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## India

### **TRAI wants to restructure cable TV industry**

***The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has sent its final recommendations on restructuring of cable TV services to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting saying that, if acted upon by the Government, they would put India on the map of developed countries where the transmission of entertainment content is mostly digital.***

Detailed recommendations are available on TRAI's website [www.trai.gov.in](http://www.trai.gov.in). They follow a consultation process following publication of the TRAI's discussion paper "Restructuring of Cable TV Services" in March, 2008.

According to TRAI, the spectacular growth of the Indian cable TV industry during the past two decades has been largely due to the entrepreneurial skills of cable TV operators. "Cable TV penetration had risen to 78 million homes at the end of year 2007 and still has a lot of potential to grow. However, the present mode of cable TV transmission which is predominantly analogue, has certain limitations as it lacks scope for technological upgrading, appropriate addressability and efficient resource utilisation," TRAI says.

According to TRAI, the sector is marred with disputes relating to actual subscriber numbers, poor quality of service and inadequate consumer grievance handling mechanisms. "The non-availability of authenticated data, lack of supervisory guidance and unorganised development of the cable TV industry are some of the roadblocks to explore its full potential." TRAI has recommended "a well-defined, robust and supportive licensing framework to restructure the cable TV sector in order to boost planned, sustained growth and better services to customers."

It forecasts that recent technological developments are likely to trigger fierce competition in the TV broadcasting sector and expects conventional cable TV operators to face stiff competition from operators running TV networks based on advanced distribution technologies like direct to home (DTH), headend in the sky (HITS), IPTV etc.

According to TRAI, "With more and more convergence taking place especially between the broadcasting and telecommunication sectors, the conventional analogue cable TV networks will have to be upgraded for exploiting new avenues for delivering the converged services.

"This convergence and the advent of next generation networks will require high speed broadband access to subscribers. Cable operators can contribute a lot in this direction as it will help to increase broadband penetration drastically. This will definitely require upgrading of present cable TV networks to two-way digital cable networks. Such network upgrades require huge resources inflow which can be attracted only in a well organized sector with supportive regulatory framework."

### **Indian SMBs set to spend \$1.26b on Internet services**

***India's SMBs (those with up to 999 employees) are boosting investments on Internet-related products & services, and are on track to spend \$US1.26 billion this year, 35 percent more than last year, according to a recent study by New York-based Access Markets International.***

According to AMI, for businesses with 100 to 999 staff the Internet has become a way of life and has reached near-complete saturation. However, a significant growth opportunity exists within small businesses because only around 25 percent of them currently possess an Internet connection.

The number of Internet-enabled SMBs is anticipated to rise by more than four percentage points this year. For almost 28 percent of SMBs adding or enhancing e-commerce capabilities is a priority in the next 12 months." About 37 percent of respondents to the survey said they would like to opt for a total revamping of their Internet-access infrastructure, such as replacing or upgrading their Internet access routers.

"Web 2.0 is one of the revolutionary Internet-related technologies that have taken the world by storm," said **Kalyan Banga**, research analyst at AMI-Partners. "Indian SMBs have not been too far behind in following this global trend. Web 2.0 technologies – like social networking, blogs, podcasts, etc – are gradually being adopted by India SMBs for information dissemination, marketing and communication etc." Almost 10 percent of SMBs surveyed use social networking services. A further 33 percent are aware of this technology. Usage of blogs and podcasts for advertising and promotional activities is higher among MBs.

### **Mobile data spend in the Sub Continent: \$US8.3b by 2013**

***Juniper Research is forecasting Indian Sub Continent mobile data revenues to hit \$US8.3 billion by 2013, driven by music, games and browsing.***

Juniper says that, while ringtones are currently the most lucrative service across the region, games, mobile TV and full-track downloads will all constitute substantial revenue streams by the end of the forecast period, with mobile browsing revenues continuing to climb steadily.

According to the report's author, Dr Windsor Holden, "With the limited availability and relatively high cost of fixed broadband Internet across the sub continent, the mobile handset has become the de facto means of accessing Internet services. Regional operators were among the first to realise that low data pricing was central to encouraging service adoption, and it has paid dividends for them."

The report also notes that growth will be further bolstered as 3G networks are deployed, although these are now unlikely to be launched until 2009.

