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Symbian Foundation signs up new members

India

Tata Comms launches global content network with BitGravity

Tata Communications has launched a global content deliver network powered by BitGravity, in which it has invested \$US11.5m.

Tata Communications claims that, with more than 300 points of presence worldwide, it now offers "the first truly global CDN service on a state of the art, single ASN global IP network throughout Europe, Asia, North America and India."

Tata Communications, which announced a strategic partnership with BitGravity in March 2008, has invested \$US11.5 million in convertible debt in BitGravity. In turn, BitGravity has named Tata Communications' chief technology officer, John Hayduk to its board of directors.

"The launch of Tata Communications' CDN service is a major milestone in our strategic roadmap to offer unparalleled managed services globally," said Vinod Kumar, chief operating officer, Tata Communications. "We chose to work with BitGravity because it has the best architecture and technology to deliver high quality content and video."

The new service is claimed to deliver the highest performance and reliability in the industry while providing immediate access to content, including high-definition video, without delay or jitter, and the highest levels of throughput for end users. "Fast forwarding, cache clearing, resolution switching and rate throttling are just a few of the features that enable customers to build a robust and engaging application into a Flash player," according to Tata Comms.

Tata Communications' suite of offerings includes: Tata Communications CDN, designed for a wide range of applications; Tata Communications CDN Plus and CDN Secure for the distribution and protection of media assets; and Tata Communications LiveBroadcast, a flash-based streaming service for broadcasters of live events.

"Video will soon become over 80 percent of the traffic on the Internet and content delivery will become strategic for every carrier," said Berge Avayzian, chief strategy officer of Yankee Group. "Carriers without a CDN strategy will inevitably become insignificant and will lose the economy of scale required to be competitive. This is a strategic endeavour for both Tata Communications and BitGravity and sends a bold message to the global CDN market."

Transaction Network Services expands into India

Transaction Network Services (TNS) has extended its presence in Asia with a connection to India-based Kotak Securities, the stock broking and distribution arm of the Kotak Mahindra Group.

Kotak Securities has added FIX trading connectivity, via TNS' global IP network to its range of services. "Using the TNS Extranet will enable Kotak Securities to switch from traditional phone based trading to an electronic fully-managed format, with access to one of the world's largest financial communities of interest," TNS claims.

Kotak Securities is a corporate member of both The Bombay Stock Exchange and The National Stock Exchange of India. Its operations include stock broking and distribution of various financial products - including private and secondary placement of debt and equity and mutual funds. It is one of the largest broking houses in India with substantial geographical reach to Asia Pacific, Europe, Middle East and America.

The Group has a network of more than 1,250 branches, franchisees representative offices, and satellite offices across 344 cities in India and offices in New York, London, Dubai, Mauritius and Singapore.

Alex Walker, senior vice president and general manager at TNS' Financial Services Division, said: "Today's announcement is a reflection of the rapid growth sweeping across the Asia marketplace, which is increasing demand in the region for TNS' fast, secure and robust data communication."

TNS says that, with over 120 points-of-presence, it provides services to customers in 28 countries across America, Europe and Asia-Pacific, with its reach extending to many more. "Financial institutions using TNS' network can access a variety of mission critical trade-related messages, data and applications, which support order routing, trade executions, direct market access and algorithmic trading."

China

Email archiving specialist Mimosa enters China

Content archiving service provider, Mimosa Systems, has entered the Chinese market through a distribution deal with Shenzhen Federal Software.

Shenzhen Federal is a major distributor of Microsoft products, network appliances, software, and storage solutions. It will sell and support the Chinese version of Mimosa NearPoint, which, according to Mimosa "is transforming the email archiving market worldwide."

According to Mimosa, China's Basic Standard for Enterprise Internal Control will place requirements on business similar the US Sarbanes-Oxley Act, bringing stronger corporate governance to China's listed companies. The Basic Standard is in public comment stage until September 30, 2008. It will then undergo revisions and will become effective on July 1, 2009.

