

The Secure Mobile Data Solutions for Enterprises (SMDSe) initiative aims to accelerate the adoption of 3G wireless for the enterprise sector. It comprises a consortium of partners with the common goal of easy-to-use, secure high-speed wireless data. The companies involved include Hewlett-Packard, Proxim, IPunplugged, Sierra Wireless, iPass and Lucent. This roundtable aims to explain SMDSe aims in more detail

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3G Solutions for operators: ***What is today's enterprise community demanding from wireless solution providers?***

Sierra Wireless: The enterprise community has consistently identified the need for companies to have complete mobile data solutions to enable their field force. The demand to increase productivity and improve mobile workforce efficiencies is key to staying ahead of competitors in today's enterprise space.

Lucent: We've commissioned detailed primary research on this question. It's clear the demands of the enterprise market are pretty well understood: both mobile workers and IT/telecoms managers are eagerly awaiting high-speed secure wireless data services. What's really exciting for 3G operators is the market for mobile office services is virtually untapped. Existing wireless technologies simply do not meet the requirements of the mobile professional. Only 3G enables cost-effective, wide-area coverage with the bandwidth to support high data throughput and end-to-end security. In other words, this is an entirely new revenue stream.

Proxim: There's no doubt mobile professionals want seamless and ▶

transparent access to the same applications and services as they have in their offices. They want access to corporate intranets in areas like airports, stations and even customer office locations – wherever they happen to be on the road. The enterprise community realises such access will increase overall productivity.

IPunplugged: But what we need to remember is that enterprises really don't care about the technology – they're looking for solutions. They just want ubiquitous access to their resources at any time, regardless whether the delivery mechanism is 802.11b, UMTS, GPRS, CDMA20001x or EVDO.

HP: Absolutely right. The enterprise business manager wants incremental or new business capabilities – not another 'new' technology implementation. Companies want a clear picture of how costs can be reduced, productivity increased, and new revenue generated. Where possible, enterprises want wireless/mobile technology packaged in a simple form and easy for end-users to use. From an IT management perspective, companies need stable, scalable, secure, manageable and easily deployable solutions for their distributed organisations and they want to understand how they can extend IT investments that have already been made.

iPass: It's worth pointing out that enterprise customers see wide area mobile data services as a complement to their existing remote access services. This means they're looking for a means to easily integrate the capability, ensuring consistent security, ease of use, ease of support and quality of service. The message is clear – companies are demanding a single service provider offering integrated, secure, IP dial, ISDN, WiFi, wireline broadband and 2.5/3G mobile data services. The IT organisations of today's enterprises are overburdened and unwilling to support multiple business, technical and billing relationships for their remote access service.

3GS: ***Why have your companies come together to address corporate sector demand?***

IpUnplugged: Increasingly, enterprises are demanding complete high-speed data solutions that include services along with enabling technologies. We've all realised that partnership is the only way to achieve a genuinely comprehensive offering.

HP: There's no doubt that together we can offer customers better choices that meet their business objectives. We hear from our customers that they don't want to struggle with integrating 'pieces' of technology – especially when the technology in question is rapidly evolving.

> "The message to enterprises is that if they haven't already evaluated how mobilising their workforce can benefit them – they need to begin now!"

iPass: In our view, the founding companies of SMDSe are individually clear leaders in their respective markets and collectively they add up to a potentially unrivalled team. These are companies with complementary capabilities that are uniquely positioned to catalyse the marketplace with combined solutions.

Lucent: This partnership is about creating an end-to-end portfolio of products and services. It's also about providing wireless solution providers (WSPs) with significant competitive advantage in the enterprise market. By drawing on a diverse range of skills, the SMDSe partnership ensures that the components of the SMDSe offer are fully tested and presented as an integrated solution. This reduces risk and accelerates time to market.

3GS: ***What are the challenges facing enterprises and their wireless solution providers?***

Proxim: There's no doubt security must be at the top of the agenda. Wireless solution providers must convince enterprise IT managers that by deploying existing technologies, mobile data applications can be offered in a highly secure manner.

