Peer-to-Peer and File Sharing Services Market 2007 - 2011

By Bharat Book Bureau
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This report provides an overview of the Peer-to-Peer and File Sharing application services market. It details the status of the market today, as well as the migration through various stages of service integration and unification. The report covers all of the major approaches to IP-based applications service development and provisioning currently in the marketplace.

Service providers are in the midst of a gradual evolution from circuit-switched infrastructures to IP-based packet-switched infrastructures. While much of this evolution to date has taken place in the transport and access parts of the network, there are now enhanced services that are being developed and refined. In particular, the architecture of—and market for—next-generation enhanced services is beginning to take shape.

Report Excerpt

1.1 IP Applications Services Markets

This report provides an overview of the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) and file sharing services market. It details the status of the market today, as well as the migration through various stages of service integration and unification. LBS is one aspect of IP-based applications service development and provisioning currently being rolled out in the marketplace.

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Peer to Peer (P2P) file Sharing Services involve the exchange of audio and video files among networked peers.

Traditional carriers see IP application platforms as a means of beginning their slow migration to fully-convergent IP-based networks and services. Some view the highly personalized services enabled by IP as the ultimate “sticky” applications that will stem the tide of customer churn. Other carriers desire new, affordable service applications that will bring additional revenue streams. Every carrier is looking for new ways to enhance their service suites, which are rapidly becoming commoditized.

Interestingly, wireless carriers seem to be making headway when it comes to the adoption of new architectural and service paradigms. Given the bandwidth constraints of the medium, the gap between 2G and 3G has been covered in less than a decade. There are compelling reasons for this phenomenon. Wireless architectures have been exposed and have embraced open standards very early in their development lifecycles; therefore, interoperability issues are less formidable as compared to their wireline counterparts. As a corollary, wireless subscribers are reaping the benefits of rich services developed by a large number of vendors.

Fundamentally, wireless operators have had more experience with and greater control over the content in their networks, and have solid billing platforms, which automatically reassure content providers of reliable and stable revenues from content provided to wireless subscribers. Content providers are, therefore, more comfortable with the wireless domain. The IP multimedia subsystem (IMS)-driven paradigm calls for packetization of the access network to transform the services and applications to be network agnostic. This has given further impetus to sophisticated access protocols like high-speed packet data access (HSPDA), enhanced data rates for GSM evolution (EDGE), and others to hit the market faster. The drive is led primarily by East Asian and European operators, with North American (NA) operators catching up.

Wireline carriers also expect operational and infrastructure savings from deploying new IP-based services. Many incumbent carriers are choosing to initially implement IP-based services on an overlay network. Taking this approach, carriers do not have to replace circuit-switched network elements, which represent sunk costs and have minimal ongoing operational expenses. In an overlay network scenario, the packet-switched network is isolated from the circuit-switched network, and the two are connected via a gateway. Web-based applications can control the public switched telephone network (PSTN) through this gateway. This architecture preserves the wireline carrier’s investment while reducing risk as new opportunities are explored and implemented.

Proof that convergent communications and the world of IP are starting to become realities can be seen not only from the development of IP infrastructure elements such as gateways and softswitches, but also in the development of IP-based application servers, which are designed to deliver actual revenue-generating services for carriers.

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