"The proposed regulations require new controls for publicly listed companies that can be managed with the Mimosa next-generation archiving solution for retention, discovery, regulatory compliance, content monitoring and data protection in a single, unified solution," Mimosa says.

The Mimosa NearPoint platform is claimed to enable companies to adopt best-in-class applications for content archiving, eDiscovery, retention management, regulatory compliance, content monitoring, data protection, disaster recovery and storage optimisation in a unified solution. "Mimosa NearPoint gives enterprises a cost-effective and robust offering to perform intuitive searches, implement retention policies and provide data protection and business continuity to minimize risk across email, files and backup tapes."

Mimosa claims more than 550 customers in healthcare, government, financial services, energy and other verticals have standardised on NearPoint for information archiving, eDiscovery, regulatory compliance, continuous data protection and disaster recovery. The company is only five years old. It is based in Santa Clara, California with offices in Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, China, Australia, and India.

According to IDC, the worldwide email archiving applications market grew 48 percent in 2007 over the last year driven by the need for email archiving to satisfy compliance, legal discovery and storage optimisation requirements. Archiving applications are a critical foundation of the legal discovery infrastructure platform market which IDC expects to approach more than \$22 billion in 2012.

China -Tianjin high speed rail link opens, with GSM-R

China has opened its fastest railway line – the 350km per hour link between Beijing and Tianjin.

According to Nokia Siemens Networks, its GSM-R railway cellular communications system integrated with other key communications subsystems enables high speed, safe travel and higher density of traffic between the two cities. GSM-R is a railways

communication solution which replaces traditional communications methods with an integrated system that carries train dispatching and train control information.

The new link reduces travel time between Beijing and Tianjin to 30 minutes and was inaugurated just before the Olympics to cater to the high traffic during this period. The development project was completed in two years, despite significant challenges including weather conditions such as wind, erosion, freezing rain, sleet, snow and thunder storms, all of which had to be taken into account in the process and reflected in the project scope and system design.

Under a turnkey contract, Nokia Siemens Networks undertook the design and engineering of the key communications subsystems, equipment supply, system integration, installation and tuning, testing, acceptance and technical services. Nokia Siemens Networks was also involved in building a unified interface management mechanism and platform and in developing standard design documents and a deployment schedule.

"By using one standard communication system, the GSM-R technology makes it possible not only for trains to travel much faster but also increases safety as operators will now only need to be familiar with one emergency and operational system. GSM-R is without a doubt the technology of the future," said Zhang Zhiqiang, head of Nokia Siemens Networks Greater China Region.

Nokia Siemens Networks is one of the inventors of the GSM-R technology, with Siemens researching and creating the GSM-R standard in the early 1990s. The world's earliest three GSM-R trial networks and the first commercial network have been supplied by Nokia Siemens Networks. The company says it has deployed GSM-R networks in 15 countries serving some 50,000 km of railways, making it the world's number one GSM-R vendor in both the number of commercial networks and the length of operated GSM-R lines.

Wi-Fi TV targets China

Wi-Fi TV is forming a subsidiary to further develop and deploy its social Internet TV plan for China.

A new personal Internet TV feature is being developed for joint introduction in China and the United States. Wi-Fi TV says it will provide further details of its partners for the introduction of online videos into China. "Wi-Fi TV is working with recognised industry leaders in all aspects of its rollout to China. Based on the relationships Wi-Fi TV has developed in China, Wi-Fi TV believes it will be able to potentially reach millions of Chinese Internet users once its Chinese site has been developed," the company said.

Wi-Fi TV provides Social Internet TV, billed as a new generation TV delivery platform that has a geographic sphere out-distancing any traditional cable or over-the-air TV broadcaster. It claims that Wi-Fi TV web site (www.Wi-FiTV.com) is "the only place on the Internet where you can watch hundreds of TV stations and chat with others watching the same program in a live chat box directly under the viewing screen, and get breaking news for each country and category listed."

