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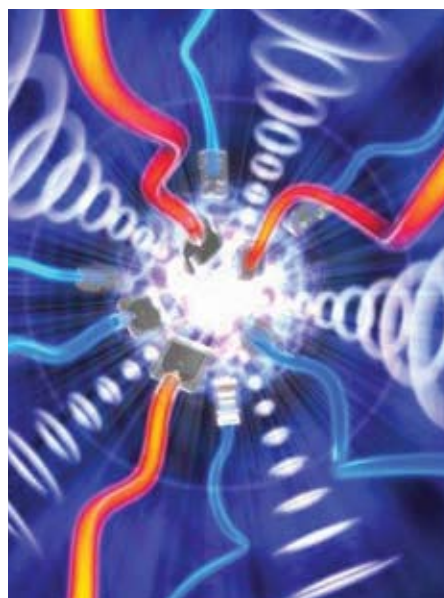
## Are you being asked to consider Ethernet Services?

Ethernet is a technology that has been around for more than 25 years and is the most widely used Local Area Network (LAN) technology in the world today. IT professionals worldwide are comfortable building LANs on Ethernet technologies, so it seems natural that Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) and Wide Area Networks (WANs) would take advantage of the same technology.

Inside the walls of your local offices, 10 Mbps or 100 Mbps Ethernet is delivered on Cat5 cables made of twisted pair copper. Previously, the limitation to extensive Ethernet delivery was in the distance it could be transmitted. Today, equipment manufacturers like Covaro Networks are building products that allow transmission of the Ethernet signal over greater distances. Many network operators can now provide Ethernet over existing fiber connections, whether the buildings are a mile apart or 2,500 miles apart.

As these equipment manufacturers improve the technologies of Ethernet delivery, more and more buildings will be Ethernet ready, whether they have fiber capability or copper local access.

Why are businesses interested? Lower costs, familiarity with the technology and faster, scalable connections are three



primary reasons. The customer no longer has to purchase expensive cards for their routers to accept multiple T1s or T3s. Their IT staff is already comfortable working with and troubleshooting Ethernet, so the overall business costs are reduced. And finally, Ethernet is highly scalable and available at speeds from 10 Mbps to 10 Gbps. Legacy networks cannot easily scale to these levels.

For more information on Ethernet options, contact us at 800.297.1122.

## Telecom Consolidations

*Not sure what you'll really be getting?*

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 you are worried about the level of service and support you may now receive while your 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 on their customer base. The result is a feeling of uneasiness and apprehension.

Start by reviewing your environment and requirements.

- Will your network remain diverse after the mergers?
- Is support still accessible 24x7 and will the technicians continue to have access to your records?
- Is your sales team continuing to be responsive?
- Are your contract rates changing?
- Are you still being billed correctly?

Additionally, you may have concerns about the path your network now takes. If your sales team has changed as a result of the mergers, you may be left in an uncomfortable position. The real question is, do you need to make changes or just find answers?

Consult with your vendors to ensure your needs are still their top priority.

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## 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 to their customers. Most carriers run MPLS underneath other, more familiar services, such as frame relay, wide-area Ethernet, ATM and native IP. Carriers can also 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?

If you are planning a convergence project, MPLS may help. 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.

If you have numerous sites that require any site to any site traffic, MPLS may be the answer. In a frame network, 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. However, it is not safe to assume that all traffic must always be transmitted to all of the sites on a network. Many data applications today are still client/server based and are set up to be truly hub and spoke. If you are only sending data back to a host, without a need to add voice or video to the network, then you 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 a monetary savings and network optimization by bringing different types of traffic together into one port, however, MPLS is not the answer to all needs just as frame relay was not the answer for all environments 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 find the right fit.

For more information, please contact us at 800-297-1122.

## Bits & Bytes of Interest

- Visit American Telesis at Booth #3616 SIA Technology Management Conference, The Hilton New York, June 20-22
- **Announcing American Telesis Trading Turrets. True IP Turret System**
- WSTA Summer Magic, The Lighthouse at Chelsea Piers, Pier 61, New York, NY July 20
- American Telesis is a Silver Affiliate of the WSTA



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