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MEF: Industry moves to enhance Ethernet for the cloud

CloudEthernet Forum launched with close MEF collaboration.

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Launched today, the CloudEthernet Forum addresses the specific issues of scaling and applying suitable Ethernet services to meet the stringent demands of delivering cloud services.

With virtual machine populations running into the millions across geographically dispersed data centres, plus the migration of storage networks to Ethernet, the Forum provides a unique framework for industry stakeholders to collectively develop solutions that address technical challenges such as VLAN scaling, layer 2 performance and resilience across very large domains, and consolidating storage network technologies onto Ethernet.

James Walker, president of the CloudEthernet Forum and vice-president of Managed Network Services, Tata Communications, explains how the Forum is addressing real concerns: "Four years ago, we migrated our Ethernet services over SDH to native Ethernet over PBB and it is proving highly popular with our data centre customers. They love Ethernet's simplicity and scalability and want more. However, as data centre networks become larger and more sophisticated, they are coming up against challenges, and the CloudEthernet Forum is committed to resolving those issues."

Ultimately, the work of the CloudEthernet Forum enables cloud service providers, carriers and enterprises to quickly and simply build and manage very large amounts of computing and storage capacity to meet the rapidly changing localised performance, scalability and regulatory requirements of cloud services, all while optimising operational costs. Just as the MEF has enhanced and standardised Carrier Ethernet to create services suitable for geographically dispersed enterprises and mobile operators worldwide, the CloudEthernet Forum will work to develop Ethernet to enable collections of millions of virtual servers and storage devices to perform reliably and efficiently across both regional and global networks.

"Establishment of the CloudEthernet Forum is a reflection of Ethernet's critical position in the future of the communications industry," says Ihab Tarazi, chairman of the board of the MEF and vice-president of product technology at Verizon. "Ethernet is ideal for delivering dynamic high-speed bandwidth for public and private clouds with reliability, scalability and high performance."

“Solutions from the CloudEthernet Forum will increase demand for Carrier Ethernet services – aligning it closely with the MEF’s objectives and mission to accelerate the adoption of carrier-class Ethernet globally,” says Nan Chen, president of the MEF.

The founding members of the CloudEthernet Forum include: Alcatel-Lucent, Avaya, Equinix, HP, Juniper Networks, PCCW Global, Spirent Communications, Tata Communications and Verizon.

The CloudEthernet Forum is an MEF organisation but will operate independently. New members such as systems integrators, NEMs and service providers, including leading cloud providers, are encouraged to join.

For more information, and for the latest CloudEthernet Forum news and membership details, see www.CloudEthernet.org.