Wi-Fi TV now features over 500 live TV stations with live chat on topics such as music, news, politics, religion, cars, environment, weather, sports, wildlife, children's shows, and more. It claims that a growing number of these stations are Wi-Fi TV global exclusive stations such as www.AllGolfTV.com, www.WineNationTV.com and www.Wi-FiCars.com.

Any business can now purchase its own Wi-Fi TV station, and have complete automated control over 24/7 continuous playing content, live content (which can be delivered from any laptop computer with a webcam and Internet connection), on-demand content, banner ads, links, news, logos and more. "Your URL of choice takes

viewers to a page with only your station. Wi-Fi TV complete station packages start at only \$US2,000 and can be purchased with a credit card through PayPal or by check or wire transfer," the company says.

The subsidiary will initially be formed in the United States and will be affiliated with either an existing or newly formed company incorporated in China and co-owned by China based partners.

The US subsidiary, Wi-FiChina.cn, will be majority owned by Wi-Fi TV Inc. Its purposes will include oversight of:

- Development of a China specific web site in Chinese with certain features added and deleted to the Wi-Fi TV delivery platform;
- Legal and accounting compliance for China based operations, and plan for meeting Chinese regulatory requirements;
- Working with a two-step plan of first deploying servers in Los Angeles, California and later deploying servers in China;
- Wi-Fi TV licensing and advertising arrangements;
- China based marketing and public relations.

Hong Kong

Rackspace Hosting opens Asia HQ & data centre

Rackspace Hosting has opened its Asian headquarters and data centre in Hong Kong.

It joins Rackspace's existing data centre operations in San Antonio, Dallas, northern Virginia and London. Over the past five years, Rackspace has grown net revenues more than 50 percent per year to \$US362 million in 2007 and serves more than 31,000 businesses located in more than 100 countries.

Rackspace says it selected Hong Kong due to its reputation within the global business economy, its world-class IT infrastructure, multiple telecommunication providers and rich talent pool. Rackspace also solicited feedback from its current customer base in the Asia Pacific region and the majority of those respondents confirmed their preference for Hong Kong. "Rackspace already has more than 500 customers based in Asia Pacific and the establishment of the data centre in Hong Kong is an important step in strengthening the Company's presence to build on its hosting service offerings." the company said.

The data centre, located in the Fo Tan district, will represent an investment of at least \$US20 million when complete, inclusive of data centre lease obligations and infrastructure, equipment and personnel expenses, according to Rackspace. It will initially have an area of approximately 950 square metres, gross and will be expandable to about 1,800 square metres.

It will offer the full range of Rackspace services: managed hosting, cloud hosting, virtualisation, security and email, storage and backup and professional services. Sales and support will be handled on a global basis with teams located in Hong Kong, the US and UK.

Rackspace is partnering with Dell Hong Kong. Steve Lam, managing director, Dell Hong Kong, said: "We have been in close discussions with Rackspace, both in the US and here in Hong Kong, to discover all the intricacies of helping set up their first data centre in Asia. These discussion entailed near-term and long-term business and technical goals, the right infrastructure and professional support, right up to location requirements. We are proud that our infrastructure consulting services, servers and storage solutions fit perfectly well to the high expectations of Rackspace and its customers. This is as much a milestone for Dell as it is for Rackspace's expansion into Asia.

Singapore

DVB-H trial goes live with Gemalto SIMs

What is claimed to be the world's first Open Mobile Alliance (OMA) smart card profile-compliant mobile TV consumer trial will be launched in Singapore.

It will use Gemalto's UpTeq mobile TV subscriber identity module and viewership measurement service. "Working in conjunction with an advanced live measurement platform, the UpTeq high-end SIM will study usage patterns, making it the ideal mobile content customer relationship management tool," according to Gemalto.

The trial is backed by MediaCorp, StarHub and SingTel for content provision; Singapore's three main operators MobileOne, SingTel and StarHub for the content delivery; Alcatel-Lucent for the digital video broadcasting – handheld (DVB-H) platform and Samsung for the mobile TV handsets.

