

Pipeline

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OSS NewsWatch for April 2008

by Alana Grelyak

Spring is upon us this month and with it we have to offer you tidbits of news about mergers, acquisitions, and other interesting bits of information. Microsoft is still trying to bully Yahoo! into a takeover and Sprint Nextel is still looking somewhat depressed, although there are plenty of other informative pieces that may brighten your day like a warm spring breeze. Enjoy the sunshine this month of April and with it your fourth 2008 installment of OSS NewsWatch.

Subex Limited, a global provider of OSS for communications service providers, has designed and launched an online user forum for its customers that is sure to help build Subex's relationship with them. The forum includes a place for discussion, a resource center, and a customer contribution section "where Subex customers can share case studies, best practices, and other issues related to the OSS space." The new forum is an extension of Subex's already present user conferences and will help the company to better understand the needs of its clients. A customer outreach effort such as this might go a long way in growing Subex's customer-base and may be something that other OSS providers can implement to help them attract more clients. It offers the customer an easy way to directly connect with the provider and can certainly be a selling point when service providers are making decisions on who will provide for their OSS needs.

Sprint Nextel's future is still looking grim. Their shares have been nearly cut in half since the beginning of 2008 and analysts are now speculating on what the company may need to do to save itself in the near future. An analyst at Merrill Lynch, for example, speculated that Deutsche Telekom may consider buying Sprint, while Stanford Group analyst Michael Nelson has said he thinks Sprint Nextel may be in talks with Clearwire Corp. and Intel Corp. regarding Sprint Nextel's WiMax ideas. Sprint's customer defections are still occurring and have been since the company's acquisition of Nextel in 2005. Perhaps customers are still having issues dealing with the compatibility problems between the Sprint and Nextel networks, or perhaps they were simply frightened away by the mustard yellow television commercials. In any case, no clear future has, as of yet, been mapped out by the company and I, for one, am looking forward to seeing what kinds of strategies they devise in order to stop their ship from sinking.

Sonus Networks, Inc. announced the latest release of its IP Multimedia Subsystem

(IMS) core architecture, which "integrates within existing environments, with the ability to scale up as required." The product is built on the open-source Linux operating system and includes upgrades to Sonus' SRX™ Call Sessions Control Function and HSX™ Home Subscriber Server. "Our goal is to provide network operators with an IMS core network that will support the delivery of enhanced services to any end-user device, based on the user's preference," said Vikram Saksena, CTO of Sonus Networks. "With today's release, we've taken Sonus' long history of leadership in SIP-based networks to the next step and added additional scalability and reliability components."

Sonus Networks also made headlines when Synergy Research Group, an independent industry research firm, announced that Sonus grew at more than double the speed of the industry average and ranked #1 in Q4 in 2007. "Sonus continued to build on its market share leadership position in Q4 and in 2007 as a whole," said Jeremy Duke, president and CEO, Synergy Research Group. "The Company broadened its deep roots with existing customers and continued to win new deals that spurred growth faster than the overall market." This is another step in the right direction for Sonus and with a distinction such as this, chances are Sonus may continue its significant growth rate into 2008.



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eServGlobal, a communication and payment services inventor and provider of end-to-end solutions, has done well for itself with not one but three new deals signed in New Zealand to provide messaging and network management services to the growing New Zealand telecommunications market. While eServGlobal has not announced the names of the companies with which it will be working, referring to them in their press release only as "clients," CEO Laurent Lafarge has stated that they've been working with companies in New Zealand since 1998 and they are "...a valued partner in this flourishing market. These contracts are a result of our long experience in the New Zealand telecommunications sector..." This packet of deals will definitely be good for eServGlobal, increasing their already growing presence in one of the lesser-mentioned markets.

As of our publishing date, Microsoft is still trying to find way to buy Yahoo! with an offer of \$41.4 billion, a number which Yahoo! feels is a sad undervaluing of its

actual worth. A recent Reuters poll finds that quite a few Wall Street brokers who are familiar with the companies feel that Microsoft is going to win this takeover battle. And, although it may win, some other analysts are wondering whether Microsoft should bother at all. It's a large investment that may not pay back quickly in the short-term, but perhaps Microsoft is thinking more in terms of the far away future.

Verizon Communications is bringing in faster 7/mbps DSL service to 12 Eastern states and Washington, D.C. by the end of 2008. Verizon was accused of ignoring its non-FiOS customers in its eagerness to build an FTTH network and this seems to be an effort to bring the current DSL capabilities up to speed (pun intended? Maybe...). This new service will cost contractually obligated customers \$39.99 per month and will run \$47.99 per month for those free spirits who prefer not to be tied down. Did we mention that this service is only available to customers living within 8000 feet of a Verizon control office?

Alcatel-Lucent is expected to close a deal on April 1 that will give them ownership of ReachView Technologies, an assurance consulting and integration firm in North America. The company has about 85 employees and is based out of Atlanta and Dallas. Alcatel-Lucent hopes that this acquisition will "enhance Alcatel-Lucent's current professional services consulting practice, specifically, OSS/BSS and software integration..." Said acquisition should also give Alcatel-Lucent the means to better resolve network and server issues. The sum of the purchase hasn't been disclosed.

Highdeal, a provider of pricing & rating solutions, has signed a deal with Mobile Satellite Ventures (MSV), a supplier of mobile satellite communications services, to provide the Highdeal Transactive® advanced billing solution, which will serve as the pricing, rating, and billing platform supporting MSV's all IP 4G wireless satellite-terrestrial communications network.

Clarity, an OSS automation company, will be expanding the use of an Indonesian mobile telephony provider PT Hutchison CP Telecommunications' (HCPT) end to end OSS. Clarity was awarded a contract and will provide "real-time, zero-touch provisioning of 3G subscriber services."

If you have news you'd like to share with Pipeline, contact us at editor@pipelinepub.com.