



## Whats In A Name?

By Hunter Newby



*As the fittest survive during this technological evolution its no wonder the applications that make it are ones that people need and find easy to use. This same common sense can be flipped into logic that is the basis for determining what will be successful. There are certain components to the bigger picture that can be found in everyday life now and there are others that will be created and developed into mainstream when the time is right.*

The key to success lies in knowing the entire value chain, from dark fiber to transport to IP networks... all the way up to the application layer. Understanding where everything is provides the ability to know where a new product, or service will sit in the chain, how well it will do, and how it might impact the other pieces.

Take ENUM (**define - news - alerts**), for example. Number mapping makes sense for many reasons, not the least of which is on-net calling at zero cost per call. ENUM sits at layer 5 and enables the voice application to work more efficiently. Today it uses E.164 numbers, but, in reality, SRV records work just as well, or better, with e-mail addresses.

SRV stands for Service which makes it an abbreviation, I guess, and not an acronym. As ENUM is to number mapping, SRV is to name mapping. Names seem to be quite logical to map for the purposes of establishing sessions given their current and growing acceptance in the marketplace.

Consider URLs in this process. Do we type an IP address in our browser, or a domain name? Do we remember everyones telephone number, or do we just select their name on our mobile phone or PDA?

This actually brings up two separate points about the future of VoIP: Network Intelligence and Human Intelligence. In both, names may ultimately be the top level routing identifier because of simplicity. With Network Intelligence it is really the layer 5 piece doing the thinking (searching) for you. Its not really the network that is smart, but rather the database logic in it and signaling from your switch, IPBX, or that of your carrier. The Human Intelligence is when you want to initiate a session of some type with another person. You look-up the person by name on your device, or PC. When selected, the device asks you how you would like to interact MMS, SMS, e-mail, voice, video. Your intelligence chooses the type of application and the network will work off of your queue and search for the other person by name, most likely an e-mail address. The reason for that is simply that it currently exists

and it works. Keeping look-ups as names eliminates a step and decreases signaling and session set-up times.

There are some that believe that names will ultimately dominate the domains and that last remnant of the PSTN, the telephone number, will be relegated to the Smithsonian. There are others that know nothing of this concept and are trying to build businesses and revenue models on numbers through ENUM. Telling the future is tricky business, so look to the past to see what has worked. Are we all just a Social Security Number, or are we really known by our name?

This issue and many more were raised at the recent Voice Peering Forum held at the Wyndham in Miami Beach. The participants included several experts in the field that openly share and exchange information for the benefit of all in the industry. Without that interaction there wouldnt be much in the way of progress. Among those I would like to thank are Rich Tehrani, Gary Kim, Eric Dean and Randy Waters. Thank you all for your exceptional insight. I look forward to future events and the future of VolPeering! IT

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