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June 17, 2010

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# NBN launch 'won't slide': Nucleus

by Joseph Waring

Nucleus Connect, the wholesale carrier in Singapore's groundbreaking NBN project, is on track to launch commercial service in Q3.

Nucleus Connect GM for commercial services, Malcolm Rodriques, told *Show Daily* that he's been told by his CEO that that date "is not going to slide. Internally we face a lot of pressure, but everything seems to be coming along on schedule."

At launch he said fiber coverage is expected to be about 50% of Singapore – both residential and non-residential. "Then we'll offer the basic 100-Mbps and 1-Gbps access to homes and businesses."

The StarHub-owned firm has already launched co-location and interoperability testing services, which service providers take-up in advance of launch date so they can start to install equipment into their central offices (COs) and test their applications.

Asked about cooperating with OpenNet, which is backed by rival Singapore Telecom, he admitted the company was "always concerned" because the central office was co-located in SingTel exchanges.

"But it's been pretty good so far and according to our schedule," he said.

Rodriques said Nucleus was still working with OpenNet on sorting out end-to-end processes. "A three-layer model is more

complicated than a two-layer model, because you have extra handoffs from the RSP to the opco to the netco."

Under the model developed by the IDA, wholesaler Nucleus is in the middle, playing the role of "opco," on infrastructure leased from the "netco," Open-

Net, and selling to the customer-facing retail provider, or RSP. Nucleus selected Huawei to build the end-to-end network, which includes 80-Tbps IP core clustering routers and a GPON access platform.

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## Sat operators blast new pay TV rules

by John C. Tanner

Satellite operators yesterday blasted the government's new pay TV scheme, which requires channels to be carried by both Singapore cable operators.

They say the scheme from the Media Development Authority (MDA) would eliminate profits in the sector and ultimately harm consumers as well.

Measat COO Paul-Brown Kenyon told a panel at a satellite summit panel session that mandating non-exclusivity "is dangerous, because if you don't

have differentiated content in a pay-TV market, you see a massive focus on price.

"That may be good for consumers in the short term but it's bad for the industry in the long term because they lose money and they can't invest in future networks. It destroys their future."

Brown described the MDA's decision as a "political issue" because it was primarily about sports rights and the ability of people to watch very popular content, such as the World Cup.

AsiaSat CEO Peter Jackson



### SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER:

Verzio Booth assistants Tet Qin Mei (left) and Stella Tet distribute literature and screen cleaners promoting Verzio's Internet-ready consumer electronics. (4C3-03)

also criticized the exclusivity ban – as well as similar policies in markets like India and Indonesia – saying that making every platform a commodity means "zero profit for everyone".

Jackson said the logic of

banning exclusive content to drive down content acquisition costs – which can then be passed on to consumers and recouped by higher subscription volumes

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## Asia dominates broadband sub growth

by Dylan Bushell-Embling

The number of broadband lines worldwide swelled 3.12% to 484 million in Q1, with Asia accounting for 53% of the growth, says the Broadband Forum.

China alone accounted for 45% of all global lines added, recording 5.7% quarter-on-quarter growth to register 112.6 million subscribers.

Japan trailed only China and the US by number of subscribers, with 31.8 million compared to the US's 87 million, but growth in the market slowed in Q1 compared to the prior quarter.

The only other Asian nation to make it into the top ten, Korea, improved its performance relative to 4Q09, reaching 16.6 million subscribers and comfortably holding on to seventh place.

Overall, six of the top ten countries improved their performance in Q1.

"With all the recent technology advancements and service provider pushes, it is great to see how broadband continues to grow on a global basis," Broadband Forum COO Robin Mersh said.

The quarter also saw abundant growth in the IPTV market. Subscribers are up a record 46% on a year ago, Broadband Forum said, with 11.4 million new customers added during the 12-month period. There are now around 36.3 million IPTV subscribers worldwide.

While Europe continues to lead the IPTV market with nearly half of total subscribers, Asia is beginning to challenge that dominance. The region added 2.9 million customers in the last year, and 1.2 million in

Q1 alone, increasing its share to just shy of a third of the global market.

China led by growth in this market as well, and now has over 5 million lines. South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong are also among the top ten IPTV markets.

DSL remains the most popular access technology for broadband, but fiber is catching up fast. Asia now has an estimated 50 million fiber subscribers, and the sector's growth is expected to outstrip DSL nearly everywhere.

The exceptions will be in second-wave broadband countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines, which still has room for DSL to grow, and areas where the geography of a country makes wireless broadband a more attractive proposition than fixed connections. \*

## ...OVERNIGHT WIRE...

### Conexus launches flat-rate roaming in Vietnam

The Conexus Mobile Alliance has launched its flat-rate data roaming tariff plan in Vietnam and Macau. Conexus members FET, Hutchison Hong Kong and StarHub will offer the discounted pricing in Vietnam and Macau this month, followed by Indosat, NTT DoCoMo and Thailand's True Move over the next few months. Eight alliance members have meanwhile introduced SMS roaming alerts set to automatically warn users when they pass a certain usage threshold.

