

Inside IIR's IMS Global Congress 2006: The Power of Focus.

By Tim Young, Pipeline Editor-in-Chief.

Sometimes it seems like shows are sprouting up everywhere. From giant supershows to focused boutique events, most calendars (and marketing budgets) are generally bulging from the strain of so many shows. Sometimes the smaller events are lost in the shuffle, but the focus offered can often compensate for the lack of booth traffic. For parties interested in IMS (and it's hard to find a service provider who isn't, these days), IIR offers the 2nd Annual IMS Global Congress. The event kicks off November 27th in Geneva and runs until the 1st of December.

So what makes the IMS Global Congress unique? "The presenters come from fixed and mobile operators, MVNOs and ISPs from across the globe, so that pretty much covers the entire spectrum of IMS providers today." " " says Gerogina Hajdu, IIR's Senior Telecoms and Technology Conference Producer. The team behind the conference promises open and honest discussions led by the presenters, most of whom are service providers. There will be case studies presented from both Tier 1 and smaller providers, representing a wide variety of available capital. Noteworthy presenters include the head of Telefonica I + D's Mobile Division and representatives from Orange France, Deutsche Telekom, Swisscom, and Telecom Italia, with case studies from Sprint Nextel, Portugal Telecom Inovacao, and KPN Telecom.

"It is a highly focused event, answering the questions that IMS project managers are trying to grapple with today," says Hajdu. Before preparing the agenda for the program, Hajdu conducted research with industry experts across the broad spectrum of telecommunications, including vendors, operators, application developers, and consultants, to ensure that the program would address market needs as they exist and will exist in the near future.

There is a promise from the planning staff that speakers at the show will disclose the business drivers behind their live implementations. According to Hajdu, they will "show their solutions for achieving practical and cost-effective migrations to IMS, discuss their experiences of deploying pre-IMS and full IMS architectures, and show how they are commercially deploying value-added services that really have maximized their savings and their revenues." If all of that comes to pass, the event could be a benefit for service providers and vendors alike. As far as focus goes, service provisioning is a running theme throughout several of the presentations, and there will be a talk specifically on the reality and requirements of OSS in an IMS-enabled world.

Let there be no mistake: One of the greatest fringe benefits of a focused show is the opportunity to network. Such opportunities appear at this particular event in the form of a Gala Drinks Reception at the country manor of Domaine de Chouilly on the evening of the first conference day. What's better than complimentary cocktails in a palatial European county setting? The chance that over those cocktails, a few deals can be made or some groundwork laid.

The exhibition isn't huge, but still shows potential for some quality interaction. The exhibitors for the event include a small, but qualified group of vendors. Attendees can expect to see booths

from Siemens, Ericsson, Lucent, and Synthesis, as well as jNetX, Kabira, Comverse, and Tektronix. Likewise, attendance will be small with only about 150 attendees and 30 presenters.

That's clearly the downside. However, when it comes to the battle between focus and volume, there aren't enough good things to be said about focus. If 10,000 people pass your booth, take your materials, and pretend to pay attention to your presentation, but no deals are made, no new customers or supporters are created, and nothing is actually done to further your image, beyond maintaining visibility, is much gained? Alternatively, if you meet 10 people and make 8 deals, the trip is a success. Therefore, the jury remains out on the IMS Global Congress. If the big boys come to play, and contracts are lined up between sips of wine or on the non-crowded exhibit floor, the event will be a success. If not? Well, if not, there likely won't be much of a turnout for IMS Global Congress 2007.



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