Europe is really down, both in usage, and the overall economy, currency and all that,” Brekke said.

Currently, Telenor is focusing its attention on the launch of its Indian joint venture with Unitech Wireless.

“We are just about to launch. We will do that in a few week’s time. We closed that deal in April. I’ve very pleased to see how quickly we have been able to scale up that operation, and after 7 months, we are ready to go. We are ready to launch,” he said, highlighting further the importance of India for Telenor going forward.

“We really need to deliver in India. India for us is a big risk, not only financially, but also operationally because moving into that continent, and to scale up the operations requires a lot of resources. Right now we focus on what we have and then making sure that it is successful,” he added. “With India, the focus of Telenor is turning more towards Asia because Asia is becoming the main growth factor for Telenor, not only in terms of subscribers, but in terms of revenue.”



Alcatel-Lucent claims first 800MHz LTE data call

Alcatel-Lucent claims to have completed the first LTE data call using the 800MHz European Digital Dividend band on a live network. The supplier said its test demonstrated continental 4G infrastructure was ready for rollout as soon as officials issue licenses next year.

The test involved streaming HD video using a German network based on prototype handsets and commercially available network hardware. “This is a major breakthrough on our path to become the first vendor to offer a commercial solution for the Digital Dividend spectrum,” enthused Alcatel LTE solutions president Ken Wirth.

XO expands to Inland Empire

XO Communications expanded its US network into the Inland Empire section of southern California. The operator said adding new PoPs in the in the market would expose it to thousands of regional businesses.

“In today’s economy, businesses large and small are reevaluating their IT expenditures and seeking the high-quality, cost-effective and diverse solutions that XO offers.

“With this network investment, we’re confident that area businesses will see XO as a strategic option for those looking to maximize their network investments and enhance their overall IT capabilities,” stated XO Pacific vice president Jim Ferguson. The carrier’s 19,000km US network already featured more than 600 route miles of metro fiber throughout southern California, allowing local businesses to seamlessly connect to XO endpoints nationwide. Its regional expansion includes a new sales office in Ontario serving 4 million potential subscribers.