



## VoIPeering

### Maturity and Change

The concept VoIP Peering and its major functional areas have been introduced and generally defined over the last several years. Within the last two years there have been several service providers some established, some start-up that have thrown their hat in the VoIP Peer-ring, but recently there haven't been any new entrants. There have been a few major announcements, X-Connects' Brazilian Federation for one, but no major breakthroughs in either the technology, or service model. Does this mean that VoIP Peering has matured?

The alternatives might be constant change in service types, features, rates and, or new providers being announced on a regular basis, so the current players getting settled in and a steady stream of customer announcements and new deployments coming from them is a good thing. The perception of maturity may be derived from the stability and predictability of the market at the moment. That is not to say that "everyone" understands what VoIP Peering means at this point, but when they are finally exposed to what it is it shouldn't be much different than it is today. Or will it be?



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There are intelligent forces hard at work out in the developer community that are creating open, dynamic and highly scalable programs that support every application imaginable. Some of these sources are more adept than others and can create based on original ideas and execute on those ideas producing valuable services for the business and, or consumer markets in a very short period of time. The cycle from concept and creation through execution is shorter than the time it takes most companies to just organize a meeting. This incredible power is going to impact all applications and the industries they support including Voice.

This notion may be nothing new because we have seen hints of it for a while now, but the hints are beginning to materialize. There has been much discussion about what happens to the stand-alone service of voice once it is embedded in a video session. How does it continue to generate revenue as a separate service and/or business in that world? The growing online gaming communities have their own voice-enabled features that provide not only the circumvention of the traditional PSTN, but the entire process of a linear call. Along these same lines there is SecondLife which is a virtual reality world with Avatars that currently text to "speak", or communicate with each other, but a full duplex audio feature is probably not far off. Facebook, an online social networking site, just recently opened up their platform to the world so that new features can be developed and used dynamically for the benefit of everyone and they're not charging anything for it. Imagine on-net "click to talk" with a member base of 10 million and a very high growth rate. These are all peering communities and the voice piece is in now, or will be soon and it will be seen as inherent and not seen as unique, or special.

Beyond, or behind the community itself though are the people that are building the functionality. That is where the true innovation is coming from and the results are not limited to only online communities such as gaming,

social networks, or virtual reality sites. Those are just the tip of the iceberg. The same thought process of building applications for open communications with no care, concern, or even knowledge of the past "telco" model that is being employed in these individual communities is being used for the backend intelligence of private Internets and search engines that generate revenue from ads to create a totally new world that none of us have ever seen before. So, where are the voice carriers in the future when everyone is part of an online community? How do they have to change the way they sell to businesses like H&R Block – that has opened up an office in SecondLife? Do the same old rules apply, or have they changed? And if those rules have changed, doesn't that change the very nature of VoIP Peering? IT

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[Internet Telephony Magazine Table of Contents](#)

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