

Connections in The Gateway City

The "Meet Me" series returns to St. Louis

By Hunter Newby

Editors' note: Throughout 2004, we used this space to identify the key physical layer carrier interconnection points within the major North American markets. This year the series moves forward to identify the service providers with the key wholesale enterprise-focused offerings within those markets. And clearly, the key services in the greatest demand by enterprise users today are Ethernet transport and VoIP.

Although this market is not an international gateway city, it certainly is a domestic one. Just the same as it is for roadways and trains, St. Louis is a junction point for

communications networks. These all-important commerce routes intersect at distinct places in the city, and those places for communications network interconnections are 210 North Tucker Blvd. and 900 Walnut St. Much the same as the rest of North America, the networks in these sites are experiencing a transformation from circuit- to packet-based transport and higher layer services.

Both properties are owned and managed by the same group, Bandwidth Exchange Buildings, and they have taken the right steps to run fiber between them to facilitate interconnections. Making it easy for networks to interconnect is the key to success. That same premise applies to enterprise LAN-WAN (local area network – wide area network) connections and the metro and long haul circuits necessary to put them all together.

Ethernet dominates every LAN in North America; therefore it is logical to see such Ethernet growth in the transport business. Keeping things packet-based and low cost across the continent and ultimately the world is a successful combination.

The core interconnection points for networks in the major cities are in place. In these facilities there is never a local

VoIP Service Provider Question Key

- 1 = Does the provider have an IP based local direct inward dialing service offering accessible via the carrier hotel?
- 2 = Does the provider have a flat rate pricing plan for domestic call termination?
- 3 = Does the provider have an international call termination offering?
- 4 = Does the provider offer a hosted IP PBX service?
- 5 = Does the provider accept Layer 2 Category 5 cross connects at the carrier hotel?

210 N. Tucker VoIP Service Providers

	1	2	3	4	5	Contact	email
Level 3	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Jackson Markley	jackson.markley@level3.com
Global Crossing	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Thomas Topalian	thomas.topalian@globalcrossing.com
XO	No [^]	No ^{^^}	No	No	Yes ^{^^^}	Dan Dunn	daniel.m.dunn@xo.com
Broadwing	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes*	Javed Abdi	javed.abdi@broadwing.com
NetLogic	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Michael Morey	mmorey@netlogic.net

900 Walnut VoIP Service Providers

Level 3	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Jackson Markley	jackson.markley@level3.com
Global Crossing	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Thomas Topalian	thomas.topalian@globalcrossing.com
XO	No [^]	No ^{^^}	No	No	Yes ^{^^^}	Dan Dunn	daniel.m.dunn@xo.com
Broadwing	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes*	Javed Abdi	javed.abdi@broadwing.com
NetLogic	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Michael Morey	mmorey@netlogic.net
Charter Communications	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	John Scheihing	jscheihing@chartercom.com

[^] Will be available with release of VoIP origination end of 3Q05

^{^^^} Fee-based

^{^^} VoIP termination product is based on a rate per minute and varies by NPA NXX

* ICB, not standard

access problem. There is no fiber exhaust between networks. Interconnection prices are fixed and stable for the most part (where there are rational minds at work), and this gives the buyers a very high level of predictability. Setting the right expectations is critical, but what good is all of this potential if the buyer cannot access it?

There still exists a last mile, or first mile, problem in the minds of many. Although this is not a figment of their imagination, the solution to the problem is not as insurmountable as one might think. Enterprise buyers need to know about the operational cost reductions that can be achieved from buying carrier services at the carrier hotels, such as Bandwidth Exchange Buildings. The metro transport providers need to spread that word.

Awareness creates need and urgency and drives access solutions. Where there's a will, there's a way. Where there's a problem to be solved, there's a dollar to be made. Transport providers should position their products as selling access to the marketplace, and they will cost justify their piece of the enterprise's new network as soon as it is built. Every day buyers wait, they are losing money.

One such way to lower operating costs at the marketplace is to move from circuit-switched minutes to VoIP (voice over Internet protocol). This is a voice trunking scenario, from the PBX (private branch exchange) out, and is not about devices or PBX replacement. The VoIP wholesale carriers at Bandwidth Exchange Buildings are ready to offer PSTN (public switched

It's a fairly simple story. The best way for a buyer to take advantage of that is to get an Ethernet presence, via metro circuit from their premises to the marketplace or actually housing an Ethernet switch in the carrier hotel. Think of it as rather than having your phone closet in your office, having it at the carrier hotel. That one move does wonders for buying power and dramatically changes the networking landscape. This also drives metro carrier transport business and the VoIP carrier termination business.

This is not a forward-looking statement or concept; this actually is all happening right now. "The upswing in the demand for VoIP and Ethernet-based services out of the Bandwidth Exchange Buildings has been amazing," according to Bob Guller, managing member of the Bandwidth Exchange Buildings. "In the St. Louis market, the strongest demand for these services has come from enterprise and academia. A large major private university has just completed the switch of both its campus and research networks to Ethernet-based transport. We are also seeing the same for enterprises."

As it has been in each article in this series, there are more providers of these services in the carrier hotels than are listed in the charts. This data is meant to give the readers a view to what is actually happening in the market. For various reasons, including secrecy, certain carriers choose not to participate in the information gathering and awareness process. The ones that could be reached and were willing to be open and discuss their offerings are included below. I thank you all.

Given all of the confusion in the way the networking world is changing, it is clear that the Bandwidth Exchange Buildings in St Louis, as well as their tenants listed below, are on the right track. **FAT**

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Ethernet Service Provider Question Key

- 1 = Is the Ethernet service in use in this metro area today?
- 2 = Is the Ethernet service native Layer 2?
- 3 = Is the Ethernet service Layer 2 over public Layer 3 IP?
- 4 = Is the Ethernet service a flat rate price and zero-mile within the metro footprint?
- 5 = Is the Ethernet service metro as well as long haul?

telephone network) quality call terminations at lower rates.

210 N. Tucker Ethernet Service Providers

	1	2	3	4	5	Contact	email
Broadwing	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Javed Abdi	javed.abdi@broadwing.com
Charter Communications	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Robert Kittner	robert.kittner@chartercom.com
Cogent	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Andrew Hathaway	ahathaway@cogentco.com
Level 3	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Ketan Patel	ketan.patel@level3.com
XO Communications	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Dan Dunn	daniel.m.dunn@xo.com

900 Walnut Ethernet Service Providers

Broadwing	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Javed Abdi	javed.abdi@broadwing.com
Charter Communications	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Robert Kittner	robert.kittner@chartercom.com
Cogent	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Andrew Hathaway	ahathaway@cogentco.com
Level 3	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Ketan Patel	ketan.patel@level3.com
XO Communications	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Dan Dunn	daniel.m.dunn@xo.com