

PRODUCT FLASH

Cisco Strengthens Carrier Ethernet Design with a New E-FTTH Platform and Enhanced Instrumentation and Resiliency

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IN THIS PRODUCT FLASH

This IDC Flash discusses the extension of the ME 3400 product line with the ME 3400-24FS Ethernet Access Switch and Cisco's end-to-end systems approach to the Carrier Ethernet market. As business and residential services converge onto single Carrier Ethernet platforms, product lines are extending to meet new market opportunities and systems are being hardened to ensure the *Carrier* in Carrier Ethernet.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

- ☒ The ME 3400-24FS Switch is equipped with 24 100M Ethernet ports and two Gigabit Ethernet ports. Identical to the ME3400-24TS 10/100 copper platform that is ideal for enterprise building deployments, the 3400-24FS now extends fiber within multidwelling apartment buildings, taking fiber all the way to the apartment unit. Fiber connections to business or consumer customers in these multitenant and multidwelling buildings are a growing market, especially in the emerging regions such as EMEA and Asia/Pacific.
- ☒ Cisco is also announcing the ability of its Carrier Ethernet design to extend 50ms resiliency from the core of the network all the way to the building basement, which it claims others cannot do cost effectively. With the 3400-24FS deployed in multitenant buildings as well as enterprise accounts, Cisco can now extend its end-to-end resiliency through Resilient Ethernet Protocol (REP), a new Cisco-based Ethernet recovery protocol. With other platforms such as the ME6524, it can use MPLS Fast Reroute (FRR), providing choice to its customers at different price points. The Ethernet access edge is important because most other solutions do not extend 50ms resiliency past the aggregation point in the network and another FTTH box must be deployed, breaking the end-to-end resiliency and visibility of the traffic flow.
- ☒ Included with this update, Cisco is introducing the Embedded Event Manager (EEM). This essentially provides SONET/SDH-like service-level agreements (SLAs) for Carrier Ethernet networks. Network issues can be resolved faster by deploying automated troubleshooting and event-triggered actions, freeing up staff to focus on other issues. The faster you have access to the service information, the faster you can resolve network degradation. This is becoming more and more important as video becomes more popular via multiple download vehicles. So in this release, Cisco is also introducing the concept of an IPTV SLA, which ensures video quality distribution over Carrier Ethernet networks. This extends comprehensive OAM tools to IPTV and video-on-demand services by enabling end-to-end tracking of multicast channels and flow monitoring across the entire network. Proactive notification can pinpoint exactly where in the network the video is experiencing latency or jitter issues. What many people do not realize is how many points in the network video actually traverses to get to an end user and how many places on the network the video can be corrupted. It starts with the satellite download and extends across the network to the end user for his or her personalized viewing. Monitoring and tracking with instant error notification will help ensure the video reaches the destination with the same quality enhancements it had when it was sent.
- ☒ Cisco also highlighted EANTC testing of its Carrier Ethernet design for IPTV, which provided third-party validation of 1 million emulated subscribers receiving a full set of triple-play services including 200 channels of SD video and 20 channels of HD video alongside voice, high-speed data, and business services. This approach tested Cisco's headend encoding and transcoding equipment (Scientific Atlanta), delivering video over the Ethernet network to IPTV set-top boxes in the home alongside data and voice services.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

IDC believes this is a very good announcement for Cisco, extending its product line to meet the provider demand for FTTH connectivity as well as the resiliency features it has announced. What Cisco is realizing is that as carriers converge services to more flexible IP networks, they really need an end-to-end solution that allows them to provide the resiliency and operational tools they expect. As networks deploy more video services, whether they are via multicast (broadcast) or unicast (video on demand), pinpointing where in the network problems are happening is not only proactive but also essential. IDC has forecast the Carrier Ethernet market for routing and switching to grow to \$5.9 billion in 2010, and we think this gives Cisco an advantage over point products or partial solutions — kudos to Cisco for taking these important next steps.

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