



Just A Moment...
IT Commentary

Staying Connected

by Leon A. Enriquez

Electronic mail is today the standard way that we stay connected, keep our communications channels open, and transact business at Internet speed. E-mail is now the essential part of the workplace because it extends our value chain from end-to-end -- from our company to our business partners and ultimately, to our customers. And we take this utility for granted – as long as we remain plugged to the internal network infrastructure which then extends our reach beyond our organisation to the World Wide Web.

Just stop for a moment and imagine the dramatic consequences that arise when your company's mail server goes down. For one, you immediately feel the repercussions of lost productivity. Users feel frustrated and stressed simply because they are denied this networking tool. You feel the effects of the loss of connectivity. And you grumble and complain to the IT department until the e-mail service is restored.

Clearly, the new millennium is characterised by global networking convergence, communications, collaboration and commerce on a phenomenal scale. With pervasive connectivity, the stage is set to usher the global knowledge revolution. How?

Volumes have been written about the infrastructure of the old telecommunications world which has converged with the data networks resulting in the new world of information-communications. And all this is due largely to the ubiquitous Internet Protocol (IP) being adopted as an open standard. Going beyond simple voice communications, telephony and digital multimedia encompasses all the traffic and services, and all the applications and management approaches delivered over telecom networks today.



Naturally, we need to ensure that empowering technologies are exploited in order to realise the fruits of this knowledge era. For example, the following are necessary considerations:

- ◆ Enhancing practical agility, speed, capacity, reliability and availability;
- ◆ Building mission-critical online business performance;
- ◆ Transforming supply chain integration through effective e-business initiatives;
- ◆ Attaining one-to-one customer relationships;
- ◆ Streamlining operations by bringing separate network infrastructures together;
- ◆ Meeting the growing demands for enhanced bandwidth support, and applications support; and
- ◆ Support for remote access, and distance learning.

No doubt, many of these issues are not new. But they are vital issues that must be addressed quickly if we are to profit from the way we conduct and transform our traditional business -- into one that can dynamically leverage technology for optimum payback. The basics remain unchanged. Connectivity holds the key to success.

For the first time in recent history, it is now possible to tap the creative potential of the human individual – in a collaborative way. What follows is the empire of the mind – where creativity and innovation bear fruit in marketable intellectual property that work within the context of constant change – to attain a critical mass that fuels the knowledge-based Net economy. Staying connected is no longer an option. On the contrary, it is a basic pre-requisite for success.

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