

procedural safeguard that protects its right to a fair decisionmaking process guaranteed by due process and ... the Communications Act." It said the bureau's decision is "but the latest example of the Commission's ten-year practice of ignoring the dictates of its own ex parte rule."

The National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters also sought denial of the asset transfer, saying Verizon "ignored the Commission direction" to sell the assets to "minorities, new entrants and small carriers." Instead, Verizon "conducted a sham bidding process in which the sale to AT&T was prearranged," the group said.

Sprint Nextel objected to approval of the transfer, but did not file a petition seeking denial. "Before the Commission may consider approving the transaction, AT&T must provide more detailed information about its plans for the CDMA network, which currently supports numerous CDMA wireless customers in the divested markets," Sprint said. "If AT&T confirms that it intends to shut down the CDMA network, then the Commission must extend the Verizon Wireless/ALLTEL roaming merger conditions to the proposed transaction."

Petitions to deny were due at the FCC Monday. AT&T and Verizon Wireless get their say July 30 when oppositions are due. -- *Howard Buskirk*

## Metadata Specification

### **IPTV Standards Aim to Improve Content Delivery, Development, Market Adoption**

IPTV standards are critical to discovering service providers reachable over the network and what they offer, speakers said in a webinar Tuesday organized by the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions. IPTV video needs to leverage converged services IP networks because specialized distribution networks are too expensive to deploy, maintain and run, they said.

IPTV standards developed by ATIS' Interoperability IPTV Forum allow deployment of a service over an IP multimedia subsystem network or a non-IMS network, said Chair Dan O'Callaghan of ATIS's Interoperability Forum Committee. They can also enable a switch from non-IMS to IMS-based service, he said. There's a growing standardization effort to use IMS as an architecture for supporting IPTV in carrier networks O'Callaghan said: The ITU and the European Telecommunications Standards Institute are working on standards of that kind. This approach allows carriers to offer voice and IPTV services over the same core infrastructure, and combining conventional TV services with telephony features will become straightforward, an ITU document said.

Phase one of the standardization process is network attachment, including remote configuration and management, said Randy Sharpe, a co-chair of ATIS's IIF Architecture Committee. Phase two is service provider discovery, ways for an IPTV terminal function device to become aware of the available service providers, he said. The devices learn how to attach over a secure managed network, he said. Phase three is service provider attachment, he said. That includes a terminal function attaching to the service provider and querying specific servers, he said.

Service provider authentication is important to transport critical information, said Kinney Bacon, ATIS IIF Metadata Committee co-chair. The terminal function sends its credentials to the authentication services, which will validate these credentials and transmit the information needed to give the terminal function access to services, and any other security related data, he said.

Another key element is a resource locator, which is used to define any IP resource location, Bacon said. Once attachment has completed, the terminal function learns the services available through the "Service Informa-

tion," link which will offer resource locators the virtual channels maps, descriptions and acquisition information, he said. It also offers version control to allow an ITF to quickly detect where Service Information data has changed, he said. He cited ATIS's IPTV electronic program guide metadata specification, which allows users access to information about a practically limitless amount of programming offered over an IP-network. The vast number of channels can be overwhelming to a user, but the guide standard partitions large amounts of information into manageable quantities, ATIS President Susan Miller had said. -- *Yu-Ting Wang*

## Comm Daily® Notebook

FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski named retired Rear Admiral Jamie Barnett as chief of the Public Safety Bureau. He also named FCC veteran David Furth and Jennifer Manner, an advisor to former Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy, as deputy chiefs. All three are lawyers. "The FCC must ensure that our nation's communications networks serve our public safety needs," Genachowski said. Barnett spent 32 years in the Navy and Navy Reserve, retiring in 2008 after seeing duty in Operation Desert Storm in the early 1990s. His last active duty assignments were as deputy commander of the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command and director of Naval Education and Training in the Pentagon. For the last two years, Barnett has been a senior research fellow at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, a think tank focusing on science and technology issues. Furth has been at the FCC since 1992 and was named acting bureau chief in January. He has been the agency's point man on such key issues as the 800 MHz rebanding. He was also a legal advisor to former Commissioner Rachelle Chong. Manner has held a number of jobs since leaving the commission. Most recently, she was a principal at ZComm Strategies, where she advised telecommunications companies on regulatory policy issues.

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Proposed telecom mergers face a higher standard of review from the FCC than they do under antitrust laws, said a recent Congressional Research Service report analyzing the FCC's review process. Companies seeking license transfers for mergers must prove to the FCC that the combinations would "enhance" competition, not simply preserve it, the report said. "This standard suggests a competitively neutral merger ... could be denied by the Commission," it said. Under the Clayton Act, if a reviewing agency rejects a merger, it must reach agreement with the companies or sue to block the deal. In a suit, the agency would need to prove that the merger would be anti-competitive. "Although the Commission has explicit authority under the Clayton Act to review the proposed mergers of certain common carriers, it does not seem to have ever utilized that authority," the report said. Most often the FCC "proceeds solely pursuant to the Communications Act, because that authority" extends beyond antitrust laws, the report said. The commission has contended that its review under public-interest standards "renders the exercise of the Commission's Clayton Act authority unnecessary," the report said. But the law requires companies holding FCC licenses and seeking to merge to get commission and DoJ approval, the CRS said. Its report came out July 9, just after Sen. Herb Kohl, D-Wis., the Judiciary Antitrust Subcommittee chairman, asked the FCC and DoJ to review how competitive the wireless industry is (CD July 8 p3).

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Chairman Julius Genachowski invited a few outside organizations to the FCC for what he called a "meet and greet" this week. The first meeting, held Monday, involved consumer groups and the National Telecommunications Cooperative Association, NTCA Communications Director Wendy Mann said Tuesday. Genachowski called the session the first of several meetings planned to seek groups' ideas for the new commission, she said. Genachowski and eight of his aides took part in the invitation-only meeting, she said. The chairman emphasized his desire to make a difference in the lives of "ordinary Americans" and hold more-open discussion with organizations, Mann said. NTCA Industry Affairs Director Scott Reiter asked Genachowski to keep rural consumers' needs in mind, she said. The association probably will discuss more-specific telecom issues when it meets on its own with Genachowski and his staff, she said. The chairman isn't expected to hold many get-acquainted visits with in-