



Ethernet Networking Featured Article

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Carrier Ethernet Adds Standardized Interconnect Services



By [Bob Emmerson](#), TMC European Editor

The Metro Ethernet Forum ([News - Alert](#)) "MEF" has standardized the reference point between service providers' MEF Certified Carrier Ethernet networks and services. This development will accelerate the current lengthy and complex process of matching different providers' Carrier Ethernet services. As visualized in the following schematic, the regular process involves extensive discussions between operators since every interconnect arrangement is unique. In addition, proprietary interconnects limit the functionality.

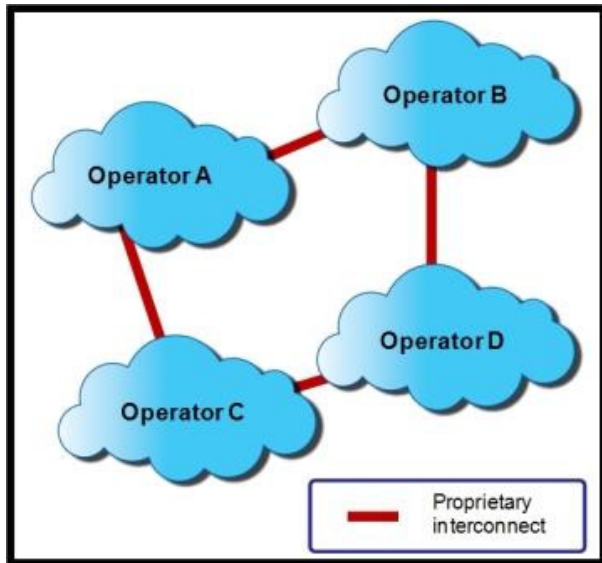
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By supporting standardized interconnect and Ethernet services spanning multiple-operator networks, and bringing issues such as CoS, SLAs and management into line, the newly ratified External Network to Network Interface “ENNI” will have a major impact on the industry.

Michael Howard, principal analyst, Carrier and Data Center Networks, Infonetics Research ([News - Alert](#)) said, “ENNI is absolutely key to the future growth of Carrier Ethernet. As operators increasingly migrate to all-packet networks, they are investing heavily in delivering Ethernet services to their customers. The ability to span these services in a timely and economical manner over multiple operator networks is a multi-billion dollar opportunity in waiting”

Wholesale service providers will now be able to upgrade their basic Ethernet connectivity services to fully featured Carrier Ethernet networks that interconnect with multiple service providers. That will mean more choice for the providers in addition to the obvious savings from their use of standardized connections and processes as opposed to piecemeal provider approaches.

ENNI also marks a significant advance in the MEF’s ([News - Alert](#)) Global Interconnect Program, which removes the need for service providers to establish and maintain their own network and service connections. Instead they can benefit from scalability and greater flexibility of a managed exchange without the escalating cost and complexity of managing multiple links to multiple provider partners.

Bob Emmerson ([News - Alert](#)) is TMC’s European Editor. To stay abreast of the latest news affecting the European market, check out Bob’s columnist page.