

MANAGING NETWORK COMPLEXITY - DELIVERING CUSTOMER DELIGHT

In Association with GLOBAL GROUP



From Left to Right - Mr. Fredrik Jejdling, Vice President, Ericsson India Pvt Ltd; Mr. Murray Ward, Head of Global Services for India Region, Nokia Siemens Networks; Mr. Devender Kumar, Executive Director (Delivery & Service), Huawei India; Ms. Damini Kumari, Senior Editor, ET NOW; Mr. Deven Buch, Senior Vice President, GTL Limited; Mr. Sarvdeep Garg, Vice President - Services, Alcatel-Lucent India

Partners for Prosperity Poised to Augur Telecom Growth

Managed network services enable value optimisation and sustainable business practices at price and quality levels favouring customers

Managed network services are a basket of offerings that include flexible solutions and engagement models for operators that enable them to offload the onus of operations, management or niche processes to an external party. The benefits of managed services comprise, but are not limited to increased efficiency in processes and reduced costs. They augur well for operators in case of scant resources, where outsourcing transfers the load of network responsibility from the operator, to an equipment vendor with expertise. Engagement models may differ as per the needs of the operator and may be chosen amongst a range of modes that have been tried and tested in the industry, significantly lowering any chances of risk.

As a pertinent step in disseminating clarity on the nuances of managed services, the ET Intelligence Group Knowledge Forum in association with Global Group has sought means for "Managing Network Complexity-Delivering Customer Delight." Moderated by Ms. Damini Kumari, Senior Editor, ET Now, the event was focused on subjects such as redefining the managed services delivery paradigm, cost-effectiveness, significance in the current scenario and solutions to common challenges faced. To this end, Ms. Kumari led the panel discussion and confronted issues concerning better end-to-end management that can optimise the quality of telecom services for customers.

Need for a Renewed Service Paradigm
As a market, India is characterised by scale, complexity and efficiency. These very things are primary when driving new models for managed services aimed at ensuring end-user satisfaction. A technical challenge the industry has been facing is limited spectrum as opposed to the large numbers of

subscribers. In relative terms, Indian cellular telephony operates at half or a third of the spectrum used globally. As a result, some network quality-related issues are inevitable. Innovation in the Indian community, in terms of applications and software development, will see the dawn of a new environment and is poised to drive traffic significantly.

Gearing Up for Challenges: Mr. Sarvdeep Garg, Vice President-Services, Alcatel-Lucent India admitted, "With the launch of 3G, there will some relief to 2G networks in the interim period, some of the voice traffic will be offloaded to 3G. But as data traffic grows

It is absolutely critical to have the backend sorted out, for which, managed services is going to be the key. Technology will inevitably be the prime differentiator as we go forward.

again, there will be challenges in this space." Whether the bubble of data is just a bubble or a lucrative revenue stream for operators is still to be seen. "The expansion of the industry from vendors' perspective means that it is an era of convergence, outsourcing and quality end-user experience at an acceptable price. This is the paradigm that the services industry has to look into," observed Mr. Devender Kumar, Executive Director (Delivery & Service), Huawei India. In the opinion of Mr. Murray Ward, Head of Global Services for India Region, Nokia Siemens Networks, managed service is therefore not just cheaper operations, but also about bringing the knowledge of networks and experience from global markets in a limited spectrum scenario to optimise the asset base. And that is where managed services becomes much more of a value optimisation game.

Optimisation-The Buzzword
According to Mr. Fredrik Jejdling, Vice President, Ericsson India Pvt Ltd, with 10-15

years of evolution in 3G, data capacity has optimised, making 21 Mbps on 5 MHz a possibility. However, 4G will pose a different challenge since technologies like LTE TDD are likely to be first launched in India and China. Therefore, developments will continue to drive price, increasing the need to optimise delivery models. Fortunately, there is some hope for reduced equipment price with rising volumes. The operator mindset towards shared sites has also changed as all infrastructure is shared with providers, tower companies and the goal is increased tenancy.

Optimisation also involves greater emphasis on bottoming out costs and climbing up the value chain. Operators that are looking to drive cost-efficiency can gain significantly by partnering up with managed services considering every avenue of network where value can be added.

Collaborative Effort: In offering solutions that cover the full range of end-to-end managed services, the different cogs of the industry will need to collaborate since they will be dependent upon the vendor who supplied the equipment. For instance, if Cisco provides the routers, one might have to depend upon them for the spare parts. The ob-

very critical for managed services mode where there is ultimately a multi-vendor type of capability to serve the customer.

Spotting the Discerning Factor
Having said all this, one wonders then, how to choose amongst so many names for a reliable managed services partner. According to Mr. Deven Buch, Senior Vice President, GTL Limited, the differentiators for managed services vendors will be their reach of the network across a minimum number of circles and technology skills. "Any partner that the service provider chooses to work with in terms of a managed services approach will need to have the reach to cover the entire network, not only on a geograph-

ET NOW
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ical basis, but also on the logistical management basis. Secondly, almost all operators today have network components from different vendors using different technologies. So, any partner which a service provider chooses should have multi-vendor capabilities on his skill side," he said.