Other findings include:

- The Indian Sub Continent mobile user base is expected to rise from 431 million in 2008 to nearly 740 million in 2013;
- Blended ARPU levels are expected to decline steadily across the region, although the sharp fall in voice ARPU will be partially offset by the steady increase from data services;
- India will provide the largest share of cumulative regional revenues over the forecast period, followed by Pakistan.

### **IBM opens regional hub for Tivoli management**

***IBM has opened a service management centre of excellence in Pune that will act as the regional hub for IBM Tivoli service management software and strategy.***

According to IBM, the centre is the first of its kind and has been designed to develop a specialised focus and skills in high value areas such as telecom, security, automation and asset management.

It will be staffed by IBM service management experts from around the world and will provide infrastructure and resources for enablement and education; client engagement support to sales teams and business partners; and facilities for proof of concept, demos and workshops. It also will offer certification and joint education programs with local universities, access to industry models, best practices and proven methodologies based on IBM's worldwide service management experience.

"At India Software Lab, we encourage the blending of technology and domain expertise with industry relevance," said Ponani Gopalakrishnan, vice president, India Software Lab. "Our centres of excellence are designed with the objective of spurring innovation initiatives in partnership with clients and business partners. This IBM service management centre will bring together worldwide experts, product developers and business process consultants to promote service management excellence."

IBM says it chose Pune as the centre in order to "harness the local presence of deep technical skills and the ability to collaborate with several of the top engineering universities and institutes in the region based there."

## China

### **Thomson Reuters collaborates on patent research**

***Scientific, a business of Thomson Reuters, has struck up a partnership with the Intellectual Property Development Research Centre (IPDRC) to accelerate patent research and promote IP management competence in China.***

The IPDRC is a non-profit public enterprise owned by the State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO) of the People's Republic of China. The partnership is part of the national IP strategy initiative spearheaded by IPDRC and will enable IPDRC to leverage Scientific's IP management platform and patent search and analysis solutions for 20 patent research projects which will be undertaken by Chinese universities, public research institutes and corporations.

Dr David Liu, senior director and head of China Regional Business Unit for the Scientific, said: "China is a major economic powerhouse and as it continues to shift from manufacturing to a more knowledge-based economy, institutions and corporations are now appreciating the importance of protecting their patent assets in China as well as globally for competitive advantage.

"We recognise China's rapid growth in patent activity and were, in fact, the first patent information provider to offer weekly comprehensive coverage of all Chinese Utility Model Registrations in English through our Derwent World Patents Index database. We are pleased to support IPDRC's national efforts in driving the quality and development of patent research and promoting of best IP practices amongst academic and public institutions alike."

IPDRC will leverage several Scientific solutions to provide pertinent patent search and analysis information, as additional support, for the 20 patent research projects which it is currently funding. Such research projects often rely on large collections of pertinent patent documents and advanced analytical tools for gaining insights and reaching the right conclusions.

According to Scientific's latest "World IP Today Report in Global Patent Activity 2007," China has almost doubled its volume of patents from 2003 to 2007 and will become a strong rival to Japan and the United States in years to come. "Academia represents a key source of innovation in many countries and China has the largest proportion of academic innovation with Russia very occasionally beating it to the top spot." This, Scientific says, is strong evidence of the Chinese Government's drive to strengthen its academic institutions.

## **Guangxi Telecom to launch interactive advertising displays**

***China Telecom subsidiary, Guangxi Telecom, has chosen UTStarcom's RollingStream IPTV platform to deploy a new interactive advertising system.***

UTStarcom will provide Guangxi Telecom with 3,600 concurrent IPTV streams for the initial deployment of the interactive advertising system in 14 Guangxi cities. In the first phase, set-top boxes will be deployed in supermarkets, department stores, office buildings and in Guangxi Telecom's facilities in Nanning, Liuzhou, Guilin, Qinzhou, Guigang, Wuzhou, Beihai and Baise. Guangxi Telecom will be the first service provider in China to deploy IPTV for building-based video advertising.

