

AZURE LAUNCHES NEXT-GENERATION INTER-PARTY MANAGEMENT SOLUTION AT 3GSM 2005

Submitted by: Pirate Communications

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Next-generation services will present new revenue assurance issues; operators can start addressing them strategically now.

Azure Solutions (stand E46), the revenue assurance company, today announced the launch of Azure Inter-Party Management as the first part of its next-generation revenue assurance portfolio roll-out. A number of Azure's customers have already signed up and delivery will take place over the next few months.

Azure Inter-Party Management will provide operators with real-time rating, billing and partner management for next-generation services. The ability to manage voice and service providers will play an important part in operators' next-generation strategies. Partners will be able to view their data and business online, and Azure Inter-Party Management will allow operators to manage the billing process in order that they will be able to set up real-time billing and online partner self-care to minimise their costs and meet the emerging demands of the market.

Revenue assurance, the reduction of losses and safeguarding of profits from malicious and unintentional revenue leakage, will become an even more complex issue for next-generation voice and IP-driven services. It will involve more extensive inter-party (including trading and margin), integrity and fraud and security management. Azure's next-generation revenue-assurance portfolio will provide operators with real-time financial and operational control of their business based on opportunities provided by next-generation networks enabling them to reduce potential leakage and maximise profitability.

As next-generation services evolve and value chains become more complex, the ability to deal in real time with high volumes of traffic and multiple partners independent of access (eg, fixed line, mobile, PDA or PC) will be key. The provision of and charging for rapidly-expanding content alone will provide significant management challenges. For example, wholesalers or mobile network operators will want to ensure that provision of content and voice traffic cease when partners have surpassed their pre-paid threshold to reduce overall liability.

In this type of environment operators will need to be able to trade and interact online and more effectively manage clients, suppliers and cashflow. For this to work it is important to have integrity management in place to ensure all network data is correct, and fraud and security management to help minimise potential revenue leakage resulting from malicious activities. With this in mind Azure has reinforced its existing event-integrity capability through the acquisition of Connexn and its Certo platform.

John Cronin, president and CEO of Azure, said: "Effectively managing partner relationships will be one of the biggest revenue assurance challenges facing operators from next-generation services. Azure Inter-Party Management will help ensure that operators are part of the content chain and be able to manage partner relationships in order that all revenues due to them are actually collected.

“Revenue assurance for next-generation services is a fundamental part of the success of our industry; if revenue is being lost then even compelling services will fail. Azure recognises this and will be making more announcements over the coming months as to how it will enable all parties ensure the commercial viability of IP- and 3G-based services.”

Azure is exhibiting at stand E46 at the 3GSM World Congress, taking place at the Palais des Festivals et des Congress, Cannes 14-17 February 2005.

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About Azure (www.azuresolutions.com)

Azure is the world’s largest revenue-assurance company. It is headquartered in London, with people in Westminster (Colorado), Ipswich, Paris, Frankfurt, Madrid, Barcelona, Islamabad, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Singapore, Sydney and Melbourne. Azure’s solutions for current -generation networks include End-to-End Revenue Assurance, Interconnect Billing, International Settlements, Fraud Management, Mediation Management, Event Integrity and Route Optimisation. Azure has also announced the Inter-party management product as the first product in its next-generation portfolio. Azure provides individual products or complete revenue-assurance solutions using a common platform and any combination of products that a customer might need. Customers can choose a system that they own and operate themselves or a bureau that Azure manages on their behalf. Azure has over 60 customers across the world comprising PTTs, mobile operators, national operators, carrier’s carrier and cable TV companies. Azure has significant carrier experience and understands the problems faced by all these operators. The company’s heritage can be traced back to BT in the early 1990s. Azure was spun out of BT in April 2003 and is backed by New Venture Partners (www.nvpllc.com).

Further information

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