

## Philippine telco joins Ethernet forum

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SINGAPORE - In a move expected to promote Carrier Ethernet use in the Philippines, Globe Telecom joined in April the Metro Ethernet Forum (MEF), an alliance of over 145 organizations pushing for the interoperability and deployment of the technology worldwide.

The announcement made only recently to *Computerworld Philippines* at NetEvents 2009 by MEF makes Globe the first Filipino company to join MEF, which advocates the use of Ethernet worldwide.

"What we're doing with Globe is a take-off (to promoting the use of Ethernet) in the Philippines," says Kevin Vachon, MEF chief operating officer. "Ethernet use is expected to generate \$38.9 billion by 2013, (even if) the Asia-Pacific region continues to be (largely) late in its adaption. But since Ethernet (consolidates business functions, and) consolidation can only be good, we expect APAC to follow suit soon. Globe is (leading in the Philippines) on this development."

Globe was not at NetEvents 2009 to comment.

Ethernet is a local area network (LAN) architecture developed by Xerox Corporation with DEC and Intel Corp. in 1976. LAN allows for networking to occur through the use of a common cable shared by all devices on a certain network. For as long as a device is attached to this cable, it can communicate with any other devices also attached to the cable, so that the network may be expanded to accommodate additional devices sans the need to modify the devices already on the network.

"The benefits of Ethernet to users are numerous," says Victor Zhang, director for IP marketing and knowledge transfer at Alcatel Lucent. "It is scalable, since it integrates (needed) technologies of companies (without the need) for additional capital expenses; and, subsequently, businesses can maintain their competitive edge because they are best tooled even while seeing savings in prices."

Globe invested US\$15,000 for the MEF membership, joining over 20 other MEF certified service providers, offering 70 services and over 350 certified systems.

Globe is not the first to offer MEF-certified products and services in the Philippines. Since 2008, Indian fixed line and broadband operator Tata Communications has been offering Ethernet products/services through local non MEF-certified companies including the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT) and Bayan Telecommunications Inc. (BayanTel).

According to John Hoffman, Tata Communications head of Ethernet product management, "since the products/services are provided in different platforms (that vary according to different countries), service providers benefit from getting an MEF certification even if the products/services they sell are already MEF-certified."

For Hoffman, Ethernet is "not an 'add-water' technology - it isn't as (simple) as that. It is complicated, and you have a lot learning to do, so early adaption is the best (approach)," he says.

MEF is slated to start propagating Ethernet in the Philippines next week.