## **Singapore**

### **SingTel's Mio TV to offer US TV shows**

***SingTel has signed a deal with Disney-ABC International Television, Twentieth Century Fox and Warner Bros International Television Distribution that will make it possible for its mio TV service to screen over 50 top US TV series as early as 24 hours after their US premiere.***

SingTel says that mio TV will be the first IPTV operator in the world to offer such a volume of top US series within a day of their US telecast on a subscription-based model, and this will provide the first exhibition of such licensed series in Singapore. The service, Season Pass, will launch this September and the availability of programming will follow the US TV calendar.

mio TV will offer the latest seasons of popular American TV series debuting in the US from September, such as Grey's Anatomy, Lost, Criminal Minds, Prison Break, Bones, 24, Ugly Betty, Without a Trace, Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles, Supernatural, Samantha Who? and many more. mio TV will immediately launch another new offering called Favourites-on-Demand that allows customers to watch ten popular TV series between now and 31 October.

### **Singapore SMBs to send \$US1.5 on Net & telco services in 2008**

***Businesses with up to 999 employees in Singapore are on track to invest up to \$US1.5 billion on Internet access and telecom services this year, up three percent over 2007. according to the latest study by New York-based Access Markets International (AMI).***

Spending on cellphones and long-distance telephony services will make up about 50 percent of the total. "We expect SMBs in Singapore to boost their spending on Internet access and telecom services in the years to come," says Vu-Thanh Nguyen, Singapore-based research analyst at AMI. "That's because of the growing number of mobile and telecommuting employees, the increasingly high penetration of notebooks among SMBs, the Singapore government's initiative to grow the wireless broadband market, and the growing popularity of Internet-enabled handheld devices."

About half of Singapore's small businesses (companies with up to 99 employees) and 68 percent of medium businesses have staffs that are increasingly mobile and need to travel on the job. "Mobile employees make up from 10 percent to 50 percent of their workforce depending on the vertical segment," said Vu-Thanh. "Currently, there is one laptop for every three desktop PCs in a typical Singapore SMB. More PC-owning SMBs are migrating from desktops to notebook PCs, however."

The top three reasons for SMBs opting for notebook computers are to save office space, to take advantage of their built-in WiFi capability in highly connected Singapore, and for ease of use, given that most employees are either telecommuting or on the move.

The Singapore government has also initiated an island-wide wireless broadband program called "Wireless@SG." This is program free of charge and is targeted towards people on the move, including tourists, business travellers, and enterprise users. This free service offers connectivity speeds of up to 512kbps. Many SMBs are opting to purchase premium broadband services though to allow themselves higher connectivity speed and quality of service.

"One key catalyst is the growing popularity of Internet-enabled handheld devices," says Nguyen. "With the introduction of smart phones at cheaper prices, there will be a higher adoption of these devices by SMBs. With the wireless infrastructure in place, this will encourage the usage of more bandwidth-intensive applications like VoIP and video conferencing. This wireless infrastructure will help SMBs reduce their spending on long-distance telephony services. At the same time, service providers will increase revenues through connection charges and new Web-based services such as enterprise email and CRM systems."

Several vendors have been working to take advantage of this trend. In June, Nokia announced its collaboration with the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) and wireless providers to try an enhanced version of Wireless@SG in an effort to improve usability, security, and WiFi usage among handheld-device users. SingTel announced its winning bid to be a provider of IDA's SME Infocomm Package initiative. This initiative will provide SMEs broadband access, email, web hosting, push-mail, and other Web-based business solutions in a single package.

## Hong Kong

### **PCCW to rollout Government WiFi network**

***Aruba Networks is supplying secure WiFi equipment to PCCW-HKT Network Services for use at roughly 2,000 new WiFi hot spots serving some 350 Hong Kong Government premises as part of the GovWiFi program.***

GovWiFi will provide the citizens of Hong Kong and foreign visitors with free high-speed WiFi Internet access at some 350 Hong Kong Government premises, including at least three public parks, for the next five years. When completed, the network will include thousands of Aruba access points as well as multiple multi-service mobility controllers located at redundant PCCW network operations centres. More than 30 government premises were commissioned in late March, with the remainder slated for installation before the middle of 2009.

"The scope and purpose of the network means it must be easy to manage and troubleshoot, offer robust security to protect privacy and data integrity, and run 24 x 7," said Larry Wong, PCCW's director of marketing and products, Commercial Group.

## Taiwan

### **Chunghwa Telecom upgrades net security offerings**

***Chunghwa Telecom has added Fortinet FortiGate multithreat security appliances to its HiNet managed security service offering.***

Security Fleet 2.0 integrates multiple security applications - including firewall, antivirus, intrusion prevention (IPS), virtual private network (VPN), Web filtering and anti-spam - on a single platform. "With the superior performance of the Fortinet FortiGate security appliances, we can provide our enterprise customers with broad protection, consolidated for ease of management and maintenance. Additionally, Fortinet's appliances support 3G/3.5G wireless network connections, which will enable more flexibility and scalability for enterprises," said Ban-He Liu, HiNet director of data communication business group, Chunghwa Telecom.