The Open Mobile Alliance (OMA) mobile broadcast services enabler suite (BCAST) is a globally recognised standard for mobile TV that specifies a variety of features amongst which is the use of a smart card for content protection. According to Gemalto, "The smart card has always enjoyed recognition as the platform of choice for portable secure devices. The UpTeq mobile TV SIM provides the end-to-end security needed for mobile digital television and is a simple, well-understood means for operators to market their services in any combination of post-paid, pre-paid or pay-per-use model."

Gemalto claims that, "Of particular interest to operators and content providers is the unique ability for the UpTeq SIM to analyse viewer usage patterns such as most viewed channel, duration spent viewing a channel and other channel switching patterns. The viewership measurement system records, organises and presents this data for further analysis. This gives service operators a critical tool to observe and anticipate growth trends, and to identify problem areas that are difficult to spot."

Lee Kok Chew, director of business development and strategic planning, MobileOne, said: "The mobile TV trial will be extremely useful in helping us gain a better understanding of our customers' viewing habits and preferences and the types of content they want. The SIM technology provided by Gemalto is a key enabler for the trial and will be crucial to our ability to meet the trial's major objectives."

ViVOTech powers SingTel's NFC cellphone payments trial

Silicon Valley-based near field communications (NFC) specialist, ViVOTech's NFC mobile payment wallet, over-the-air payment, coupon delivery and redemption technologies are being used jointly by NETS, SingTel and United Overseas Bank for a NFC mobile phone payment trial in Singapore.

According to ViVOTech, it is the first in which users simply open a coupon on their NFC-enabled phones and flash it to a NETS FlashPay reader for automatic redemption. The trial also introduced the first stored value purse in Asia on NFC mobile phones and over-the-air (OTA) servers to enable downloading and top-up of stored value accounts on the NFC phones.

In the pilot program, SingTel users can download a SingTel wallet application that will allow them to store and top up value on the mNETS payment application in their phones at any time. Users are then able to make payments using NETS FlashPay by merely flashing their SingTel mobile phones at more than 500 participating merchants island-wide, each one equipped with ViVOPay 5000 NETS FlashPay contactless terminals. Topping up of the mNETS card is performed over the air anytime and anywhere from the phone after registration of a SingTel-UOB credit card.

The SingTel wallet is also equipped with an electronic coupon application that provides SingTel customers with discounts and other incentives and freebies. A simple flash of NFC-powered mobile phone on mNETS posters or at other smart billboards will initiate an OTA download of the mNETS coupon that is affiliated with the promotion. Again, users simply flash the coupon on NETS FlashPay readers for the coupon to be automatically redeemed.

ViVOtech claims to have enabled more than 25 NFC phone trials globally and to have shipped over 450,000 contactless terminals to more than 30 countries worldwide.

Powerlan expands IMX operation into Asia-Pacific

Australian company Powerlan has announced the expansion of its IMX subsidiary into Asia-Pacific with the opening of an office in Singapore.

It will be headed by Michael Low as sales director. The company says it has exploited its existing regional group infrastructure to enable IMX Software "the global leader in banknote trading and travel money technology solutions" to expand into the Asia-Pacific market at levels of investment which represent significant competitive advantage.

Low joins IMX from aurionPro Solutions where he was instrumental in building its business in South East Asia. He has over ten years of regional business-to-business sales and marketing experience and "has repeatedly led the sales of corporate treasury, loans and cash management systems in the Asia Pacific region," according to Powerlan.

Jon Newbery, CEO of Powerlan, said "We have developed strong relationships over many years with leading banks and travel money organisations in Europe and Australasia and we are now looking to build on that success in the Asia-Pacific region.

"By investing in a regional presence alongside other Powerlan group operations we can better support the larger players as they automate their wholesale currency trading and retail foreign exchange operations in pursuit of competitive advantage and improved profitability."

IMX specialises in developing software solutions for three market segments: wholesale currency and banknote trading; currency distribution and fulfilment; and retail foreign exchange and travel money products for business-to-business and business-to-consumer channels.

