

Rebel Forces Status Report Year 2004

(10 years of Telco Resistance!)
;-)

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In the Beginning...

(1993 – 1995, The NSF Transition years)

A handful of “Network Service Providers” -

(Regional Nets + MCI/ANS/vBNS, UUnet, Sprint, PSI, EUNET, BBN, ...)

- Using a variety of transport services never designed to carry IP traffic (DS1, DS3, SONET, ATM, Frame)
- Offering best-effort Internet services with unstated reliability
- For the cause of connectivity for all!
- Without regard to content, regulation, or need to wear suits...

And then...

(1995 – 2001, The Unconstrained Growth years)

ISP industry realization that:

- 100% annual growth is hard on the cash reserves...
- Anything between the router & the fiber is in the way...
- You're using our Internet service for what?!?

Carrier realization that:

- Not only is the Internet not going away; it's beginning to eat our lunch...
- Organically growing Internet talent takes too long
- "Hey, this is unregulated!"

Thus, the great Telco/ISP mating rituals begin...

BBN/GTE, Digex/Intermedia, UUNET/Compuserve/MFS/Worldcom,
Supernet/Icon/EUNET/Qwest, UUNET/Worldcom, Nwnet/Verio/NTT,
Earthlink/Sprint, iMCI/C&W, Netcom/ICG, Intermedia/Worldcom, Digex/MCI,
Exodus/C&W, PSI/Cogent, etc, etc.

Today...

(2001 - , The Post-Bubble years)

Predominantly carrier-affiliated backbones are:

- *Using direct access to fiber and wavelengths*
- Offering best-effort *and CoS* Internet services *for critical business applications*
- Without regard to content (*except for SPAM, digital rights management, CALEA, VoIP, etc.*)
- At risk of another round of carrier consolidation due to capital pressure and declining pricing...
- Still generally free of regulation and the need to wear suits!

Lessons Learned

- Good technical ideas generally prevail in the end (but don't be surprised if it takes an oscillation or two...)
- A finite number of both networks and talented people means that you'll be seeing the same faces over and over again as coworkers, peers, and customers...
- Customers will be more creative than we expect, and we will held accountable for the result...
- You can infiltrate the empire and still remain true to the cause!