## Cambodia

### **VimpelCom enters Cambodian cellular market**

***Russian telco, VimpelCom has acquired a 90 percent stake in the Cambodian company Sotelco, which holds a GSM 900/1800 license for the whole of Cambodia.***

VimpelCom has bought 90 percent of Sotelco's parent company, Atlas Trade Limited, for \$US28 million from VimpelCom's largest shareholder Altimo. The remaining 10 percent of Atlas will stay with a local partner, a Cambodian entrepreneur. However VimpelCom has acquired a call option to purchase this 10 percent for its market value at the date of purchase.

Cambodia has a population of 14 million and a mobile penetration estimated at around 18 percent. VimpelCom CEO, Alexander Izosimov, said: "Cambodian market entry is an important part of VimpelCom's international expansion strategy particularly within a South-East Asian cluster of operations started by our entry to the Vietnamese mobile market. We foresee an impressive growth potential within the South-East Asian region and cluster synergies."

## Pakistan

### **Mobilink GSM deploys Tekelec gear to control spam**

***Pakistan mobile operator Mobilink GSM is to deploy Tekelec's TekMedia anti-spam firewall to gain better network control and enhance customer experience.***

Pakistan Mobile Communications, better known as Mobilink GSM, is the largest telecommunication service provider in Pakistan, with more than 31 million subscribers. With the TekMedia solution, Mobilink says it now has better control over spam impacting its network and is able to help protect its customers from unsolicited, unwanted SMS messages.

Said Yousaf Allah Dad, senior manager of engineering at Mobilink's core value added services group. "We've chosen Tekelec's SMS Firewall solution to help us fight the problem because it allows us to use rules-based filtering to stop the delivery of unwanted messages, and protects our network and customers from costly viruses, flooding and spoofing attacks."

According to Tekelec, TekMedia can be configured to detect different spoofing techniques and can adapt to new techniques. Spoofing brings the risk that soon SMS service will suffer as much from spam as e-mails do. "SMS spam is quickly becoming the next big problem for service providers. There has been rapid development of technology that allows relatively cheap ways to send SMS spam using the Internet," said Wolrad Claudy, Tekelec's senior vice president of global sales. "We've worked directly with Mobilink to deploy an anti-spam solution that will not only meet their demands for more efficient network operations, but also provide a better experience for their customers."

Mobilink has been a Tekelec customer since 2004, when it first deployed the Eagle 5 integrated signalling solution, performance management, number portability, equipment identity register (EIR) and Map Screening solutions. To monitor network activity, Mobilink also chose Tekelec's IAS monitoring solution.

## Technology

### **Nokia Siemens bets on future fibre access, shuns GPON**

***Nokia Siemens Networks is to cut back on R&D into gigabit passive optical networks (GPON) and will instead boost R&D on future optical access technologies.***

Christoph Caselitz, Nokia Siemens Networks' (NSN) chief market operations officer, explained the move by saying: "Fibre is progressing closer to the home with the focus today on fibre-to-the-curb or building with last mile connectivity based on proven DSL technology. Our view is that mass market roll out of fibre-to-the-home is unlikely in the short term due to regulatory uncertainty and the operator's business cases. This will be different with the NGOA [next generation optical access] technology, where we will target to take a leading role."

NSN is expecting delays in GPON deployments due to three factors: operators balking at the cost of fibre rollouts; questions regarding just how much more bandwidth GPON will provide versus substantially cheaper and technically more mature DSL-based FTTx architectures; and lack of regulatory clarity, particularly regarding local loop unbundling regulations in Europe, which adds to operators' FTTx investment risks. It expects this situation to persist until at least 2011 at which point NGOA technologies based on different network architectures will support more financially viable FTTH networks.

It expects a market to develop for NGOA technologies as the result of "An enormous hunger for bandwidth [which] is driving the fixed broadband access networks and will lead into a hundred-fold traffic growth until 2015," and says that "this development and the operators' need for revenue growth are driving Nokia Siemens Networks' investment in fibre-based NGOA technologies."

