



## Case Communications Xmas 2008 Newsletter

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#### In this Issue:

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[Case win order for routers to control traffic signals over the Internet](#)

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## Welcome

Welcome to this, the last Case Communications Newsletter of 2008. We wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas and enjoyable New Year.

### Openreach set to receive the nod for wholesale price hike

Openreach look likely to receive permission to increase some wholesale prices, subject to the outcome of an OFCOM consultation launched on the 5th December 2008.

[\[More\]](#)

### Microsoft recommended over Cisco for unified communications

Two years ago, Zeus Kerravala, a Yankee Group analyst, confidently recommended Cisco over Microsoft for most enterprise unified communications deployments.

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### Sir Alan Sugar steps down from Amstrad

The company that carried and made the name of the entrepreneurial businessman was acquired by BskyB last year and the departure from the operation will leave Sugar with time to concentrate on other interests, which include the educational PC specialist Viglen.

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### The UK is lagging behind other countries when it comes to next generation broadband networks

The UK is lagging behind other countries in the push for next-generation broadband networks. Telecoms firm BT has said it is unwilling to fund the roll-out of a £15bn fibre optic network to every home in the UK, and there are concerns over how such a network would make money.

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## **Case win order for routers to control traffic signals over the Internet**

November 2008

Case Communications receive an order for their Highway Rugged routers for use in controlling Traffic Signals over the Internet.

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## **UK consumers worth £14k each to cyber criminals**

Each adult in the UK is worth about £14,500 to internet criminals according to the UK's online security guardians.

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## **Case Communications is now shipping its new 6Gbps Rebel Router**

Case Communications is now shipping the latest version of its Rebel router. Using a Core 2 Duo the new Rebel can deliver over 6Gbps and has both PCI Express and PCI expansion slots.

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## Openreach set to receive the nod for wholesale price hike

The objective of the increases is to allow Openreach to achieve an economic return on its local loop telephone lines when sold either as a wholesale telephone service or as an unbundled loop. Previously it was argued that the caps on charges did not reflect current or future costs and that the LLU charges in particular were capped below cost and hence an effective cross subsidy was benefiting the LLU operators.

Fully unbundled lines, used for example by Talk Talk, will see the largest increases from a current cap of £81.69 per year to a range of £85.00 to £91.00 for 2009/10 followed by RPI + 0.0% to RPI + 5.0% thereafter.

Rises of up to 3.7% are proposed for wholesale residential lines, increasing the price cap from £100.68 to a maximum of £104.40. Increases thereafter will be the subject of a wider ranging market review.

With the economy still firmly within the grips of a recession, any wholesale price hike is sure to be vehemently opposed by both ISPs and consumers.

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## Microsoft recommended over Cisco for unified communications

Today, the tables have turned somewhat, but the two competitors, and a host of bit players, continue to wage war over where unified communications is going, and who will take enterprises there.

"It's pretty safe to go with Microsoft now," Kerravala said. "The thought process was that VoIP is the foundation for unified communications, which meant Cisco was pretty safe. I think the conversation has changed."

Strangely enough, he said, the strategies of the companies have remained fairly consistent. Microsoft has long approached unified communications from an email and software-centric world, while Cisco has brought its PBX legacy to bear with a strong voice message.

But enterprises' definitions of unified communications and their expectations for the technology have changed. Two years ago voice was considered the cornerstone of any UC deployment, but that thinking -- at least in some circles -- has changed, Kerravala said.

"Presence is now the centerpiece of UC," he said. This pushes the advantage toward Microsoft and its rich ecosystem of software partners.

Presence has become increasingly important as the value of UC has shifted from simply unifying communications options to integrating those communications into business processes while boosting productivity, which businesses cite as the number one reason to adopt the technology.

To fill this need, presence capabilities are being embedded into an increasingly broad range of applications. Presence helps users of all center applications to route support tickets quickly to available expert assistance. Microsoft has begun integrating presence into its Office productivity software.

It has not hurt that even as presence has increased in importance, Microsoft has made great strides in terms of improving its voice capabilities and uptime.

"People who argue against the Microsoft communications vision say: 'Do you want to reduce your phone system to the reliability of your email system?'" said Michael D. Osterman, president of Black Diamond, Wash.-based Osterman Research. "But overall, their [reliability] is pretty good, so I'm not sure if that's a valid argument."

