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Cisco Announces Major Advance with Video Telephony Solution

*Customers benefit from expanded Cisco IP Communications portfolio
that boosts productivity, security and system migration*

London, UK, Feb. 18, 2004 – Cisco Systems® today announced a new wave of compelling products and solutions for its Internet Protocol (IP) Communications system that take full advantage of a converged voice, video and data network to deliver a rich-media communications experience.

Today's announcement includes an exciting new video telephony solution and significant conferencing, security and system migration enhancements powered by Cisco AVVID (Architecture for Voice, Video and Integrated Data). These new solutions are drivers for greater communication effectiveness, business resilience and security for enterprise organizations.

Video Telephony Adds to Productivity Quotient

The introduction of Cisco CallManager release 4.0, the award winning Cisco IP PBX, features a new desktop productivity solution called Cisco Video Telephony (VT) Advantage release 1.0 that allows real-time person-to-person video sessions to be added transparently to telephone calls. With Cisco VT Advantage and Cisco CallManager 4.0, users can cost-effectively create an instant face-to-face video call with access to the familiar hold, transfer and conference features of their Cisco IP Phone for the video-enabled telephone call. Cisco VT Advantage uses the flexibility of IP to provide broadcast-quality video and sound previously unavailable to most video conferencing systems.

Orange Caribbean, which is part of the Orange Group, one of the world's largest mobile communications companies with operations in 19 countries, has been using CallManager 4.0 and Cisco VT Advantage to communicate across the islands of Guadeloupe, Martinique, Dominica, French Guyana and the Dominican Republic. Executive feedback on the on the technology has been unilaterally positive.

“Putting a face on certain core business communications improves decision making,” said Orange Caribbean Chief Information Officer, Patrick Raimond. “It is really easy to use. It runs on existing desktop tools so you don’t need to get used to a new machine, and it is relatively low on bandwidth. The image is as clear as seeing someone in person so it has already cut our travel cost significantly. .Putting a face on certain core business communications improves decision making. Our next step will be to extend our experience with the technology to our customers through our converged service portfolio.”

How Cisco VT Advantage Works

Cisco VT Advantage interoperates with multiple new and existing desktop and room-based videoconferencing systems. The solution integrates a Cisco IP Phone with an associated personal computer to deliver users a rich-media video telephony experience. Cisco VT Advantage application software coupled with a Cisco universal serial bus (USB) camera makes the personal computer video-telephony ready. For other applications, the same video calls can be made using Cisco VT Advantage with new personal and conference room video systems from TANDBERG, which are specifically enhanced for use with Cisco CallManager 4.0. Cisco CallManager 4.0 also integrates with other Cisco AVVID partners and their H.323 video endpoints allowing customers to preserve their existing video investments.

"The personal workspace is becoming increasingly media rich as the industry moves towards integrated voice, video and data communication and collaboration," said Chris Kozup, program director with META Group's Technology Research Services. “As user acceptance of the technology increases, the integration of video and telephony at the desktop is a natural evolution to enhancing the collaborative experience and improving the effectiveness of internal meetings."

System Security Enhanced

A number of new security enhancements in Cisco CallManager 4.0 extend the capabilities of the Cisco intelligent self defending network to better protect Cisco IP Communications systems and provide improved business resilience. New industry-standard digital certificates confirm the identity of network devices to protect against entry of rogue system users and new standards-based encryption has been added CallManager 4.0 to provide end-to-end privacy in voice communications.

Business resilience has also been enhanced with the new Cisco Security Agent (CSA), which is a key component of Cisco's overall security strategy. CSA provides proactive and adaptive threat protection for Cisco IP phones, servers and desktop computing systems. It brings together multiple levels of security functionality by combining host intrusion prevention, authentication to Cisco IP phones, distributed firewall, malicious mobile code protection, operating system integrity assurance, and audit log consolidation all within a single agent package. Cisco CallManager 4.0 customers, as well as Cisco Unity and Cisco IP Contact Center customers, receive all of these additional levels of safety and protection for their converged networks at no extra cost.

New Migration and Interoperability Options

With new native support for Q Signaling (Q.SIG) and Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) signaling in CallManager 4.0, the Cisco IP Communications system can interoperate with systems from the past and systems of the future. Q.SIG, the world wide signaling standard for private branch exchange (PBX) systems, provides CallManager 4.0 customers worldwide with the ability to interoperate with existing legacy PBX equipment and financial systems.

Support for SIP allows CallManager 4.0 to interoperate with a variety of current and future communications systems as well, including Cisco MeetingPlace, the Cisco BTS 10200 softswitch, and Cisco and third party SIP proxy servers. These additions, combined with H.323 voice and video interoperability, make it easy for customers to integrate Cisco IP Communications systems with existing voice and video communications equipment.

Rich Media Conferencing

Today, Cisco also introduced the new Cisco MeetingPlace™ 8106 Rich-Media Conferencing Server. Cisco MeetingPlace delivers the true benefits of a converged IP voice, video and web conferencing environment using technology acquired through Cisco's recent acquisition of Latitude Communications.

Cisco MeetingPlace allows users to participate in and control audio and web conferences through their Cisco IP Phone, traditional phone or PC. Cisco IP phone users can easily view schedules, set-up audio conferences and attend real-time meetings using soft keys on their phone display screen. Both the Cisco VT Advantage and the Cisco MeetingPlace solutions are key elements of Cisco's overall vision of delivering customers a rich-media communications experience.

List Prices and availability

Cisco CallManager 4.0 software with the Cisco Media Convergence Server 7815 I-2000 is \$5,995 (USD). The hardware and software is currently shipping. Cisco VT Advantage 1.0 is \$190 per user, including the USB camera. The product is expected to ship in April, 2004. The Cisco MeetingPlace 8106 Rich Media Conferencing Server with associated software and user licenses starts at \$69,995 and is scheduled to begin shipping later this month. For additional information about these products, please go to:

<http://www.cisco.com/xxxx>

Notes to editor

High resolution images are available for the media to download free of charge from www.vismedia-online.com

About Cisco Systems

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