Winding Up
With frequent call drops and network quality that is not quite up to the mark, there is clearly a long way to go for the service delivery model. The industry has undergone rapid change on the technology and demand fronts and this has involved huge costs amid price wars. Not to mention, the costs of acquiring precious spectrum. However, the consensus is that quality user experience is sacrosanct to attract and retain the customer. It is absolutely crucial to have the backend sorted out, for which, managed services is going to be the key. Technology will inevitably be the key differentiator as we go forward. As for the data bubble the big promise of 3G that is going to ramp up revenues for many service operators and become the keystone of potential success-is going to be eagerly awaited.

“ If we can provide better services to operators, we can certainly give them some revenue benefits in the whole game plan. The concept of service R&D is to understand the pain points of the customer-the operator and bridge that gap. And that has dictated the evolution of the new service paradigm also. ”



Mr. Devender Kumar
Executive Director (Delivery & Service)
Huawei India

“ What we are offering to operators in a managed service is not just cheaper operations. It is about bringing our knowledge of networks from global markets and global experience, and making that limited amount of spectrum do much more for them as an asset base. ”



Mr. Murray Ward
Head of Global Services India Region,
Nokia Siemens Networks

“ EXPERT SPEAK ”

“ With innovations from the Indian community in terms of applications and software development, we are going to see a new environment that is really going to drive traffic significantly. ”



Mr. Fredrik Jejdling,
Vice President,
Ericsson India Pvt Ltd

“ What works in other parts of the world will not work in India—we are a different market. No other country has 5,000 base stations in one particular circle. The ball game here is different, and so are the volumes. Here, we need to optimise our delivery models. ”



Mr. Sarvdeep Garg
Vice President - Services
Alcatel-Lucent India

“ You could have similar services being offered by all managed services vendors in the community, but what will differentiate them is the reach of the network and the technology skills that they have. ”



Mr. Deven Buch
Senior Vice President
GTL Limited



Engaged in a riveting exchange

Riding the Crest of the Wave: The 'Data Bubble' is Arriving

Those who are savvy with the machinations of the telecom industry as well as the rising trend of users being drawn to better phones are aware that the 'data bubble' is on its way. What is still not known, however, is how big it will be and how long it will take to come. Yet, we do know that the gainers in this market will be those who can manage networks well for customers and deliver a premium quality of service when that bubble hits. There have been instances outside India where networks have struggled to cope with the data challenge. In essence, it is what came to be known as the 'smart phone challenge.' Managed services vendors must be focused at gearing up to drive more value for the operator in the data space as it transforms from a voice to a data market. "Today, one thing that we need

to be really concerned about and I am sure all operators and service providers are struggling with this as a challenge on the network side-how it is going to pump that data right up to the end customer. Most of it is related to the IP backbone or the IP backhaul network that is required to pump that data," opined Mr. Deven Buch, Senior Vice President, GTL Limited. Further elaborating on the concerns faced by inadequate infrastructure, he said, "The challenge operators face is that even though there is a good amount of fibre on the ground, there is not enough to go the last mile; and that is going to be an impediment for delivering 3G. There is equipment and technology available, but there is no infrastructure that can act as a means to deliver this technology to the end customer; and if we do not solve this challenge over the next few months or the year at least, we can

talk about the data bubble but it will not happen." Balancing the debate with much-needed optimism, Mr. Murray Ward, Head of Global Services for India Region, Nokia Siemens Networks mullied, "The sheer scale of what we do in India is remarkable. So, that piece of the infrastructure puzzle will come and new business models will drive forward." Elucidating how future technologies can be supported if there is the will, he continued, "If you look at where it went with fibre deployment that was done eight-nine years ago by Tata and Reliance, nobody would have believed that so much fibre could have been deployed in that short a time, but that is where we built the 2G capability. The same thing will happen on the IP-based transmission network and optical-based networks around the 3G and 4G sto-

ry." He opined that such a revolution will return and that it would be a great opportunity for everyone here. Mr. Sarvdeep Garg, Vice President-Services, Alcatel-Lucent India corroborated, "Infrastructure has a very big role to play-if we have proer infrastructure, technological advancements will definitely come. Two years back we did not expect to leverage limited spectrum for so many subscribers." He insisted that further technological progress is also on the horizon and would lead to sure improvement of customer experience. Given the nature of enthusiasm this new data buzz has garnered, it may be hoped that efforts to ease the technological and skill transformation in India be made in time. This will ensure that industry stakeholders can enjoy the ride on the next wave in telecom success.

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- Our Energy Management Solutions deliver:**
- Reduced energy costs leading to higher profits
 - Reduced CO₂ emissions
 - Reliable power conditions at all telecom sites, leading to higher network availability
 - Options to use alternative sources of energy for a greener tomorrow

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