Cisco has not been resting on its IP PBX laurels, however. The company has been busy integrating its online collaboration suite WebEx Connect with everything from TelePresence to third party widgets. The two competitors' portfolios look more alike as they are filled out.

Their feature sets may be growing similar -- rich IM, video conferencing, integrated voice -- but the old differences between the two vendors still matter, particularly when enterprises want to use both platforms.

Both companies often pay lip service to interoperability, Kerravala said, but users are frustrated that the two competitors do not integrate more seamlessly.

"I think there still is a chasm between what they can do together," he said. "When you talk to customers, the interoperability can be done, but it's kind of hard."

The acceptance and implementation of SIP as a unified communications standard will help, as well as letting another part of the equation come into play: the ecosystem outside the Cisco-Microsoft dichotomy.

"We'll see multiple vendors in the space for a very long time," Osterman said, pointing to Avaya, Nortel and IBM, all of which have pushed aspects of unified communications despite needing partnerships to deliver a comprehensive communications suite. "Standalone islands are just not going to make it."

Instead, Kerravala said, it is important to think about unified communications strategically and choose among Cisco, Microsoft or another vendor based on the platform they can help create rather than any individual component.

"When companies think about making the UC decisions, they really need to think about it as a business transformation maker," he said. The question is not who has the best VoIP solution, but how can mobile UC transform field sales processes? How will presence make call centers more efficient?

"I think it's tougher," Kerravala said. "But I think it's more important."



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## Sir Alan Sugar steps down from Amstrad

The company that carried and made the name of the entrepreneurial businessman was acquired by BskyB last year and the departure from the operation will leave Sugar with time to concentrate on other interests, which include the educational PC specialist Viglen

According to reports despite his age, a ripe old 61, Sugar has been quick to deny that the step down is a move into retirement.

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## The UK is lagging behind other countries when it comes to next generation broadband networks

### FIBRE TO THE HOME

Fibre to the home would bring speeds of between 50Mbps and 100Mbps, with the added benefit of being able to offer those speeds both upstream and downstream. This would make contributing back to the net - sending video files for instance - much easier.

Unlike DSL technologies - which are carried along copper cables - it is not subject to noise issues.

Providers such as BT would lay ethernet over the fibre in order to provide services.

The biggest problem issue about fibre is the cost. To provide fibre to the home across the UK would cost up to £15bn.

BT is the most likely candidate to provide such a network and while it has committed itself to putting fibre in all new-builds, nothing else has yet been decided.

### SYMMETRIC DSL

SHDSL is a symmetric technology that allows the users to send data at the same data rate they receive it. In the early 2000's G.SHDSL emerged which dictated a standard of 2.3Mbps per pair of wires and products such as the Case XLR 4600 bonded 2 pairs to obtain 4.6Mbps across the 4 wires.

In 2003 G.SHDSLbis emerged which also went onto become Ethernet First Mile or 2\_base-TL. this technology achieves data rates of 5.7Mbps per pair of wires with ranges to 3-4km with reduced rates after that. Again the user can transmit data at the same rate as they can receive it and by bonding up to 4 pairs together products like the Case Communications XLR 550 can reach 22.8Mbps in each direction.

### VDSL (Very High Speed Digital Subscriber Line)

This is the cheaper option than fibre optics - UK estimates are about £5bn for a nationwide rollout - and it is basically a hybrid solution utilising both copper and fibre.

VDSL will require the building of 90,000 new street cabinets - where wires from the telephone exchange are kept at street level - and is also known as Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC).

It is capable of supporting new high bandwidth applications such as HDTV, as well as telephone services such as voice-over IP and general internet access, over a single connection.

VDSL is deployed over existing copper wiring and, according to BT, can operate at speeds of up to 30Mbps with the chance of getting faster as new flavours of it are deployed.

Like ADSL it is still distance-dependent and those closest to the exchange will get the fastest speeds. VDSL cannot be incorporated into the existing telephone exchanges because of interference issues.

Second-generation VDSL2 systems could provide data rates exceeding 100 Mbps simultaneously in both the upstream and downstream directions, with the maximum available bit rate achieved at a range of about 300 meters.

### ADSL2+

This variant of existing DSL is being rolled out in the UK from

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April 2008 with every exchange enabled by 2011.