HP: At present, the end user experience is not where it needs to be in the mobile data space. Either coverage is inadequate, speed is insufficient, the solution is not secure enough or the solution is simply too difficult to use and support. For the business manager, an immediate return on investment is not very clear and companies have a difficult time justifying the investment in today's tough economic climate. Yet, we are hearing from many customers that they want to at least get started – to have a strategy in place, and perhaps pilots underway, so that when economic pressures shift, they're in a good place to quickly move forward.

Lucent: The economic downturn means enterprises must find smarter ways to do business. Companies need to increase productivity and

efficiency while maximising customer satisfaction. As a result, there's renewed interest in more effective business tools – in particular, taking IT on the road. However, existing wireless technologies are not able to deliver mobile office services – only 3G can provide anytime, anywhere access to corporate IT services and information without compromising speed and security. Another major challenge facing operators is provisioning – quick and easy subscriber provisioning and activation is essential to the rapid adoption of new services. A key component of Lucent's 3G solution is rapid subscriber provisioning and service activation – enabling end-users to get online in a matter of minutes, rather than days. Another traditional roadblock to the success of new wireless services is non-availability of end-user devices. SMDSe has the solution – plug-in 3G data cards provide existing laptop PCs and PDAs with 3G connectivity. WSPs do not need to wait for 3G handsets before launching new services. In short, WSPs must link up with business partners who know the enterprise market and know 3G – the SMDSe partnership has this knowledge, providing WSPs with essential competitive advantage.

Sierra Wireless: We'd identify five main challenges. There's a real need to facilitate collaboration and communication, increase productivity and improve efficiency and effectiveness. In addition, the industry as a whole must tighten the supply chain and work hard to raise customer satisfaction and loyalty. None of this can be achieved unless we offer a total solution that can be easily implemented into the organisation.

IpUnplugged: They've been mentioned before, but we'd argue that the key challenges come down to usability and security. Keeping track of all different networks available is a troublesome task that should not be a user concern. Neither should they have to bother about security issues. Ubiquitous access should be made seamless and secure – without user intervention.

> "Quick and easy subscriber provisioning and activation is essential to the rapid adoption of new services."

Ipass: We'd agree with the emphasis on the security angle. Enterprises want to be sure they can take advantage of these emerging mobile data services in a manner that fits in with their corporate security policies and requirements. In addition, such services must be intuitive and easily leveraged by the corporate user base in a manner that does not overly burden their support organisation. Ultimately, corporates are viewing mobile data services as a means of increasing productivity at the end-user level. But there's an important caveat: they won't deploy if such services represent significant security vulnerability, or place a huge resource burden and cost on the IT organisation to support the capability. The challenge is to address these concerns.

3GS: ***What does your company bring to the SMDSe partnership?***

Lucent: We'd point to our network deployment experience and in-depth understanding of spread spectrum technology. Having already deployed over 70,000 CDMA base stations worldwide, we have the experience, expertise and products to help ensure rapid, low-risk roll-out of field-proven, reliable 3G infrastructure.

HP: We bring three fundamental qualities to the party. First, a passion for customer satisfaction coupled with HP's commitment to innovation and excellence. We'd argue HP is a company with a sustainable commitment to mobility. Second, we possess a deep understanding of how mobile solutions and wireless technology can be applied to meet the needs of business. This goes hand-in-hand with the expertise to integrate the technologies underpinning wireless solutions. Finally, and particularly relevant in the present context, HP has a long history of partnering with companies which are the best in the industry to offer superior value for customers.

Proxim: We tackle the WLAN and wireless wide area networking (WWAN) side of the story. Proxim is behind the ORiNOCO WLAN infrastructure solutions – a complete set of Wi-Fi-compliant WLAN products for secure access in enterprises and public hot spots. We have a leading market position in both IEEE 802.11b and 802.11a solutions.

