

# TELESIS TIMES

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**AMERICAN TELESIS**  
*The Private Line Specialists*

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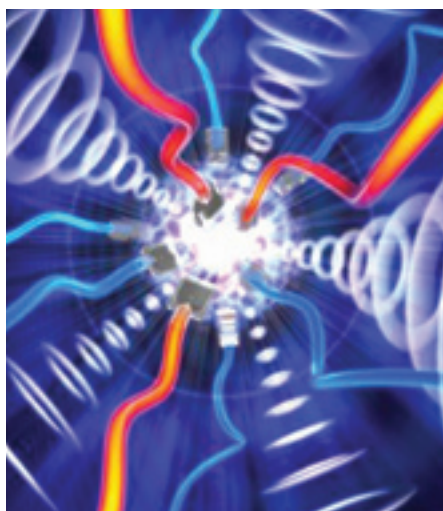
## Telecom Consolidations

*Time to brainstorm  
& reinvent your sales strategy*

Consolidation. Not a day goes by without a new headline about one of the mergers; Verizon/MCI, Sprint/Nextel, SBC/AT&T and Level 3/Wiltel to name only the largest. Will these new giants be able to masterfully consolidate their joint operations while successfully keeping focus and harmony with their existing client base?

Odds are pretty good that your clients are worried about the level of service and support they will receive while their current carriers are consumed with untangling the legality of their merger. It is also likely that the merger will result in a carrier sales force that spends more time looking for a new job and less time calling on their customer base. The result is an apprehensive or even unhappy client.

What can you do to ease the worries surrounding all the consolidations? View this as a window of opportunity. Explore new options with your customers. Reach out and check on them. Customers still need to add services, reconfigure networks, complete upgrades and just evaluate their overall spending. You want to make sure you are there when your customer revisits his network options.



You can continue selling with confidence if you listen to your customers. Continue to educate yourself on new products. Select your partnerships carefully because steps you take now may ensure more business in the long run. If you can step in and take care of the customers now, they are more likely to stay with you for the long haul. Ask questions, provide guidance where you can and most importantly, follow up on the promises you make. If you can do this, you will end up exceeding your customer's expectations and setting the standard.

## Understanding MPLS

MPLS is certainly a hot conversation topic these days. Nearly every carrier is touting the benefits of their MPLS offering but what is MPLS and is it really the "Killer App"?

MPLS stands for Multi-Protocol Label Switching. It is a technology that was developed in the mid 1990s and is now being used by carriers to optimize their networks and offer additional products and services for their customers. Most carriers run MPLS underneath other, more familiar services, such as frame relay, wide-area Ethernet, ATM and native IP. They also can offer new converged products with Quality of Service (Qos) that has not been available in the past.

In an MPLS network, the data packets are tagged with a priority level. Using these priority levels, the packets are processed more quickly and sent along to their destination at faster speeds, with the highest priority packets being delivered to the right destination in the right order at the right time. This allows a carrier to guarantee a quality of service and security equal to that of a private line, but in an environment that allows more optimal utilization of the backbone network.

Why and when does this make a difference to the customer?

If your customer is planning a convergence project, MPLS may help them. For example, many firms are exploring combining voice and video traffic over one network. Video is often carried over an ISDN circuit, which can be costly, but eliminating that old ISDN network by moving the traffic to the converged network provides immediate savings and may make sense.

> MPLS continued

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## < MPLS continued

If your customer has numerous sites that require any site to any site traffic, MPLS may be the answer. In a frame network, customer costs can really add up when multiple PVCs need to be built to allow all the sites to send all of their traffic to all of the other sites. A false assumption may be that the customer with multiple sites always requires any site to any site traffic.

Many data applications today are still client/server based and are set up to be truly hub and spoke. If your customer is only sending data back to a host, without a need to add voice or video to the network, they may not see any cost savings from an MPLS network, and may be better served using private line or frame relay.

The bottom line on MPLS networks is they can offer customers a monetary saving

and network optimization by bringing different types of traffic together into one port, however, MPLS is not the answer to all customer needs just as frame relay was not the answer for all customers ten years ago. There are still applications for private line, frame relay, ATM and dedicated Internet services. It is up to you and your vendor to help the customer find the right fit. **To find out more information, please contact us at 800-297-1122.**

## Ask More Questions & Build Credibility Increase the value you bring to your clients

We all know the standard selling techniques; information gathering, qualifying and then establishing rapport, trust and credibility. The dilemma is we sometimes get so passionate about our products and/or services that we start selling a solution before we fully understand the client environment. We need to take a moment and remember that the most successful salespeople ask questions and even more importantly....they listen, listen and listen some more.

*If your client doesn't want to talk or discuss an opportunity or bid*

- They think you don't have the solution
- They already have a solution
- They don't think you are worth their time

Remember, getting a "no" from a client can be the beginning, not the end, if you can ask "why?"

**Consultative Selling: Prove to your client it is worth their time to speak with you.**

*For example, when contacting IT professionals*

- Acknowledge they are busy and their time is valuable
- Let them know you won't make assumptions regarding their network and needs
- Encourage them to brag about what they have built
- Ask "What are you going to be using it for?"
- Find out what their wish list is
- Ask whether they plan/need to upgrade equipment
- Find out whether or not there is fiber in the building?
- Discuss future plans for additional sites, perhaps there is enough traffic to merit a fiber build
- Find out how they are managing their network today.
- Ask more detailed questions about current contracts with their existing vendors

**These are a few topics to keep in mind.**

Contact us for more information including a comprehensive list of Sales Qualifying Questions for your specific opportunities or to set up an appointment.

## Bits & Bytes of Interest

- **American Telesis was a Sponsor at Channel Partners Spring 2006, Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas, March 1-3. Booth #123**
- VON Spring 2006, San Jose Convention Center, March 14-17
- COMPTEL PLUS Spring 2006, Manchester Grand Hyatt, San Diego, March 19-22
- USTA TelecomNext, Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas, March 19-23
- American Telesis is a proud member of the following organizations:  
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- **Add us on to your client calls as your technical experts.**



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