



The State of the Industry: 2007
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Part 2: Taking the Four Steps*

It's nice to have some symmetry or consistency, especially in an industry as complicated as ours. So, to address our four truths CIMI Corp. proposes four steps.

The "truth of the consumer" demands the "**path of cooperative investment**". The rate in which emerging markets (such as consumer content or mobile services) are growing coupled with the ever-increasing technological elements needed to service those markets demands some level of cooperative investment from all industry participants. Cooperative investment along the technical spectrum will enable industry participants to offer better, more innovative services with greater efficiency than would occur if each player built every single technology element for a particular market.

The "truth of legacy services" leads to the "**path of managed touch**". It is clear from the disparity between Internet pricing and enterprise data service pricing that customers are paying for more than bits when they buy certain services. They are paying for "touch", for the assurance that the provider is fully controlling their service behavior, fully managing their exposure to risk. In the past, this was done through very stateful network technology like ATM or TDM. The challenge is to achieve that same level of "touch" without the "state", in an IP, Ethernet, and Optical network. Service management automation is the only way to make "touch" affordable, the only way to make the packet networks of the future create the service experience that enterprises have gladly paid for in the past, and will continue to pay for in the future as long as it's available. This will demand a unique marriage of network, server, software, and operations practices, and one that must span not only a provider's network but a world of partners as well.

The "truth of multi-technology services" dictates a "**path of resources and not networks**". No software, standard, architecture, or framework that does not make network equipment, servers, storage, software, and human practices equal partners in a cohesive service relationship will have long-term technological or profit potential. What is "on" and not "in" the network can be provided as easily by others, but with standards and specifications focused only on networks and protocols, how are servers and software to be included? Only the providers themselves can lead the way to the answer.

For the "truth of operations cost" there can be only one response, the "**path of service automation**", and to follow that path is to accept the notion that an abstract feature-based description of a "service" must be decomposable into specific resource behaviors that can be created and assured through automated tools. Incomplete service automation processes require so much time for workers to align with their omissions and correct them that much of the benefit is lost. A "90%" solution becomes no solution at all. Service providers, the people who are both the owners of

the overall operations processes and the ones with the most experience at optimizing human productivity with custom tools, will again have to take the lead.

IPsphere is an element in this, both as a forum for the introduction and discussion of these issues and paths to solution, and as a body that can standardize those key components of the total solution that are not provided elsewhere. In fact, based on the work the IPSF has already done and because 2007 will be the year that responses to these truths are demanded, IPSphere is the only forum that can credibly move to provide them.

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