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## **NTAF Announces Release of First Industry Specification for Network Test Automation**

*Specification cuts test time and time-to-market through multi-vendor communication and interoperability in network test labs*

**FREMONT, Calif., June 06, 2011** -- The [Network Test Automation Forum \(NTAF\)](#), an organization of industry-leading communications and networking companies that develops interoperability standards in the test community, announced today that it has approved the release of the first set of specifications for enabling multi-vendor interoperability in network test labs. The specifications define tool registration, discovery and activation functionalities that enable software and hardware from multiple vendors to automatically and seamlessly recognize and communicate with each other.

The ratification of the NTAF specifications has profound implications for network equipment manufacturers, service providers and other network test labs in the telecoms industry. Interoperability between test tools and the simplification of lab automation efforts will reduce the time, complexity and cost of product test cycles by streamlining development, test setup and testing time. This will help vendors to get their products to market faster and help service providers to deploy new network services more rapidly.

“Automation is and has always been a key strategic focus for test labs around the world, but in today’s fast-paced tech environment it’s absolutely essential,” said Robert Ormsby, president of NTAF and director of technology at [Verizon](#). “Establishing new specifications represents a major milestone towards standardizing network lab automation, which can speed the introduction into the marketplace of technology that makes a difference in consumers’ lives and help businesses prosper.”

In today's world, a great deal of money and time is spent integrating testing components, which increases cost and delays time-to-market. Customers must develop and maintain custom integrations between in-house tools and suppliers, which often must be updated with the release of new software from any one internal tool or supplier. These integrations are limited in functionality and cannot access all the capabilities of any tool.

The NTAF specification defines mechanisms for network entities, either lab equipment or software automation tool harnesses, to publish information that will allow other entities to integrate with them and control them in a generic manner. The specification also covers how these entities can register themselves and discover what other NTAF entities are available within their environment.

The end result is that customers can now assemble complete test automation solutions using pluggable tool components, ensuring that the best tool is used for a specific job, be it commercial, proprietary or open-source. Since all tools are self-registering and self-describing, everything is built to be transparent and simple.

NTAF held its annual meeting and Board of Director's meeting earlier this month, and multiple vendors from the membership demonstrated interoperability based on the final draft specifications of this standard. "It is very impressive to see competing test tool vendors and network test labs work collaboratively to achieve such success in such a short time to solve a complex problem," said Kaushal Agrawal, a board member of NTAF and senior director of engineering at Cisco. "The demonstration instantiated multi-vendor interoperability, a critical need for all network test labs in this age of convergence."

NTAF was launched on March 16, 2010. Membership is rapidly expanding and includes a mix of companies from across the communications and networking industries including BreakingPoint Systems, Brocade, BT, Cisco, Empirix, Ericsson, EXFO, Ixia, JDSU, Linkbit, MRV, Polystar, Shenick, Spirent Communications, Tata Communications, Tech Mahindra and Verizon.

#### **About Network Test Automation Forum (NTAF)**

The Network Test Automation Forum (NTAF) brings together users, vendors, and other telecommunications and data communications industry experts for the purpose of creating interoperable testing solutions for service providers, network equipment manufacturers, and other enterprise organizations with large network deployments, <http://www.ntaforum.org>.

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