In the near term, Nokia Siemens Networks plans "continue its fixed access investment in DSL by introducing new products addressing the increasing deployment of fibre to the curb/building."

#### **Ovum brand NSN strategy "risky"**

Ovum analysts Lynn Hutcheson and Dana Cooperson spoke to NSN about its decision and reported that "According to NSN, the problem isn't with GPON *per se*, but rather with the FTTH business case. To make FTTH financially attractive to more operators, vendors would have to price equipment at unprofitable levels. Without volume, vendors can't ride the cost curve down, but without lower prices, many operators won't buy, thus volumes won't grow, creating a vicious circle."

However, they were not overly impressed with NSN's decision saying: "We think NSN's FTTH strategy is risky. NSN's GPON pessimism is unwarranted given competitive pressures pushing operators to extend fibre to the premise to support higher-bandwidth services. Second, catching the next FTTH wave is unlikely to be as easy as NSN hopes. Even if deployments are delayed from our (more conservative than some) projections, GPON vendors will have an advantage in future FTTH deployments: competitive advantage will accrue from crucial matters of field experience, including techniques for decreasing installation and maintenance costs."

According to Ovum, "Commercial GPON deployments date back only about two years. Through 2007, our research tallies about 27.8 million FTTx subscribers globally, including a small fraction of GPON subscribers, compared with nearly 323.3 million DSL subscribers. Our GPON forecast calls for its growth to far outpace that of other PON technologies and account for the majority of revenues in 2008-12."

## **Rival camps form to link mobile devices with broadband**

***Following the formation last week of the TransferJet consortium to develop ultra-wideband radio technologies that will enable high speed data transfer between mobile devices, the WiMedia Alliance, an established global body dedicated to developing similar technologies, has struck up a relationship with long established ICT standards body Ecma International.***

The WiMedia Alliance was formed to promote ultra-wideband (UWB) technologies. WiMedia UWB provides for communications at 480Mbps and beyond for the PC, CE, mobile and automotive market segments. It forms the basis for the industry's first UWB standards which have been published by Ecma International. WiMedia board members include Alereon, CSR, Intel, Nokia, NXP Semiconductors, Samsung Electronics, Staccato Communications, Stonestreet One, and Wisair.

Ecma, formed in 1961 is a non-profit industry association of technology developers, vendors and users. Experts from industry and other organisations work together at Ecma to develop standards which Ecma submits for approval as ISO, IEC, ISO/IEC JTC 1 and ETS. It claims to be a frequent practitioner of "fast-tracking" of specifications in international standards organisations.

Their agreement between the WiMedia Alliance and Ecma International provides for the joint development of specific standards by WiMedia engineers and Ecma member companies. When the work on a standard is completed, it will then be sent through WiMedia's approval process resulting in WiMedia members' intellectual property being bound to the work. Ecma will submit completed standards through its approval process which will likewise bind Ecma members' intellectual property.

The two claim that "The structure of this relationship between an internationally recognised standards development organisation and an industry special interest group is unique in that it allows standards development work to be done with significantly increased speed and efficiency."

Meanwhile, Sony has just announced formation of a consortium of 12 Japanese technology companies to develop an ultra short range, high bandwidth wireless technology that will enable large files to be transferred between portable devices such as cellphones and digital cameras, just by bringing them close together (ExA 16/27, p8).

The 'TransferJet' system was announced by Sony earlier this year. It will use UWB techniques around the 4.8GHz frequency to achieve throughput without causing interference to other systems, but will have an effective range of only about 3cms. The founding members of the consortium are Sony, Canon, Eastman Kodak, Hitachi, Victor Company (JVC), KDDI, Kenwood, Matsushita Electric (Panasonic), Nikon, Olympus, Pioneer, Samsung Electronics, Seiko Epson, Sony Ericsson and Toshiba.

Stephen Wood, president of the WiMedia Alliance, said: "We chose to work with Ecma to develop this new structure because they had a firm understanding of the issues which cause standards to be delayed unnecessarily and had already addressed the overwhelming majority of these. Ecma's willingness to consider non-traditional strategies to standards development gave us the necessary flexibility to do something new."

According to Ecma deputy secretary general, Onno Elzinga, "WiMedia adds significant value both prior to and following actual standardisation...in research and certification respectively, thus complementing Ecma International's tried and true standardisation process. Ecma has established rules that favour consensus while balancing the interests of all stakeholders small and large. Additionally, the structure of this relationship provides access for WiMedia members to other standards which Ecma has expertise in developing without the need to replicate that body of work."