New Zealand

Commerce Commission issues draft sub-loop determination

New Zealand's Commerce Commission has issued a draft determination setting out the standard price and non-price terms for sub-loop services on Telecom NZ's network.

Sub-loop services will allow other telecommunications providers to locate equipment in Telecom's distribution cabinets, use Telecom's copper network to deliver services to their own customers, and to access fibre transmission capacity from Telecom's distribution cabinets back to local exchange buildings.

The Commission says its determination amounts to a complete commercial agreement, which will allow competitors to take the services from Telecom without the need for any separate agreements. "This draft determination is the last in the current series of determinations to improve competition in broadband telecommunications markets," said telecommunications commissioner Dr Ross Patterson.

"Sub-loop unbundling will allow Telecom's competitors to offer high-speed cabinet-based services by taking advantage of the shorter copper loops that result from the cabinetisation process. This will help facilitate the deployment of broadband technologies which are capable of delivering speeds in excess of 20Mbps."

To address capacity constraints associated with distribution cabinets, the Commission's preliminary approach has been to develop a comprehensive set of space allocation rules to ensure that parties are allocated space in an equitable manner. These rules are designed to prevent lack of cabinet space becoming a major barrier to competition in the telecommunications industry.

The Commission's preliminary view is that monthly rental charges for access to the unbundled sub-loop service should be set at \$NZ11.99 per line for urban areas and \$NZ22.14 per line for non-urban areas. The monthly rental for the sub-loop backhaul service is \$NZ281, where dual-fibre transmission capacity is used, or \$NZ142 for single fibre transmission capacity. The monthly rental charge for co-location of equipment in a distribution cabinet is calculated on a case by case basis depending on the space occupied in the relevant distribution cabinet.

The industry has been asked to provide more information on a number of issues by 15 October 2008 and there will be a period of further consultation and a conference in early December. The final determination is expected to be issued in January 2009.

Telecom NZ and Veraz trial IP based network interconnects

Telecom New Zealand International (TNZI) and Veraz Networks have completed a multi-operator global trial of the GSM Association (GSMA) IP eXchange (IPX) framework for IP-based network interconnect services.

IPX is a global private IP network, supporting end-to-end quality of service, and the principal of cascading interconnect payments for next generation GSM and CDMA mobile operators, fixed line service providers and application service providers. TNZI's IPX trial network involved four other carriers, including Telekom Austria and MTT, connected to TNZI as IPX provider-service provider pairs.

According to Veraz, "The testing demonstrated the ability of the IPX architecture to provide a secure IP-based platform for interconnecting mobile and fixed operators. In addition to VoIP peering, the trial also demonstrated value-added services including transcoding, security features provided by Veraz's network-adaptive border controller as well as VoIP to PSTN interworking that IPX providers can use to differentiate their offering."

Pan Asia

Google backed satellites promises broadband from the skies

O3b Networks - backed by Google, Liberty Global and HSBC - plans to launch a multi-satellite network that wil deliver "fibre performance over satellite at prices comparable to fibre."

The claim it wil enable ISPs and telcos in developing nations to deliver "cost-effective voice and broadband services at speeds equivalent to those enjoyed in the developed world."

O3b Networks' target markets is countries where the deployment of high-capacity fibre backhaul is restricted by geographic, economic or political barriers. It claims that operational and technical development is well underway and that production of the initial constellation of 16 satellites has begun with service activation scheduled for late 2010. "The system's 2,300 transponder equivalents will deliver low-latency Internet backhaul at speeds reaching 10Gbps."

The satellites are being built by French company Thales Alenia Space. They will be low orbit satellites with a round trip transmission delay of 0.1 seconds, compared to almost 0.5 seconds for geostationary satellites. Each satellite will have a capacity of 10Gbps. They will be in equatorial orbit at a height of 8.063kms which means each will take 288 minutes to orbit the earth enabling continuous coverage to be provided from only six satellites. Eight satellites will be launched initially and sixteen more in the 18 months following the initial launch.