Ipass: In the first instance, this initiative will highlight iPass' dedication to meeting enterprise IT security and policy management requirements. The resolution of these issues will help expedite enterprise adoption of emerging 3G mobile data services and drive users and revenues to mobile operators' networks. Leveraging iPass' large installed base of enterprise users, mobile operators can attract a significant enterprise end-user population to their networks. Secondly, because iPass also manages an industry-leading network clearing house back-end, the mobile operator has the flexibility to initiate its own bilateral roaming agreements with third- ▶

party network service providers. Through its clearing house, iPass handles cross-network authentication to enable roaming between networks, the ability to rate networks and transaction settlement. The iPass offering is ideal for any mobile operator wishing to build a global footprint and extend existing infrastructure to multiple connectivity technologies.

Sierra Wireless: Our contribution is very straightforward. We bring superior 3G CDMA2000 wireless modems to the marketplace that will make it easier for mobile operators to provide enterprise customers with secure and easy-to-use high-speed wireless access to critical applications. Our wide-area modems coupled with software, hardware devices and infrastructure technology create a unique solution for the enterprise.

IpUnplugged: While most of the partners in SMDSe are working hard on various different access technologies, ipUnplugged is coupling these together into a seamless experience. We make sure that users have ubiquitous access to all their corporate services – without compromising security.

3GS: ***How is SMDSe likely to benefit your customers?***

HP: One key benefit is a more pre-packaged approach, which will reduce complexity and cost, and facilitate ease of adoption. Another is the enabling of several new levels of connectivity, which will address some of the issues of security, coverage and scalability.

Proxim: A key benefit for our customers is the integral solution for both enterprises and service providers. In effect, the SMDSe consortium can act as a one-stop-shop delivering all mobile data applications to customers.

Lucent: First and foremost, the integrated, end-to-end portfolio of SMDSe solutions and services enables operators to satisfy the needs of an untapped market – the enterprise market – and generate new revenues. The extensive experience and skill sets of the SMDSe partners provides WSPs with a fast track to success in the enterprise market. This will prove important in the months and years ahead. Analysis of past marketplace disruptions has shown that the first-to-market operator is likely to capture 30 to 40 per cent long term market share. There are clear advantages for operators that can capture early adopters and build relationships with significant enterprise customers and opinion formers ahead of the competition.

Sierra Wireless: Business users will be able to access enterprise applications via WLANs and 3G networks with the same level of security typically associated with other common remote access methods such as cable modem, dial-up, and DSL. This will equate to secure, high-speed wireless data for the enterprise.

IpUnplugged: We feel that with a strong group of partners, customers can benefit from a comprehensive, well-tested high-speed data solution that encompasses all their needs.

3GS: ***When do you believe that enterprises will start to see these benefits?***

HP: Now! The message to enterprises is that if they haven't already evaluated how mobilising their workforce can benefit them – they need to begin now! And if they need help, we are ready to assist them with setting a strategy and roadmap, conducting pilots and managing deployments.

IpUnplugged: Exactly. As we speak, operators around the world are rolling out their wireless data services. The operators have to prove that it works before a massive customer adoption can take place. This proof is happening right now for CDMA2000 and we will very soon see more and more customers and potential customers recognising the benefits.

Proxim: The fact is there's an urgent need for these capabilities. In today's increasingly challenging business climate, it has become critical for businesses to improve their decision-making processes. Making faster and better business decisions requires access to vital data in all types of situations. Mobile professionals' expectations are growing. They require instant and transparent access to information, wherever they are. And they expect to continue working, uninterrupted, as they move from place to place. Businesses need these services now.

Sierra Wireless: To add to that, the enterprise and end-users must truly begin to see the return on investment and how a wireless WAN solution can contribute to their bottom line. In addition, making them more productive in their work environment will allow them to recognise they have a competitive edge in today's marketplace.

Lucent: Enterprises will begin to benefit from SMDSe as soon as it is implemented within their organisation. Studies with enterprise IT departments have shown that SMDSe will be budget neutral within the first year of implementation. Commercial service availability is dependent upon the WSP's strategic roadmap. From our perspective, SMDSe is ready to begin commercial deployment from Q4 2002. ■