



WiMAX Update

- [WiMAX Forum](#), Ed Agis
- [GTL Int.](#), Sharat Chandra
- [Vecima Networks Inc.](#), Wayne Fredin

Sections

- [Development](#)
- [Carrier Services](#)
- [New Service Delivery](#)
- [WiMAX Update](#)

[Home](#) | [WiMAX Update](#) | [GTL Int.](#), Sharat Chandra

GTL, global agility and innovation

Sharat Chandra, President and Chief Operating Officer of GTL International Limited talks to Intercomms about the company's global plans

Mr. Sharat Chandra, former Director Operations, India, Motorola, has joined as the President & Chief Operating Officer, of GTL International Limited. The company is an international subsidiary of GTL Limited and will manage the international acquisitions and integration of the group companies. The company has also the vision of being at the forefront of Systems Integration in the 2G/3G Cellular and 4G technology platforms globally.



Q: What is GTL all about?

A: GTL Limited, part of the Global Group, is India's largest network services provider to the world.

Global Group is India's leading business group focused on Network Services and Shared Telecom Infrastructure. With FY 08E Revenues of USD 600 million, Balance Sheet size of USD 1.5 Billion and over 12,675 employees, the Group has six operating companies, presence in over 35 countries and supports 18 social causes.

For over two decades the Group has been partnering with leading Telecom OEMs and Operators, to offer its solutions in the wireless communications space. From 2G networks to 3G and 4G, from, WiMAX to IPTV, Global Group provides complete life cycle solutions of network services and telecom Infrastructure.

By 2010 the group plans to engineer and manage over 100,000 cell sites across 150 networks. These networks will connect more than 100 million subscribers in 50 countries across the world.



Growth - A Business Imperative

In a rapidly changing marketplace, fast technological transitions, fixed-mobileconvergence; Global group retains a position of eminence driven by its vision to become the Largest Network Services Provider, Globally.

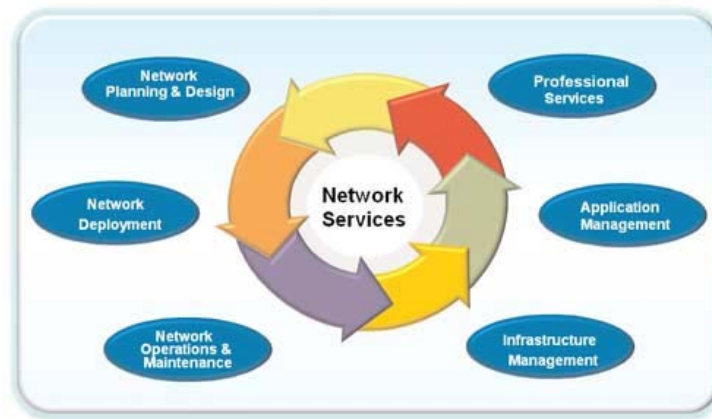
Within our Global Group we have two listed companies. GTL Limited, that offers Network services and works closely with the equipment manufacturers and operators. We are technology agnostic; we work on GSM, CDMA, 2G, 3G and now WiMAX in order to service subscribers.

Our other company GTL Infrastructure Ltd. is a pioneer in the Shared User Telecom Infrastructure (Telecom Towers) in India. The company plans to invest close to \$1.8 billion, to set up 25,000 towers to enable cost effective infrastructure sharing between multiple operators. Since our strengths lie in network design, engineering, program management, deployment, operations and maintenance we are capable of managing both the passive as well as active infrastructure. This brings forth an un-matched cost arbitrage across the industry.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS





Services aligned with Life cycle for OEMs & Carriers

Q: What is your strategy for growth?

A: Global Group has adopted two methods for growth: organic and inorganic. The organic method is in markets where deployment is significant e.g in India, our Network deployment vertical has grown much taller than the others because of the sheer magnitude and size of business and the expansion requirements of our customers. We are witnessing organic growth in SE Asian markets where we have business in optimisation, network planning and operations and maintenance. We are extending and growing our teams for sales and execution capability to strengthen these verticals.

Inorganic growth enabled synergistic and rapid growth in new markets, customer accounts and business verticals. We have acquired 3 companies in the recent past namely, UK based Genesis Consultancy that has expertise in 3G, Malaysia based ADA Cellworks that specialises in Network Planning, Design and Optimization and USA based SCS Consultancy that specialises in Site Acquisition and Network Rollout.

Each of these organisations have helped us attain new skills, access to different markets, engage with new customers and gain knowledge. For instance, ADA Cellworks is a RF company specialising in network planning, design and optimisation. It brought with itself 750+ professionals that are helping us grow in customer domains and territories where we were not present initially.



- » Radio & Tx Planning - GSM, GPRS, EDGE, CDMA, UMTS, WIMAX
- » RF Optimization, Benchmarking, Network Audit, RFI
- » In-building Design and Project Management
- » Planning & Operations Support for MSC, OSS, CS / PS Core

Expanding Focus on

- » VPO (Virtual Planning & Optimization - remote support)
- » Planning, Design and Deployment of WIMAX

On the other side, GTL has a strong market presence in the Middle East for the last ten years. With the capability now available through ADA Cellworks we can use this unique value proposition into the Middle East market. It is a bilateral play of strengths.

Q: What are the major challenges facing GTL and how are you addressing them?