## **Sprint pulls out as global carrier group backs LTE**

***Sprint has withdrawn from the Next Generation Mobile Networks (NGMN) Alliance, a group of global mobile operators that it co-founded in 2006 to push for a common vision for networks and technologies beyond 3G.***

Sprint spokesman John Polivka has been reported saying that the NGMN was supposed to endorse the co-existence of various technologies without favouring one over another, but had shifted from its original technology-neutral stance. "We respectfully withdrew our membership from the organisation due to the change in direction," he said. "We are enthusiastically continuing with our plans to work with our burgeoning ecosystem and launch a WiMAX network in select US cities beginning in the third quarter with expansion throughout 2009 and beyond."

Founding members of the NGMN Alliance in mid 2006 were KPN Mobile, Orange, Sprint Nextel, T-Mobile and Vodafone. It now boasts 18 operator members, the majority of them operators of WCDMA networks whose 4G path is LTE. And the organisation last month announced an alliance with UMTS Forum (see below)

However the writing was on the wall much earlier. Announcing the formation of the NGMN in mid 2006, *Light Reading* quoted Steve Falk, VP for global standards at Sprint Nextel, saying that, in selecting WiMax, Sprint used the guidelines and principles' laid out in the NGMN's white paper, *Next Generation Mobile Networks Beyond HSPA & EVDO version 2.1*, which the organisation is distributing on a request basis."

### **Alignment with LTE foreshadowed in 2006**

However the latest version of that white paper, 3.0 dated 5 December 2006, states a clear preference for LTE: "NGMN has accepted, as a working assumption, that the 3GPP LTE project will be one of the most likely vehicles for the delivery of the NGMN radio design...Similarly, 3GPP SAE is a prime candidate for the delivery of the NGMN system architecture." but does add the caveat that "this is conditional upon LTE meeting NGMN radio requirements as stated elsewhere in this document [and SAE] must meet the NGMN architecture requirements stated elsewhere in this document."

It suggested that NGMN members were working to move 3GPP towards their requirements: "Accordingly NGMN members continually work so as to increase the alignment of 3GPP specifications to NGMN requirements by working within the 3GPP-RAN, SA and CT committees."

### **NGMN teams up with UMTS Forum...**

On 27 June the NGMN Alliance announced a cooperation agreement with the UMTS Forum "to support successful development and commercialisation of next-generation mobile broadband systems beyond 3G/HSPA." The two organisations said they would "work to facilitate the timely development of next-generation mobile broadband systems while avoiding duplication of work."

This will include defining market requirements; assessing spectrum requirements; optimised backhaul solutions; and the development of recommendations to mobile operators, equipment developers, standardisation bodies and national administrations. Peter Meissner, operating officer of the NGMN Alliance, said: "Fulfilling NGMN requirements will provide a step change in existing mobile broadband experience and will enable and accelerate mass market access to new products and services. Based on intensive and detailed technology evaluations, 3GPP LTE/SAE is the first technology which broadly meets its recommendations and is approved by [the NGMN Alliance] board".

The UMTS Forum was founded in 1996 and brings together players from across the mobile industry on a peer-to-peer basis to "promote a common vision of 3G/UMTS and its evolution, as well as its worldwide commercial success."

### **...And with Wireless World Research Forum**

A week later the NGMN Alliance announced plans to work with the Wireless World Research Forum (WWRF) "to enhance the cooperation between commercial development and ongoing research activities [and] ensure that the dialogue between all stakeholders including research in the area of future mobile and wireless communication systems will be maintained and intensified."

The WWRF is a non-profit association, founded in August 2001 under Swiss law. It now has over 130 members from five continents, representing all sectors of the mobile communications industry and the research community. Its aim is "to formulate visions on strategic future research directions in the wireless field, among industry and academia, and to generate, identify, and promote research areas and technical trends for mobile and wireless system technologies." It is developing "a common global vision for the future of wireless to drive research and standardisation."

