Wavelink and Meru Networks offer six considerations for organisations planning 802.11ac deployment

August 26, 2013 – The BYOD trend has gained unstoppable momentum. Organisations must support more devices than ever, with the majority of these being wireless-only devices. This has put tremendous strain on corporate Wi-Fi networks, which need to be faster and more reliable than ever before.

Today's current Wi-Fi standard, 802.11n, creates pervasive wireless networks that can handle a moderate number of devices but a more powerful option is required to handle the needs of tomorrow. The next standard in Wi-Fi is 802.11ac, which promises to significantly improve what is available today.

Ilan Rubin, managing director, Wavelink, said, "The release of corporate-grade 802.11ac infrastructure will let enterprises create a wireless edge that can be as robust, reliable, secure and resilient as a wired edge.

"Now is the time for organisations to start thinking about 802.11ac deployments with rapid uptake expected in 2014."

Six considerations for organisations planning 802.11ac deployment

1. Understand tomorrow's enterprise application strategy. This includes having a good understanding of the types of applications being run today. Determine aspects such as bandwidth requirements, how latency-sensitive applications are and what types of devices are preferred. Project this out over five years to build a network with the necessary capacity.

2. Consider the company's BYOD strategy. It's critically important to determine how aggressively the company will implement a BYOD plan. This will help in designing the network to handle the number of wireless devices being brought onto it today and ensure it can continue to support more devices once the BYOD plan is fully implemented.

3. Identify any areas of congestion or high density. The traffic across a wireless network is not always uniform. The areas of high congestion should be identified and planned for accordingly. This will have a positive impact on end-user satisfaction as workers will have a more consistent experience across the network.

4. Explore channel planning options. Upgrading to 802.11ac involves more than just removing the old access points and replacing them with new ones. What should be considered is how to maximise the benefits of 802.11ac with regard to channel planning options.

5. Plan for continued 2.4GHz device support. 2.4GHz devices will continue to be used by individuals for some time. Any plan involving 802.11ac must also include an 802.11n strategy to support these devices. BYOD will impact on this class of device and the demand for more 2.4GHz bandwidth will increase.

6. Consider other services that need to be deployed. The proliferation of mobile applications will mandate that the wireless network support application-level functions like Apple's Bonjour protocol and Microsoft Lync. A real network-level requirement exists to provide gateway capabilities for Bonjour access and wireless unified communications services.

Rubin said, "If proper steps are taken then organisations can realise a rapid, risk-free migration to 802.11ac that provides a high-quality, consistent and secure user experience that lets workers be more productive while mobile."

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About Meru Networks
Meru Networks (NASDAQ: MERU) is a market leader in the development of mobile access and virtualised Wi-Fi solutions. Meru's MobileFLEX wireless architecture addresses the ever-growing need for higher bandwidth and higher client densities. The Meru Identity Manager solution greatly simplifies secure device on-boarding and the company's unique Context-aware Application Layers enable dedicated channel assignments for specific applications, devices and usage scenarios. Meru customers include Fortune 500 businesses as well as leaders in education, healthcare and hospitality. Founded in 2002, Meru is headquartered in Sunnyvale, Calif., with operations in North America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia Pacific and Japan. Visit www.merunetworks.com or call (408) 215-5300 for more information.

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