

Newswatch

By Jesse Cryderman

It was a slow and painful death that everyone saw coming from the moment the FCC called interference: Lightsquared, Philip Falcone's multi-billion-dollar disruptive wireless network, [declared bankruptcy](#) last month. On May 14, a dejected Falcone blamed greedy creditors for the bankruptcy maneuver in a prepared statement. "Today's filing was not an option the company embraced quickly or easily, but it was necessary to protect LightSquared against creditors who were looking for a quick profit, as opposed to our goal to create long-term market competition," said Falcone.

Beyond pointing a spotlight on the impact of signal interference and the US regulatory process, the news is having a profound effect on the evolving US wholesale wireless market, with Clearwire as the leading beneficiary. With Lightsquared out of the picture, Clearwire becomes the sole wholesale wireless provider with the potential muscle to shake up the market. Already, numerous customers have changed teams from Lightsquared to Clearwire, and hardware manufacturers ([Qualcomm](#), [Sequans Communications](#)) are announcing support for Clearwire's TDD-LTE network.

TDD-LTE offers greater spectrum efficiency, as it allows the up-link and down-link transmissions to be different sizes (asynchronous). In other words,



the band can be divided to provide a fatter pipe for download than upload as traffic demands require. What's more, Clearwire claims they will offer a much faster LTE than AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, or T-Mobile by leveraging spectrum a bit differently. Using carrier aggregation, Clearwire estimates it will hit 168 Mbps download speeds: twice those delivered by incumbents. Clearwire's CTO John Saw told GigaOM: "We're going to start with 20 MHz carriers. When carrier aggregation comes along, we will go to 40 MHz, which will essentially leave the competition in the dust."

But what about Sprint, Lightsquared's number one customer? Losing their wholesale LTE partner was certainly a big bump in the road for Sprint's Network Vision plan, but the operator has deftly maneuvered to stay on track. Seeking to capitalize on WiMAX assets, Sprint is giving pre-paid brands (Boost, Virgin Mobile) access to its 4G WiMAX footprint, and it [launched the first multi-mode hotspot](#) with 3G, LTE and WiMAX radios. Sprint also came out on top for the fourth year straight in the [American Customer Satisfaction Index](#). Maybe [a customer service portal from Amdocs](#) had something to do with it?

The Chinese Network Machine

It's impossible to discuss the developments in network infrastructure over the past few years without devoting a large bit of ink to Chinese juggernauts ZTE and Huawei. With an [LTE deployment in Moscow](#) (the city's first) alongside service provider YOTA, Huawei became the number one supplier of 4G LTE equipment in the world. Ericsson still leads overall, but their margin is getting slimmer by the month. Huawei also trialed [LTE Category 4](#)—capable of 150Mbps downloads in the field—on a live network in Europe. Simultaneously,

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An advertisement for Subex ROCware Solutions. The background is a teal and green abstract design with hexagonal patterns and a circular graphic. In the top left corner, there is a red box with the Subex logo and the tagline 'powering the 4G'. Below the logo, the text reads 'Monitor Performance of Newly Launched Products'. At the bottom left, it says 'ROCware Solutions from Subex'. At the bottom right, there is a yellow button with the text 'Learn More'.

ZTE posted record earnings and became the first NEP to successfully [pass stage-two TD-LTE trials](#) in China. Last week, Nokia Siemens Networks insinuated that Huawei [plagiarized NSN's marketing](#), but numbers like Huawei achieves can't have that much to do with brochures.

BYO...D?

Why spend precious IT resources on personal devices when your employees already carry and use cutting edge smartphones and tablets? Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) work cultures are a growing trend, and made quite a bit of news last month. A trio of research released by Cisco, BT, and Heavy Reading revealed that an increasing number of IT departments are moving to a BYOD culture and the vast majority of IT managers feel BYOD lends enterprises a [competitive edge](#). Capitalizing on the news trend, Amdocs made the case for [converging BSS and OSS](#), a necessity for an evolved BYOD culture, claimed the 'Docs.

With the opportunities afforded by BYOD come risks, however, as Neil Sutton, Vice President, Global Portfolio at BT Global Services, explained in an announcement. "There is no denying it. The BYOD genie is out of the bottle bringing with it unprecedented opportunities for enterprises but also new threats. The new perimeter is everywhere, defined by employee-owned devices, clouds, and extranets. The risk of abuse and attack has multiplied along with this massive expansion."