O3b promises a total system capacity of over 160Gbps. However because the satellites are low earth orbit, all communications from a particular region will have to go through whichever satellites are in view at any given time and will have to be switched to other satellite or satellites as each one disappears over the horizon. So far O3b has given no indication of how it will manage this handover seamlessly, or how it will manage local congestion on a particular satellite.

Also the satellites will operate in the Ka band, which is subject to rain attenuation that could result in loss of service during monsoons or other heavy rainfall periods.

Coverage will be available only between latitudes of 45 degrees North and South. This would give coverage of all the major land masses in the Southern Hemisphere except Antarctica and the Southern tip of New Zealand and in the Northern Hemisphere, almost the whole of China, the USA and Southern Europe.

O3b has however given some detail of the services it will offer. For satellite service providers, system integrators, large operators, governments, and vertical markets O3b will provide whole or partial transponder space. Each transponder carries up to 216MHz in both directions allowing for over 600Mbps of IP trunking.

In addition O3b will offer on demand access for disaster communications and in the event of fibre failures, claiming a high capacity link can be set up in only 10 minutes. "With wholesale transponder space we can interconnect any two points you require at high speed. Because the system is a pure bent pipe, it can transmit virtually any protocol, with any encryption with very secure links between two locations," it says.

The satellites will have 'steerable' spot beams, and customers will be able to position beams at short notice prior to an event and backhaul special event traffic. However, again, because the satellites are in low earth orbit each beam will have to be continually steered to keep it on location as the satellite moves and delivered from different satellites as each moves over the horizon.

For telcos O3b promises that "With the O3b system you will be able to offer almost any high-capacity Internet solution to your customers on a truly global scale. The average available speed to the Internet will be multiplied by factors of 5 to 10. The cost of the satellite bandwidth will be decreased by factors of 5 to 10. The quality of the connection will tremendously improve as the latency will decrease by a factor of 5." It does not say what these comparisons are with, presumably current satellite offerings.

O3b Networks' founders are high-technology entrepreneur Greg Wyle and chairman John W Dick, who recently helped pioneer the first commercial 3G mobile and fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) networks in Africa. Its headquarters are in St John, Jersey, in the UK's Channel Islands. Ground systems and technical development are managed through its wholly-owned subsidiary in Englewood, Colorado.

In filings with the SEC, Liberty Global has given some details of its investment in the company. In January 2008, Liberty paid \$US5.2 million for a 6.6 percent convertible preferred equity interest in O3B. In late April it said: "Other investors in O3B at March 31, 2008, include John W Dick, one of our directors and a founder of O3B, who owns an approximate 10.9 percent common interest in O3B, Paul A Gould, also one of our directors, who owns directly and indirectly an approximate 0.8 percent

common interest in O3B and the other holders of O3B, a founder and Allen & Company LLC, both of whom are unrelated to us, who own an approximate 80.9 percent and 0.9 percent common interest in O3B, respectively."

Google does not appear to have lodged any details of its investment with the SEC.

Vodafone makes Asia Pacific a separate region

Vodafone Group will split its Eastern Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia/Pacific region into two regions.

From 1 January 2009 there will be a Central Europe/Africa region and Asia-Pacific. Two regional CEOs will be appointed and will join the executive committee. Paul Donovan, the current CEO EMAPA has decided to leave Vodafone at the end of this year.

Vodafone has also announced the appointment of Michael Combes as CEO, Europe. He will also be responsible for global marketing, global technology and Vodafone Business Services and will join the executive committee. For the last two years he has been chairman and CEO of TDF Group, a French operator of shared facilities and terrestrial networks. He previously spent a number of years with France Telecom in senior management positions.

Also, Vodafone's investment in Verizon Wireless "in light of its financial and strategic importance" will no longer be part of any operating region and be managed directly at a senior level by Vittorio Colao, Andy Halford and Terry Kramer. Kramer will become the group strategy and business improvement director responsible for strategy development, for the initiatives aimed at productivity and efficiency gains across the group and, the governance and coordination of the relationship with Verizon Wireless. He will continue in his current role as group HR director until a replacement is found.

