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Management World Orlando: A Reflection of the Changing Communications Industry

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Unless you've been on a desert island with no way to reach the outside world, you've likely noticed that the communications industry isn't the same as just a few years ago. Since deregulation reared its head more than 20 years ago, the cable providers started joining the game and with more recent developments, such as the rise of mobile providers and new media companies, communications has grown infinitely more complex as consumers demand more simplicity with their service bundles, bills, and customer service.

It's definitely not an easy time to be in this market for anyone. Revenues are declining from traditional services and profit margins are tightening as these services get cheaper. Competition is facing providers from all directions, and their reaction has been to reduce the cost base of their business, develop new revenue-based services faster, innovate better than they've ever done before, and through all this keep the customers they've got through improved customer care.



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The new fly in the ointment here is that providers are starting to realize that they can't get to this wonderful goal of lower costs, more revenues, and a better customer experience with their existing infrastructure. So, while the first step was

to cut costs – many times by downsizing – providers are now looking to full-blown transformation to a much simpler networking platform and a simplified operational back office.

But even as they take the complexity out of their operations, providers are also dealing with the fact that the next-generation of communications services will rely heavily on outside partners, meaning more cooks in the kitchen to deliver the services.

Right now loads of communications companies are doing deals with loads of media providers with a lot of various intermediaries in the picture, too. Mostly these are “hand crafted” deals with the emphasis being put on the price of the content, not on developing a really slick and low cost delivery chain. The costs of handling issues such as order handling, customer care, problem resolution, payments /settlements manually across multiple trading boundaries will kill the margins on any service. As long as customer volumes of services are quite low, maybe people can get away with it. However, as the services scale, meltdown will quickly follow. A business plan that relies on the service not selling in order to keep costs under control isn't much of a plan!

Adapt and Survive

So we at TM Forum have recognized this shift from the telcos and other providers controlling everything to realizing there are many other players out there who want a piece of the pie and deserve a seat at the table. To that end, our membership is growing to the tune of 700 members in 75 countries. We’re not leaving behind our telco roots; rather, we’re taking that and extending it out to companies that are involved in the creation of services and the creation of content for those services.



We’re making significant inroads in the cable sector, and we’re looking very closely at other players such as device manufacturers, content creators, and content aggregators. We’re also taking the frameworks we’ve had in place for years that allow the telcos to automate their processes and we are expanding those to accommodate new services and types of companies.

Communications companies today are looking for much more flexibility and the ability to build services out of reusable components rather than hard wiring everything. They are working across complex value chains and changing who they work with quickly and easily. Agility is a big part of this overall principle

At TM Forum, we're building upon all of the great frameworks and standards we've developed over the years and provide the market with the foundations it needs in this brave new world.

Create, Deliver, and Monetize Digital Services

Management World Orlando, taking place November 16-20, is the best place to get a solid understanding of the new communications industry, its challenges and concerns, and solutions to keeping everyone in the new value chain happy.

Our theme of "create, deliver and monetize" lines up perfectly with our unique tri-summit format that will focus on the entire services lifecycle. Rather than presenting a single monolithic conference, we're really drilling down into the core areas of interest that TM Forum and its members are looking to advance over the next 5 years.

The **Transformation Summit** will focus on reducing costs and helping providers become more agile at developing new services. It will address the challenges facing the mainstream telcos and cable players who are now looking at instituting a bigger-picture transformation to ensure their future success. This summit will feature presentations on our core frameworks including TM Forum's Business Process Framework (eTOM), our Information Framework (SID) and our Application Framework (TAM).

The **Digital Commerce and Advertising Summit** will focus on how telecom, cable, advertising and media/entertainment are coming together in new and interesting ways to deliver innovative new services. We'll try to answer questions like how is advertising going to begin to translate to new forms of revenue in the digital world and how do you create service delivery capabilities to deliver this new content in an effective and efficient way. This summit will look closely at where we expect the major revenue growth to take place over the next 5-10 years and the key challenges that are going to delay it or make it more difficult to realize that growth.

Lastly, the **Revenue Management and Customer Experience Summit** will focus on how to actually make money from these new digital services and how to ensure customers are happy. As we all know, if your customers aren't happy, no one in the value chain makes money. This summit will also showcase TM Forum's focus on BSS, including hot topics such as billing, charging, rating, revenue assurance and how to proactively manage the customer experience.

In addition to these ground-breaking summits, Management World Orlando will also feature world-class keynote addresses by executives from Rogers Communications, Credit Suisse, Deutsche Telekom and Divvio; 18 introductory and intermediate training courses on topics such as NGOSS SOA, Service Delivery Framework, Next-Generation Billing, Revenue Assurance Maturity Model, Next Generation Network

Management and Monetizing Content; and an expo featuring dozens of the leading companies in the industry.

We'll also be highlighting a number of real-world demonstrations of proven and implemented technical frameworks and business solutions in Forumville, your one-stop shop to see market-ready deployments, to experience the convergence of communications, media and entertainment, cable and other sectors, and to talk to visionary TM Forum members and their partners.

Forumville includes Content Encounter, which will feature more than 20 companies showcasing end-to-end solutions for the digital marketplace. You'll get to experience everything from the content lifecycle, advertising-based business models, advanced services creation and delivery, revenue assurance and much more.

Within Forumville you'll also find our Catalyst Showcase, which is TM Forum's technology proving ground. These projects will have a broad technical appeal to show attendees but will also highlight how they can deliver real business benefits and positively impact the bottom line.

With so much happening under one roof, Management World Orlando should not to be missed. So join us for our leading global event focusing on the management, monetization and operations of cutting-edge communications, entertainment and online services.

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