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Forums unite for broadband networking

MAY 18, 2009 -- A powerful worldwide organization has been created by the union of the Broadband Forum (search Lightwave for [Broadband Forum](#)) and the IP/MPLS Forum. The two organizations bring together industry experts who have, until now, looked at the evolving broadband network from different ends of the network. With this union, the core and access aggregation work of the IP/MPLS Forum will blend and strengthen the local transport and digital home management specifications of the Broadband Forum.

United under the Broadband Forum name, the new organization comprises 220 members from most of the world's leading service providers, equipment manufacturers, chip vendors, and industry bodies. The organization expects these members will play an increasingly influential role in defining interoperable network equipment for local broadband access, advancing mobile backhaul solutions, and empowering the next wave of business services, IPTV, gaming, and other applications as they arise.

"Both organizations have played an important and highly valued role as the world has grown into the broadband-rich society we enjoy today. Now, together, we can help guide the industry forward across an ever-widening range of technologies and applications," says chairman and president George Dobrowski. "We are very excited by the prospects created by this union of two long-standing and well respected specification bodies and our dedicated teams are already working well together as we begin to put the new organization into action."

The union follows an industry analysis undertaken by the IP/MPLS Forum board in 2008, which concluded that convergence was the key to the future success of standards specifications work. It then focused on how its work aligned with other organizations and when, in June 2008, the former DSL Forum became the Broadband Forum -- with a focus on convergence and technology-agnostic solutions -- it appeared that many gaps toward empowering a stronger end-to-end multiservice architecture could be filled by bringing the two organizations together.

"I am tremendously proud of what the IP/MPLS Forum has achieved in its 18-year history and also proud of the fact that we recognized and addressed the need to follow technology convergence by uniting with the Broadband Forum for the overall benefit of the industry itself," says IP/MPLS Forum chairman and president Andrew G. Malis. "The Broadband Forum stood out clearly as the strongest candidate for us, and today's union will see our legacy, our expertise, and our membership move into a new era -- once again for the benefit of the industry we all look to serve."

The newly combined Broadband Forum is meeting this week in Valencia, Spain. There will be three main changes to the organization:

- In the Technical Committee area, a new IP/MPLS and Core working group will be established to continue the MPLS protocol work and to address all new Core related work brought into the Forum.
- In the Marketing Committee area, a new IP/MPLS focused vice chair will be added and new IP/MPLS ambassadors will be available to represent the organization via the speakers' bureau.
- A combined board of directors will be established to oversee the transition. George Dobrowski will continue on as president and Andrew G. Malis has been named vice president.

"As well as strengthening our global stance in the standards community generally, we will have more

resources, wider expertise, and the ability to make rapid strides in areas such as defining seamless end-to-end specifications, fostering greater interoperability, delivering enhanced quality-of-experience measurement, enabling greater mobile backhaul capabilities, and supporting residential and business services," Dobrowski adds.

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