### Virtual security market primed for massive growth

The global market for virtual security appliances surged 119% year-on-year in 1Q10, and is on track to be worth \$1.6 billion in 2014, Infonetics said. The market was worth a comparatively small \$203.8 million in 2009. But it is poised for eightfold growth over the next five years, Infonetics predicted, driven by the rapid adoption of server virtualization and the new security challenges this presents.

### DishTV choose Ericsson for upgrade

DishTV, India's largest direct-to-home satellite operator, has selected Ericsson to upgrade its satellite bandwidth efficiency, increase channel capacity and offer more choice to its subscribers in HD and SD. The head-end upgrade enables DishTV's seven million subscribers to enjoy new HD services. Viewers can also access new SD channels without the need to swap existing MPEG-2 set-top boxes.

### Arianespace to launch 2nd VNPT satellite

Arianespace has contracted with Lockheed Martin Commercial Space Systems (LMCSS) to launch the VINASAT-2 satellite for Vietnam Posts and Telecommunications Group (VNPT) in the second quarter of 2012. VINASAT-2 will be built by LMCSS. The satellite will be launched on an Ariane 5 or a Soyuz launch vehicle from the Guiana Space Center, Europe's Spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana.

### \$1m order for C-COM

C-COM Satellite Systems has received \$1 million worth of new orders for its iNetVu mobile antenna systems from China. The antenna systems will be used for cellular backhaul, emergency backup and disaster management and are expected to ship by the end of this quarter.

### TD-SCDMA baseband market to double in 2010

The TD-SCDMA baseband market is set to grow 200% in 2010, Strategy Analytics has forecast. While TD-SCDMA baseband revenues generated just 1.4% of total cellular baseband earnings in 2009, an inevitable reduction in the price of TD-SCDMA handsets stimulated by competition between chip vendors has the potential to help establish TD-SCDMA as a viable alternative to W-CDMA and CDMA2000 in China.

### BT promises fiber network launch before Olympics

BT says its fiber-based broadband network will be online well before the Olympic and Paralympic games take place in London in 2012. It is revamping previous network plans to now enable 114 exchanges and offer speeds of up to 40 Mbps in about 87% of the city.

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CommunicAsia2010 Daily News  
is published by Questex Media Inc.

MANAGING DIRECTOR  
Johnathan Bigelow

GROUP PUBLISHER  
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**SMakit UP:** Huawei Technologies product manager Li Kai Jun demonstrates the SmaKit S7, the company's new Android tablet device.

## Satellite powers Philippines' first automated election

Last month's presidential election in the Philippines – won by Benigno Aquino III, the son of former President Corazon Aquino and Benigno Aquino Jr – made history on the technology front as well. Not only was it the country's first automated election, but it also marked one of the largest-ever deployments of broadband satellite technology, with help from SingTel and Thaicom's Ipstar.

Satellite played a key role in enabling automated voting in polling stations across the country, doing away with the old system of counting votes manually and hand-delivering results from each polling station to election headquarters. Last November, the Philippines' Commission on Elections signed a deal with Smartmatic, which bought over 5,000 Inmarsat BGAN (Broadband Global Area Network) terminals from Addvalue Communications, a subsidiary of Inmarsat partner Addvalue Technologies, to connect Smartmatic's 82,200 automated voting machines across the archipelago.

SingTel says it provided BGAN satellite connectivity to link more than 5,600 polling centers nationwide and 1,700+ canvassing and consolidation centers, and incorporated its ConnectPlus IP VPN services. SingTel and Smartmatic say it's the largest deployment of BGAN terminals to date.

Meanwhile, Thaicom provided Smartmatic with 680 Ipstar user terminal units for installation at Municipal and Provincial Canvassing Centers throughout the country to transmit votes to data centers in Manila via the Thaicom 4 satellite.

Both Thaicom and SingTel supplied their solutions in conjunction with local partner We are IT (WIT) Philippines, Inc.

"We were given an aggressive timeframe to implement this project, which was done on time due to Ipstar and We are IT Philippines, Inc.'s consolidated effort on the deployment of the VSATs," said Sowmya Narayanan, country manager of Ipstar Philippines. "More than 77,000

polling centers were connected to 680 Ipstar VSATs nationwide and relied on Ipstar's technology to transmit voting tallies on

election day, and the system performed flawlessly."