A: The first challenge is managing growth. If you look at India, it is a deployment intensive market, so the needs and challenges presented by this market is the sheer magnitude of work that needs to be done. For an organisation such as ours it is important to maintain a steady inbound stream of good talent so that we are able to manage this growth and are able to sustain and provide a career value proposition to the engineers who come on board. India does churn out close to 5 million engineers every year and large numbers of those come from established institutes.

The appetite for imparting training by small to mid sized companies is limited and therefore, we as the leaders are focussing a lot on ensuring that the engineers who join us are trained and are made role-specific and responsibility specific. We depend on their inclination and initial desires in terms of the specific skill they want to build upon and provide that training. That is the challenge.

The other challenge in mature markets like Europe is in providing, managing and maintaining a healthy optimised network where legacy platforms will give way to new platforms. Growth in subscriber needs are then translated into new applications and solutions that work on legacy platforms or newer ones. Here the talent pool is more sophisticated and fulfilment of customer expectations is driven by tools, skill set, processes and quality orientation in the entire service delivery frame work. The second challenge in mature markets is that of establishing yourself. We have been present in the UK market for over seven years now but in other Western European markets, we are yet to establish ourselves and that takes time. There is therefore, an opportunity to evaluate inorganic means to present a credible presence in these markets.

Q: What are you doing within the area of WiMAX?

A: An area that I have driven with missionary zeal when I came on board from Motorola. I found that everything was already there in this organisation: good systems, trained manpower, markets and customers. It was important to establish a world class capability centre for the newly introduced platforms and that is when the WiMAX Centre of Excellence was set up. This was not born in India, for India but in India for the world and has a sprinkle of people from all the four continents.

We can engage and support when an operator files an application to win a licence for WiMAX systems. Further, we can engage with potential bidders and help them draw-up a business plan.

Since we are a technology and vendor agnostic company, when it comes to making a judgement call on either the technology or solution for an operator; a business plan crafted by us is neutral and offers an unbiased and optimised set of solutions to the customers, both in terms of platforms and choice of vendors through which those platforms could be integrated. We can also play a role of a comprehensive systems integrator.

The second vertical is on programme management and execution of the plan. The third is managed network operations of WiMAX. We are not going to just leave it as one more deployed network in the hand of an operator. This is brand new technology with its standards still evolving. While the manufacturers are inching toward certification, we are getting ready. In a situation like that, it is important that such networks are managed from start to finish through skilled and trained manpower and use of proven O&M techniques that are critical for successful and healthy management of these networks. A very important vertical of the WiMax CoE is the Academy and a Laboratory. We are a WiMAX Forum member and are working very closely with a world leader in WiMax technology to help establish the academy with sophisticated course content and certification program. Alongside the Academy, we would set up a Lab, where we will host platforms from multiple WiMAX manufacturers, and through that we will offer hands-on training. With those platforms as an integral part of the offering will also enable regulators and vendors to conduct interoperability tests.

As multi-vendor multi equipment platforms become available through this test lab, it would offer an environment for an application developer to test out his solution before he goes live to an operator.



WiMAX Centre of Excellence

Q: What's different about GTL?

A: We are one of the few organizations that are in the business of Network services, globally. We have gained recognition by large companies like Ericsson, Motorola and Nokia-Siemens as Partners in their associated project delivery requirements. Partnership doesn't necessarily mean establishing a joint venture; partnership means a spirit of cohabitation in ensuring that ultimately the customer is successful in meeting their business goals through our effective service delivery. GTL has been given the respectability and credibility by world class equipment manufacturers. While being a world class organisation, we remain conscious of the fact that we will have to deliver more with less and do the work first time right. So being cost competitive is important to us. While there is a continuous demand our mandate is to maintain quality and we have done that. High quality of deliverance wouldn't have happened with just a few bright people, there had to be good processes, adaptive and flexible to the needs of the market. That is the unique combination that we want to share with the world. That is what GTL is all about.

Q: Could you give us a brief career profile? What are you currently focusing on?

A: I have a unique blend of Sales, Engineering, Strategic planning, Business Development and Operations experience spanning 26 years. Started my career with Philips India in 1981 and then moved on to Ballarpur Industries in 1989 to strengthen Diversification and Corporate Business Development. In 1993 I moved to Motorola.

Currently I am engaged in creating a common thread of business strategy tying in all the business units of Global Group and leveraging the commonality of market presence and business play. Aside from this, there will be need to establish niche strategic initiatives for each business unit. We are in advanced stages of discussions with leading OEMs for strategic engagements in enhancing and strengthening the portfolio of services including but not limited to Network Planning and Optimization. The key outcome of these strategies is to build world class capabilities as Systems Integrator of choice, leveraging on technical skills, program management processes and strong financial base.

Q: Which have been your most memorable assignment in the past and why?

A: My most memorable assignment has been with Motorola. It is a great organization with strong people values and business ethics. Flexibility and empowerment thrive within the organization and a strong sense of pride for innovation is all pervasive. I have learnt a lot, delivered a fair bit but most importantly...enjoyed every moment of it.

Q: What do you see as your main strengths and weaknesses? How would you describe your management style?

A: I am able to empathize with customer issues and anticipate problems early on. I have a strong and flexible personality and am able to work, relate, inspire and lead within a complex matrix organization.

I am a stickler for detail and impatient with mediocrity.

I truly believe that excellence is delivered through teamwork and therefore, support and pursue participative style of management. What can be achieved through a buy-in can never be delivered through mandates. In the telecom services space where the Global group has a preeminent position globally, this style of management has been active and intensely successful.

For more information:

Email: gtlservices@gtllimited.com

Website: www.gtllimited.com