Technology

IPsphere Forum and TM Forum merge

The IPsphere Forum has joined the TM (Telemanagement) Forum and will integrate its framework for service delivery into the TM Forum's Service Delivery Framework program, moving its work programs into the TM Forum immediately.

The two organisations claim that "The fusion of these best practices, standards and guidelines will fuel automated deployment of IP-based information, communications and entertainment services."

The IP Sphere Forum was created in mid 2005 by almost 40 companies - a who's who of global network equipment manufacturers and major carriers - with the ambitious goal of developing a new architecture for IP networks. It grew out of the Infranet Initiative, set up in 2003 by Juniper Networks, which in turn spawned the Infranet Initiative Council (IIC).

The key aim of the IPsphere Forum is to produce a specification that, when implemented in network hardware, software and management systems, will enable multiple parties responsible for creating and delivering a network service from end to end to put in place the technical and commercial arrangements to deliver that service at agreed quality levels and to charge accordingly. It took its first significant step towards achieving this goal with release the first version of its technical specification in mid 2007.

The two organisations say the IPsphere's work complements that of the TM Forum's Service Delivery Framework, which focuses on enabling control of service lifecycle management across all execution environments allowing flexibility in binding services

with product catalogues. "Integrating the principles and technical work of these two frameworks will create a pre-commercial testbed for pilot program testing and the demonstration of multi-vendor interoperability."

According to TM Forum president and CTO, Martin Creaner, "In this increasingly converged market, the work IPsphere is doing to produce specifications to enable pan-provider business solutions, compliments the existing work of the TM Forum in relation to service delivery platforms and service oriented architecture. The closer alignment of these work efforts will deliver great benefits to our broad membership."

Todd Shimizu, chairman of IPsphere, added: "As part of TM Forum, we seek to accelerate time-to-market for these standards to give better results for all of us and better services for our customers."

IPsphere Forum's other relationships

In joining the TM Forum the IPsphere forum appears to have committed to one of three industry organisations with which it had formed more casual relationships. Shortly after releasing its first specification, the IPsphere Forum struck up relationships with the TM Forum, the MFA Forum and the MultiService Forum, saying it had sought these relationships to "drive its charter of unleashing the business and societal benefits of IP convergence."

The MFA Forum is an organisation focused on enhancing the use of multi-vendor and multi-service packet-based networks. It is driving the convergence of ATM, frame relay and IP/MPLS technologies in the global telecom industry through interoperability initiatives, implementation agreements, and educational and marketing resources and programs.

The MSF is a global association committed to developing and promoting open-architecture, multiservice next generation networks. It develops implementation agreements, promotes worldwide compatibility and interoperability of network elements and encourages input to appropriate national and international standards bodies.

The TM Forum, however is the largest of the three and with almost 700 member companies in 72 countries, claims to be the world's leading trade consortium focused on enabling digital services.

Symbian Foundation signs up new members

Membership of the Symbian Foundation, the new industry body being set up to promote the Symbian mobile OS as an open source OS, has increased to 50 following commitments from Acrodea, Brycen, HI Corporation, Ixonos, KTF, Opera Software, Sharp, TapRoot Systems and UIQ Technology.

Since the ten initial board members - AT&T, LG Electronics, Motorola, Nokia, NTT DoCoMo, Samsung Electronics, Sony Ericsson, STMicroelectronics, Texas Instruments and Vodafone - announced plans for the Foundation on 24 June 2008, 40 companies have confirmed commitment to the initiative.

Plans for the Foundation are based on the acquisition of Symbian Limited by Nokia, expected to close in Q4, 2008, and the contribution to the foundation of assets including the Symbian OS and S60 from Nokia s; UIQ technology from Motorola and Sony Ericsson and MOAP(S) from NTT DoCoMo and Fujitsu. This contributed software will be available under a royalty-free license to foundation members from the first day of Symbian Foundation operations, expected 1H 2009. The Foundation will work to unify the platform, with the first unified foundation release expected in 2009, and to make the platform available in open source by June 2010.