



BROADBAND FORUM UNION WITH IP/MPLS FORUM ESTABLISHES THE CENTRAL BODY FOR NEXT GENERATION PACKET NETWORK SPECIFICATIONS

May 18, 2009 - A powerful new worldwide organisation has been created today by the union of the Broadband Forum and the IP/MPLS Forum. These two organizations bring together the 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 seamlessly blend and strengthen the local transport and digital home management specifications of the Broadband Forum.

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

"Both organisations 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," said Broadband Forum 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 organisation into action."

The union follows an industry analysis undertaken by the IP/MPLS Forum Board last year, 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 organisations 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 towards empowering a stronger end-to-end multiservice architecture could be filled by bringing the two organisations 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 recognised and addressed the need to follow technology convergence by uniting with the Broadband Forum for the overall benefit of the industry itself," said 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 organisation. These are:-

- 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 organisation 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.

Today's announcement comes as broadband deployment continues healthy growth around the world, despite the current economic challenges across all industry sectors. More than 410 million users now enjoy the benefits of broadband and the union of the two organisations will only help sustain this momentum, as well as open up new opportunities.

"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 added.

"For our members, their involvement will bring them even greater membership value and they will have the opportunity to play an influential role in how the networks of the future evolve."

INDUSTRY LEADERS SUPPORT THIS UNION

"This union, of the Broadband Forum and the IP/MPLS Forum, means we will all benefit from a greater end-to-end approach for network and protocol standardisation, and that includes end-to-end performance, interoperability, architecture and protocols. This is good news for the bodies concerned and the industry as a whole."

Kevin Foster, Head of Wireline Access, BT

"Ericsson sees this merger as an important step in the industry pursuit of network convergence, including fixed - mobile convergence. Together the IP/MPLS Forum and the Broadband Forum organizations provide a single venue with the expertise and capability to drive next generation network solutions used for home, business and infrastructure."

Erik Ekudden, Vice President - Technology and Industry for Ericsson

"OPASTCO is pleased to see the union of the Broadband and IP/MPLS Forums. Combining the two forums will provide a tremendous opportunity for OPASTCO members to develop and obtain technical resources to create IP environments in rural North America."

Ronald Laudner, Jr., Second Vice Chairman, Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telecommunication Companies (OPASTCO)

"We are very enthusiastic to see the industry defragmenting. This union will allow better efficiency and coherence for some key topics for this industry such as transport equipments interoperability, mobile backhauling, access and core networks integration. We believe this union will provide better architectural view on the evolution of networks. Such a move reinforces the key position of the Broadband Forum to deliver end to end solutions for fixed broadband networks,"

Philippe Lucas, VP International Standards and Industry Relationship for Orange

"Verizon has been an active contributing member of both organisations, and we applaud this decision to unite. As broadband convergence continues, the Broadband Forum will be a key organization to ensure providers' needs are met with a holistic end-to-end perspective, ensuring no gaps in critical network specifications. We look forward to continuing to provide technical expertise and leadership to this organization."

Stu Elby, VP Network Architecture, Verizon Communications

"The union of the Broadband Forum and IP/MPLS Forum is an important milestone in bringing together experts from across the industry to collaborate on specifications that will accelerate fixed and mobile network convergence and enable a broad range of advanced business and consumer services. Alcatel-Lucent will continue to provide leadership and technical expertise in support of the Broadband Forum's work in the coming years."

Basil Alwan, President IP Division and Leader, Carrier Portfolio Strategy, Alcatel-Lucent

For further information about the newly united Broadband Forum, visit www.broadband-forum.org.

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For further information please contact Chrissie Walker or Brian Dolby on +44 (0) 115 948 6901 or by email to chrissie@bcspr.co.uk or brian@bcspr.co.uk.

About the Broadband Forum

The Broadband Forum mission is to develop the full potential of broadband. With the recent union with the IP/MPLS Forum, the Broadband Forum is now the central body for next generation IP network specifications. This organization, comprising an enlarged 220 strong membership of most of the world's leading service providers, equipment manufacturers, chip vendors and other key organizations, defines and facilitates next generation networks for local broadband access, mobile backhaul, business services, IPTV, gaming and other applications, and is poised to address further developments as they arise. The Broadband Forum's formal BroadbandSuite™ Release Program, Technical Reports and specifications are publicly available at www.broadband-forum.org.