Ericsson, Nortel Networks and General Datacomm Demonstrate Key Component of MPLS Standard

-- Constrained Routing Implementation will deliver vendor independent high performance networking

Ericsson, Nortel Networks, and General DataComm Industries, Inc., (GDC), today announced a successful interworking demonstration of constrained routing using the label distribution protocol (LDP), a key component in the much anticipated Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) standard to deliver high-performance wide area internetworking.

Constraint-based routing using LDP allows for Traffic Engineering through the set-up of Explicit Routes in an MPLS domain. In addition, it allows for the set-up of paths based on other "attributes" or "constraints" such as QoS, Pre-emption (set-up/holding priorities), etc. This is a contribution to the effort of building a better standard for carrier class IP Networks.

The interoperability demo, which took place at the Nortel Networks facilities in Billerica, MA, successfully demonstrated an integrated MPLS solution. The solution greatly simplifies the traffic management and traffic engineering of future high performance internetworking systems that can enable support of Quality of Service (QoS) based applications.

Interoperability of the emerging MPLS standard was demonstrated operating across a combination of Backbone Node (BN) multiprotocol router and Passport 6000/7000 switching platforms from Nortel Networks, the AXD and AXI IP and ATM switching systems from Ericsson, and GDC's APEX ATM switch platform. The demonstration of interoperability among the three companies' equipment is the result of an agreement previously announced between Ericsson and Bay Networks, and Ericsson and GDC earlier this year (March 16, 1998).

The cooperative, standards-based approach will provide Telecom Operators, Service Providers, Internet Service Providers and Enterprises with open, best-of-breed, end-to-end IP/ATM based Wide Area Network Solutions. This approach is seen as one of the key enablers in a merged telecom and datacom scenario. Nortel Networks, Ericsson and GDC have drafted a proposal for the constrained routing for MPLS together with a group of industry leaders in the MPLS area.

Ericsson is the leading provider in the new telecoms world, with communications solutions that combine telecom and datacom technologies with the freedom of mobility for the user. With more than 100,000 employees in 140 countries, Ericsson simplifies communications for its customers – network operators, service providers, enterprises and consumers – the world over.

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About MPLS
MPLS is an emerging Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) protocol standard. The primary benefits of MPLS are that it combines layer 2 performance with layer 3 connectivity and network services while simultaneously reducing complexity and operational costs compared to other IP/ATM connectivity options. Additionally, when used with ATM, MPLS enables ATM based Quality-of-Service contracts providing all types of service providers with telecom-class traffic engineering and capacity planning features. At the same time Network Service Providers and Enterprises can enable voice and video services on the same network infrastructure thereby increasing capacity utilisation, reducing total investments, lower total cost of ownership to increase revenue and profit potential.