Cloud News

Dial-up is dead, but EarthLink sure isn't. The

With an LTE launch in Moscow with YOTA, Huawei became the number one 4G LTE equipment provider in the world.

company that made its bucks in the baud business is **back in the news** with a virtualized cloud workspace for business customers. And they aren't the only company with big cloud news this month. Citrix and Zuora joined forces to capitalize on the new subscription economy. "There's an intense battle among service providers to deliver differentiated, value-added app and desktop services from the cloud – services that businesses depend on," said Shawn Price, President at Zuora. "Together, Citrix's comprehensive cloud platform and Zuora's subscription billing platform combine the power of two industry leaders to empower and accelerate the growth of service providers."

BT and Equinix also partnered in the cloud, this time for a high-performance cloud services offering (Radianz Venue) for the financial services industry that require minimal latency, proximity hosting, and robust interconnectivity. John Knuff, General Manager, Global Financial Services at Equinix, explained the advantages of partnering with a distributed data center partner for advanced cloud offerings: "These dense interconnection points are critical to the global trading community, providing an environment where shared infrastructure, super-fast connections, reduced total cost of ownership,

Pipeline
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connectivity costs and a wide range of choices form a new industry backbone for service delivery, prospecting and innovation.”

Taking the cloud in another direction, NTT DOCOMO launched a new cloud brand, a SIRI-like assistant, and a real-time language translation engine that utilizes their innovative “network cloud,” a combination of both network and cloud assets.

Management World 2012

Last month, TM Forum’s Management World took place in Dublin for the last time (next year the event returns to Nice, France), and although the weather was amazing, attendance was a bit spotty. It could have more than a little to do with trade show scheduling this year; vendors, carriers, and the press had to split their time between the LTE World Summit in Barcelona, Management World in Dublin, and The Cable Show in Boston. All three events took place over the same week. Still, several major carriers didn’t even have staff on the ground in Ireland to coordinate interviews, indicating their priorities were elsewhere.

While acronyms and buzzwords were certainly in attendance this year, there was a greater emphasis on transformation than in the past. It’s easy to see why: although telcos are still very profitable businesses, they must change shape to compete in the new digital service economy. This concept isn’t new—it’s been discussed by analysts, vendors and the TM Forum for some time—but CSPs are now aware of the urgency of transforming as the horizon of sweeping change is now visible.

During keynotes Tuesday, Phil Jordan, Group CIO, Telefonica O2, said much of the criticism lobbed at the telecommunications industry is unfounded. “This is a fantastic industry, and IT is right at the future structure of the industry.” Ashish Gupta, CIO, BT Global, echoed similar enthusiasm for the future, adding, “We need to figure out how to mold what was a telco model into a service model.”

Phil Jordan summed up the direction the industry is moving, saying, “We increasingly want to, and have to, become aggregators of service experiences.”

Agility was another popular subject. To create, market, manage, and monetize new services at the speed of modern demand, CSPs must be able to move rapidly and with confidence. This need for speed affects everything in the industry, including provisioning, activation, billing, product catalog, customer support, infrastructure, analytics, and policy.

NTT Docomo has launched a new cloud brand and new services, including a SIRI-like assistant and an evolving real-time translation engine.

Part of the agility and transformation problem, historically, is that the IT component of telcos is tangled and disparate. This is particularly painful when the rising role of IT is considered. Albert Hitchcock, CIO, Vodafone, explained it this way: “As operators, we haven’t been that disciplined in the IT space; lots of complexity, lots of legacy.”

One angle vendor companies are exploring is consolidation and centralization. Several vendors had solutions on display that addressed complexity concerns by reducing the number of physical and logical data repositories. Pipeline met with Amdocs to discuss OSS consolidation, and how they are helping customers reduce the number of OSS repositories and build centralized platforms, creating a, “single source of truth.” Philip Bull, Solutions Manager, OSS, Amdocs, reiterated the connection between agility and OSS. “The way we communicate is absolutely different than it was five years ago. In order to keep up with this change, OSS has to become more agile.”

Better use of big data was another common theme. Judi Gill, Director of Market Analysis and Strategy, Clarity, explained the company’s mobile assurance platform, which rests on awareness. It moves CSPs beyond reaction and pro-action to awareness: service aware and business aware.

Other trends, from the vendor community, were an increase in the number of solutions for CSPs operating in enterprise services (Alcatel-Lucent, Amdocs), further evolved CEM solutions (MYCOM), and innovative big data solutions (Versant).

Alcatel-Lucent told *Pipeline*, “there’s more money flowing into telecommunications than there ever has before,” and that “we’ve moved past just CEM.” From the talk on the floor in Dublin, that seems to be the case. Revenues are still climbing, and CSPs are transforming themselves to maintain relevance in the new digital services economy. Their systems are being consolidated, their relationship with customers is changing, and the way they use their data is changing from management to awareness. It’s an exciting time to be in this industry, as it is awash in sweeping change.