

Charging and recharge for convergence

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Laurent Lafarge of eServGlobal examines ways service providers can achieve true service convergence while ensuring high quality service and an effective return on investment.

Today's telecom market is facing new challenges due to highly competitive and saturated markets, with a high risk of commoditisation of the major revenue generation stream - voice communications.

Service providers are searching for operational business models which allow them to optimize their cost model, while managing hybrid networks in transition to the new IP Multimedia Subsystem (IMS) environment. Telecom business models are no longer fuelled by revenue from customers alone, but from many sources including advertising, sponsorship and on-demand services. At the same time, service providers are trying to preserve and improve their margins by expanding their product portfolio with next generation services such as instant messaging, video conferencing, presence and mobility.

In this rich and competitive multi-play environment, offering users the ability to combine pre-paid and post-paid elements will increase usage and produce additional revenue. A new billing approach is required to support these new services and multiple revenue sources, incorporating data-sharing between different applications and real-time billing. Subscribers will also need a greater range of payment options to facilitate uptake.

Based on its real-time multimedia charging capabilities, the eServGlobal ChargingMax Suite enables service providers to effectively manage new services and sources of revenue, as well as innovate and adapt to the new market requirements in terms of pricing strategy, user segmentation and hybrid services (prepaid and postpaid).

ChargingMax is designed on an open platform for ease of integration, so it can connect with a wide range of networks and deliver high efficiency in hybrid network environments, and to provide a consistent experience to all users. Service providers can save on their initial investments by implementing a smooth transition to IMS.

Management of multiple revenue sources becomes easier with advanced features such as revenue-sharing, MVNO support and real-time content charging.

ChargingMax also boosts mass-market adoption of multimedia services by adding a new level of service richness and flexibility, allowing service providers to stimulate service usage and new service uptake, while reaching previously untapped market segments. Achieving faster time to market for new services is also made easier with marketing-centric tools including the ability to manage subscriber profiles and define new, innovative offers based on classic (voice and SMS) and multimedia (MMS, video conferencing,...) services. Service providers can target the "right" market segments, thanks to attractive tariff plans, service packages, and advanced payment methods.

In addition, the eServGlobal Top Up Suite offers more ways for users to recharge their accounts, using vouchers, scratchcards, electronic recharge, ATM, bank account, internet, peer-peer, but using a single interface. The Top Up Suite also has a powerful capability enabling service providers to define differentiated recharge strategies for different segments.

More services on offer, more combinations between land, mobile and Internet platforms, more varied content combining voice, images and video, more business segments and more players in the value chain: all this requires a simulation, pricing and billing solution capable of integrating numerous value-added criteria, one that is extremely versatile, interchangeable, and naturally compatible with IMS architecture.

ChargingMax is an online charging solution meeting the future needs of service providers and increasing the range of service options for both pre-paid and post-paid users. eServGlobal's



expertise in convergent charging results in a flexible solution giving service providers the ability to respond faster to market trends and reduce time to market of new services.

For further information about eServGlobal and the ChargingMax Suite, please go to www.eservglobal.com.