### **One small step towards all IP mobile networks**

***The GSM Association (GSMA) - the global trade association representing more than 750 GSM mobile phone operators has announced successful transfer, in laboratory conditions of voice calls between different mobile core networks using the SIP-I protocol.***

It says the trial represents an important step towards evolving mobile networks to operate with packet voice. The network equipment was supplied by Ericsson and Nokia Siemens Networks and the trial hosted by TeliaSonera in its Finnish and Swedish laboratories. The GSMA says it plans to conduct further trials to advance the level of interoperability of SIP-I.

The SIP-I trials form part of the GSMA's IPX initiative to develop a private global IP backbone designed specifically to provide guaranteed levels of quality of service and security to customers of mobile operators and other service providers. The GSMA recommends that mobile operators adopt SIP-I (widely used by fixed network operators and transit networks) to control the transmission of packet-based voice between mobile networks. "Using SIP-I will typically involve less transcoding and provide a higher-quality of service than other protocols, while making it easier for mobile operators to achieve end-to-end call control and upgrade their networks in future," it says.

According to Martin Wiktorin, director mobile switching at Ericsson, "The international interconnect using SIP-I/IP technology will save up to 70 percent of the bandwidth and reduce transcoding, reducing cost and increasing speech quality. Ericsson supports this evolution in 3GPP and the GSMA's work to extend the benefits of mobile softswitch into international IP interconnect."

Alex Sinclair, CTO of the GSMA, said: "SIP-I is the protocol of choice for mobile and fixed operators alike and is an important element of the GSMA's strategy to help mobile operators migrate their networks to IP. With the help of Ericsson, Nokia Siemens Networks and TeliaSonera, we have demonstrated that SIP-I can work well across networks supplied by different vendors."

### **ITU's Asian Telecom event to include Thai ICT show**

***ITU Telecom Asia 2008, the ITU's regional ICT showcase, will be held in Bangkok from 2 to 5 September with the theme "New Generation, New Values".***

It is the first such event to be hosted by Thailand and coincides with the Bangkok International ICT Expo that has been organised for the last four years by Thailand's Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT). As a result, the entire central hall of the Telecom Asia venue will be dedicated to showcasing the ICT industry in Thailand.

The accompanying four day ITU Forum conference will have three tracks: Meeting the Needs of Society; The Connected Generation; and New Business Generations: New Value.

The previous The ITU Telecom Asia in 2004 event brought together 224 exhibitors from 24 countries, and attracted more than 24,000 participants from 83 countries.

### **GSA survey reveals growth of HSPA networks**

***According to the Global Mobile Suppliers Association (GSA) there are now more than 200 HSPA commercial services in operation in 89 countries, up from 126 in 63 countries a year ago.***

A further 35 in 10 additional countries are in various stages of deployment. The majority operate in the IMT-2000 core band (2100MHz) band although HSPA is also operating at 850, 900, 1700, 1800, and 1900MHz. According to GSA, "There is considerable momentum for WCDMA-HSPA deployments in... 850MHz and 900MHz to leverage coverage improvements, performance and cost efficiencies.

GSA also reports that 135 commercial HSPA operators, 65 percent of the total, support downlink data speeds of 3.6Mbps peak or higher, and 55 have launched with the capability to support 7.2Mbps peak or even higher, and further uplink speed improvements will soon be commercial reality with Evolved HSPA (HSPA+). 51 operators in 35 countries have now launched HSUPA services, with an additional 17 HSUPA networks in deployment. Today these support 2Mbps peak uplink speeds, but GSA says some networks are now introducing 5.76Mbps peak capability.

### **Cisco studies global securities trading technologies**

***Cisco's Internet Business Solutions Group (IBSG) has conducted what it claims to be the first survey that examines and ranks key factors impacting the way trillions of dollars in cash and securities are traded on global exchanges.***

It says that "A confluence of factors is reshaping the global securities industry and the traditional exchange trading business," and that in order for exchanges to meet rising user expectations, develop new revenue streams and remain competitive, they must seek a deeper understanding of these factors and exercise influence when appropriate.

Cisco claims that "through interviews with dozens of senior buy-side, sell-side and exchange executives, Cisco IBSG identified more than 50 capabilities against which to measure an exchange's performance," and found that exchanges do not currently influence many of these capabilities. It lists the top 10 capabilities in order of importance as being: liquidity, transaction costs, processing capacity, availability, low latency, resilience, volume, legal and regulatory regime, anonymous trading, indices. The full report is available at [www.cisco.com/go/ibsg/financialservices](http://www.cisco.com/go/ibsg/financialservices).