In fact, according to Smartmatic, the first results came via

satellite 30 minutes after polls closed from the mountainous regions in northern Luzon, where there are no regular cell phone

sites. Smartmatic says 92% of the total votes of the entire country were transmitted and tallied within 24 hours. \*

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# Cloud pretenders

by Chee Sing Chan

Little doubt that there's already plenty being said about cloud computing. But among the ongoing stream of debate on definitions, on how it will work and how it won't work, the most glaring gripe for us in the media is how every technology vendor claims to offer a piece of the cloud.

Let's get this clear, cloud computing – in the sense of cloud-based services – promises to provide a real-time pay-as-you-go computing resource via the web for consumers and businesses. It's the utility computing dream made reality today. We can request servers and storage on-demand via the web, we can consume applications and leverage online platforms in an on-demand fashion. And there are companies that do this today.

Cloud computing is real and it will be leveraged today and tomorrow by businesses that find the right use for it – it's not for everything. And all this without adding any hardware, software or in most cases any new IT resource to support this.

So the question many want an answer to, myself included, is what exactly are the usual suspects – IBM, HP, Cisco, EMC – all saying when they claim to be putting a company on the path to cloud computing.

So far I don't see any real cloud services from these providers. Certainly not in the strict sense of being able to put in a request for a server, storage rack or networking performance and have that provisioned immediately and pay for only the amount requested. If this is available, then the vendors are not com-

municating this very well.

What I, and I'm sure most businesses see, is that these guys are all promising to build your own cloud for you. They have all the pieces to help you build a data center like Google or Amazon.

But these are mere pieces, and maybe at some point you could replicate the dynamic virtual capabilities that Google operates in its own data centers, but is that what you really want to do? And do you have the time and resource to do that?

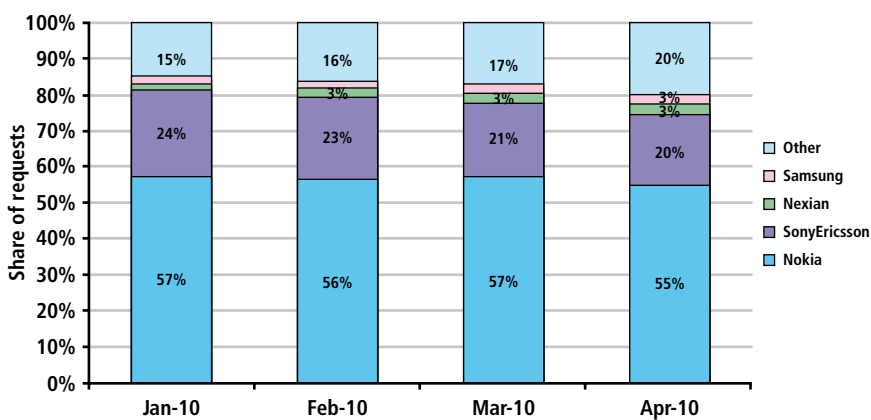
The point of cloud computing is to help alleviate the burden of managing IT, let someone else worry about virtualizing servers and coordinating and patching all the IT resources that go into delivering a dynamic real-time service to your users.

Granted there will be some that will pursue this path – banks like HSBC or DBS, companies with such resources and scale that it makes sense, particularly in such a cloud-averse regulatory environment like banking. But for the rest, or at least if your core competence as a business is not IT, why would you want to build your own cloud?

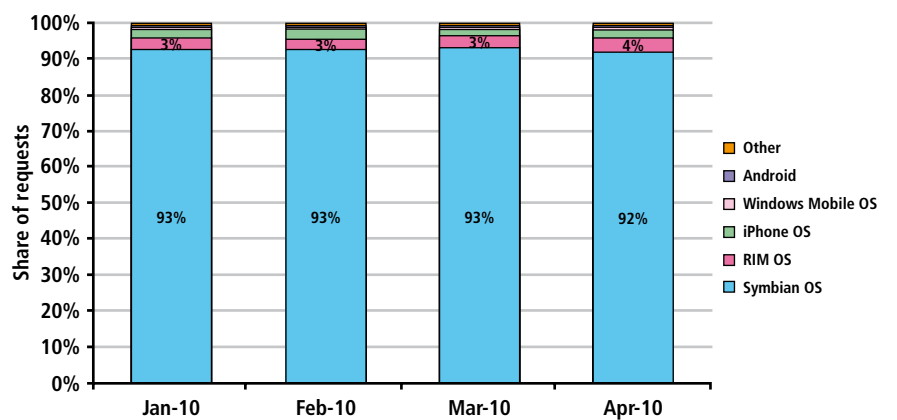
Vendors, let's get the message straight, let's stop pretending – you're not really providing cloud computing today. You're helping build clouds, whether private or public. Certainly no mean feat and in many cases, the dynamic virtual systems and networks are for actual cloud service providers. But building cloud and providing cloud computing are vastly different things. And it's time for the real providers to stand up and deliver. \*

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