



ENUM Lands On Wall Street

By Hunter Newby



Theres no limit to the value of accurate and complete information. It helps keep everyone informed and on the right track in the collective pursuit of anything. In this particular instance, the goal is VoIP peering and, more specifically, ENUM. Make no mistake; there is a lot at stake here. Control of the ENUM numbering plan and the potentially lucrative returns from it are up for grabs.

Over the past year this series has covered the players in this space, their services, customer focus, and business models. An attempt to hone broad definitions of terms has been made to keep everyone in check and on the same page. VoIP peering is evolving, maturing, and expanding rapidly. Its significance is being noted and its threat to the existing voice business model is becoming very clear. As a result, it has begun to receive coverage at the Wall St. level.

On January 10, 2006 Credit Suisse First Boston (CSFB) issued an equity research report titled Can You Hear Me Now? ENUM and VoIPs Emerging Addressing Infrastructure. In general its good to see the association between financial research analysts and ENUM because it means that they have given it enough consideration to create the report and expended energy in distributing it. If nothing else it helps to raise awareness of ENUM itself.

The report provides a good introduction to the technologies of VoIP, ENUM, DNS, and SIP that are the basis of the monumental shift that is taking place, but it was very narrowly focused on only two ENUM directory providers that were, in CSFBs opinion, well positioned, those being NeuStar and VeriSign. In CSFBs opinion NeuStar is better positioned to be the winner of the process that is underway in the United States to select a top-level ENUM registry operator. What is important to note is the CSFB disclaimer that they do and seek to do business with the companies in the report. CSFB was one of the underwriters of the NeuStar IPO.

Considering that they have a vested interest its not surprising that they believe their candidate to be well positioned to succeed. If they didnt, why would they have invested anything? Its not the support of NeuStar, or anyone, that needs to be analyzed, but rather the facts that support the position. Their opinion comes from the fact that CSFB views NeuStar as the better positioned vendor, given that the company already operates the authoritative directories that manage all telephone area codes and numbers in North America. Thats a very strong claim and certainly NeuStars experience is worthy of an edge in the race to be top tier ENUM manager.

Since Im not an expert, I decided to ask someone at Telcordia what they thought about this. I do know that Telcordia operates something called the Telcordia Routing Administration (TRA) that produces the Telcordia LERG Routing Guide. It was rather obscure and not too exciting, but in my days back at WorldCom in the mid 90s, I remember the LERG Routing Guide being referred to by my provisioners as the Bible of telephone numbering.

This is what Gary Richenaker, Chief Architect, Industry Information Services, Telcordia, had to say.

They (NeuStar) administer area codes, but the Telcordia LERG Routing Guide provides all the routing data that all carriers require to route and complete calls. In addition, it provides critical data needed for billing, etc. Therefore, Telcordia has the authoritative source of information, not NeuStar. NeuStar is the current administrator who assigns codes to carriers who then implement those codes in the network and that implementation is represented in the LERG Routing Guide. While NeuStar currently administers the NPAC (Number Portability Administration Center) it only contains roughly four to five percent of telephone numbers. Carriers could not complete calls without the information contained in the LERG Routing Guide.

This is very interesting, but how does this relate to VoIP and ENUM Peering services? Will Telcordia play a role in this increasingly important and growing space?

By extending the information in the Telcordia LERG Routing Guide, with the Telcordia VoIP Routing Registry, we provide a migration or evolutionary path for carriers. Calls will be routed in both the PSTN and IP for quite some time and switches will have both PSTN and IP interconnection both now and in IMS for the foreseeable future. If a carrier went with a VeriSign or NeuStar database, the PSTN and IP routing information would be managed separately and two administration processes would need to be established; one for PSTN (LERG Routing Guide) and one for IP. For carriers who use our VoIP Routing Registry, there will be only one administrative process and the routing data would be in one place.

So, based on this Telcordia announcement we can count them in as a VoIP peering service provider and consider the old-fashioned LERG Routing Guide rather IP-trendy. With this knowledge maybe future research reports will include Telcordia in the mix, not to mention all of the private ENUM registries that are growing out there.

Telcordia is sure to be showing up on a VoIP Peering panel discussion in some sunny city in the near future. **IT**

Hunter Newby is chief strategy officer at telx. For more information, please visit www.telx.com (**news - alerts**).

If you are interested in purchasing reprints of this article (in either print or PDF format), please visit Reprint Management Services online at www.reprintbuyer.com or contact a representative via e-mail at reprints@tmcnet.com or by phone at 800-290-5460.

[\[Return To Table Of Contents\]](#)

Copyright 2008 Technology Marketing Corporation (TMC) - All rights reserved