



News & Views

Verizon looks to mesh networks for transatlantic reliability



Ihab Tarazi, vice president,
Verizon Business

Verizon Business and Ciena have teamed up to take mesh networks under the sea.

As a way to increase reliability across the Atlantic, Verizon Business has deployed a mesh network with six diverse paths for rerouting traffic, if needed, on three major submarine cable network systems. Ciena has provided CoreDirector multiservice optical switching platforms at locations in both the United States and Europe to evaluate the health

of the network and maximise its resiliency.

Ihab Tarazi, vice president of Verizon Business' global network planning, said: "The overall benefit of the mesh network is the ability for Verizon Business to provide large business and government customers with unsurpassed reliability for their mission-critical voice and data traffic."

Standard transatlantic submarine networks use ring configurations to provide redundant paths. The ring configuration is only prepared to deal with one fault on an undersea network at a time. With two or more failures on a network it is necessary to deploy a cable laying ship to correct the fault.

Ravi Rathod, product manager EMEA at Ciena, said: "Many operators own undersea cables across multiple cable systems and rely on portions of these systems as back-up capacity in the event of a failure or cable repair. This becomes expensive and in many cases only offers partial restoration capability."

Verizon Business will expand its mesh network project to its terrestrial global IP network in both the United States and Europe in 2007.

Tarazi said: "The advanced mesh design allows customers to have their traffic travel over pre-determined 'home' paths and special protection circuits. Each customer circuit is assigned a specific end-to-end path. If there is a service interruption, transport equipment switches to protection circuits that are either pre-assigned or determined by the system. Traffic is rerouted to the next best available path or paths." ■

ON THE MOVE

David Ballarini analyses some of the consolidating moves among the players and market makers in the lucrative wireless email market

Analyst's Eye



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Motorola recently announced the acquisition of Good Technology, a wireless email software company, strengthening its position in the lucrative wireless email market. Motorola's other acquisitions this year include Netopia, Vertasent, Broadbus Technologies, Orthogon Systems, and Kreatel Communications, so it joins Cisco as the other key exit strategy for companies in the IP technology space.

Although RIM is the undisputed market leader in this space, it now faces two strong rivals, Nokia and Motorola, the world's number one and two handset vendors respectively. Nokia made its official move into mobile email earlier this year with the launch of its E-series devices and Business Center platform, acquired in the Intellisync's transaction in 2005. At the time of acquisition by Nokia, Intellisync had about 9% market share of the enterprise email market compared to Good's 8% market share. With about \$240 million of venture capital invested in Good, and over 12,000 enterprise customers, we can only speculate that Good's price tag was similar to Intellisync's \$430 million valuation a year ago. With Motorola's acquisition, we now have three large players who have built vertically integrated solutions.

While RIM has been the pioneer it has only tapped a fraction of the market, and I believe it will be difficult to maintain that lead. Another concern is the impact of NTP's litigation. This has been an all-consuming issue for RIM, and no doubt put a damper on innovation and gave time for other players aggressively to enter the market. Palm is a fourth player of importance. It faces significant challenges in other lines of business as well as a patent infringement suit filed by NTP. Palm's operating system is coming under attack on other fronts. Symbol Technologies has announced it will discontinue the product line that was using Palm's OS. To further complicate Palm's problems, Motorola announced plans to acquire Symbol on September 19. Then there is Palm's smartphone, the Treo. Now there is strong demand for mobile email among consumers. The consumer market is price conscious and brand driven, and here Palm comes up short against the big three.

In our view, Motorola acquired Good as much to become an early leader in the consumer market, as to make inroads against RIM in the business market. We believe that Motorola has positioned itself well for the mobile email market. Only Visto and Seven remain as independent software vendors. We don't see Motorola acquiring these players or Palm, so will anybody else will step up to acquire them? ■