The arrival of ADSL2+ is closely linked to work BT has been doing on its core network, upgrading it to an IP infrastructure in a project known as the 21 century network. ADSL2+ offers speeds of up to 24Mbps, but as it is distance-dependent a lot of people will not actually achieve those kind of speeds.

Because the copper lines it operates on pick up electro-magnetic noise the line can be affected by some unusual issues, such as noisy fridges.

Old houses with old internal wiring will also affect the service, with possible breaks in service or speed slowdowns.

### **WIMAX**

Wimax stands for Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access. It is based on the IEEE 802.16 standard, also known as Wireless MAN.

It is often referred to as wi-fi on steroids, because of its ability to provide wireless data over much longer distances than wi-fi.

In countries with good fixed line infrastructure, WIMAX acts as a filler but in some developing countries it can be the dominant infrastructure for broadband access. Countries such as Pakistan are planning nationwide WIMAX rollouts.

It is possible for WIMAX to deliver speeds of up to 300Mbps and operate over distances of up to 60km, although not concurrently.

For example the Case Communications Infilink 300 can operate up to 300Mbps and provide a service up to 60km. In addition it can also provide point to multipoint. The Case Communications AR80X operates at 80Ghz and can provide 1Gbps up to 9km, this does however require a clear line of site.

### **CABLE**

Cable Broadband has three major parts - the customer cable modem (which connects to the customer's PC or laptop), the cable TV network (through which the signal flows) and the main cable router (which take the customer signal off the cable TV network and passes it on to the Internet).

The system which is used, or "the protocol", is called DOCSIS (Data Over Cable Service Interface Specification).

Currently DOCSIS 1.0 offers speeds up to 38Mbps. The new system, called DOCSIS 3.0, could offer up to 120Mbps and higher. This (D3) is currently in trial at 50Mbps in selected regions of the UK, such as Ashford, Folkestone and Dover.

The system is always on, it is not dependent on the distance you are from the exchange (unlike ADSL) and every person can receive the same speeds - unlike ADSL.

The electronics are a mixture of fibre and copper cable, with the majority being fibre. Only the last part to the customer is copper which means that cable broadband has the potential to offer far greater speeds now, and in the future, compared to its DSL rival.

*Part of article courtesy of BBC.*



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## Case win order for routers to control traffic signals over the Internet

After 18 months of testing, Case Communications have received an order for a number of their Highway Rugged Routers. The Street hardened Highway Rugged Routers have the ability to operate from -20C to +70C and are to be used for controlling Traffic Signals over the Internet. The Rugged Routers are fitted with especially hardened ADSL cards, and run IP Sec tunnels between a central control room and a number of Traffic Signal Controllers.

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## UK consumers worth £14k each to cyber criminals

The value of the average UK person's salary and credit card details to online fraudsters was revealed in the 2008 report by the secure computing initiative Get Safe Online (GSO), whose members include HSBC, Microsoft and the Serious Organised Crime Agency.

A quarter of the 1,400 people surveyed said they knew someone who had revealed details to fraudsters following a phishing email - up from about eight per cent in 2007.

Nick Staib, director of GetSafeOnline.org and senior manager at HSBC, warned of the long term implications of falling victim to internet crime.

He said in a statement: "If your financial reputation has been compromised through identity theft, this could have an impact on your ability to obtain credit or borrow money in the future.

"Even with an explanatory note on your credit record, you may be viewed as 'high risk'."

A fifth of small UK businesses have been a victim of an internet scam and one third of companies have been infected by a virus, a separate GSO survey of about 1,000 businesses with fewer than 10 employees also found.

It said that an average of £1,540 is lost due to downtime during IT failure.

It echoes a recent report by the Corporate IT Forum that found 65 per cent of UK businesses had seen a rise in cyber attacks such as distributed denial of service assaults or malware infections.

The GSO report coincides with the start of Get Safe Online Week, a GSO drive to promote online security that began today



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## Case Communications is now shipping its new 6Gbps Rebel Router

Case Communications is now shipping its new Rebel Router. The new Rebel has 6 GigE ports on the front panel, each with its own dedicated x1 PCI Express bus, two PCI expansion slots, and a Core 2 Duo processor upgrade option. With the CPU upgrade option, the new Rebel can deliver over 6 Gbps aggregate throughput or 3 Gbps full duplex throughput with large packets.

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