INRANGE Technologies Announces Development Of High-Speed, Physical-Layer Switch

The new 2800 High-Speed Switching Platform targets the infrastructure management needs of switched/routed networks. At its core, a 200 Mbps switching fabric that provides bandwidth to support T-3/E3, 100 Mbps LAN, and OC-3 interfaces.

Mount Laurel, New Jersey, January 19, 1999 – INRANGE Technologies Corporation, the premier provider of physical-layer switching technology, today announced its delivery schedule for a new switching platform that supports the high-speed circuit requirements of networks migrating to ATM and Frame Relay data services.

Marketed as the 2800 High-Speed Switching Platform (HSSP), the new switch will be delivered in multiple phases over the next nine months, providing comprehensive monitor/test access and connectivity management capabilities for T3/E3, 100 Mbps Ethernet, and OC-3 interfaces.

The HSSP is being developed as an adjunct platform to the company's market-leading 2700 Switching System, which supports WAN circuit speeds up to 2 Mbps, and LAN speeds up to 16 Mbps.

"While there has been a shift in the way networks are implemented and in the protocols used to communicate from remote sites to data centers," stated HSSP Product Director Dan Raup, "the capability to manage a network's physical infrastructure is no less strategic than before. In fact, with the volumes of data being transferred today and the importance that businesses place on network availability, being able to monitor and measure performance non-intrusively and to avert problems is more important than ever.

"Resources in switched/routed environments still need to be reconfigured," Raup continued, "and devices that fail still need to be spared quickly. Technicians still need to tap or bridge circuit paths, whether local or remote, to monitor and analyze critical links. With the test access and circuit management functions provided by the HSSP, users can gain an objective view of a virtual communications network, and assure that services implemented through high-speed connections continue uninterrupted."

Raup noted that traditional targets for physical-layer switch deployment like transaction processing, information services, and financial services companies remain viable for the HSSP, but that opportunities with companies that have invested in high-speed LAN and internetwork equipment will be the most significant.

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"With a circuit-switching rate of 200 Mbps and the range of interface support being planned, there's a great deal of flexibility in the types of circuit paths the HSSP can manage and the data center trends it can support," said Raup. "Certainly, T3/E3 switching has become increasingly important, especially in carrier network provisioning. There is a need to manage a combination of high-speed WAN and Fast Ethernet in the remote network sites for most companies. And many data centers today already have access connections delivered via a Sonet ring. Within this framework, the HSSP can be used to back-up routers and switches, support test access and backup of high-speed circuits, spare CSUs/DSUs, manage circuit distribution from customer facilities back out to carrier networks, and provide statistical probing and performance analysis."

Phase One in Beta Test

Phase One of the HSSP, scheduled for beta testing at Bloomberg L.P. in January 1999 and for general availability in March 1999, will support T3/E3 interfaces and a broad mix of 2 Mbps RS-422 interfaces (V.35, T1, RS-449, etc.,) currently supported by the 2700 Switching System. A single-chassis HSSP can be configured with up to 96 T3/E3 ports, up to 512 RS-422 ports, and mixed port combinations. The HSSP architecture shares most of the core control components of the 2700 Switch. Both types of switches can be managed from one control platform, if required.

"Supporting a mix of high-speed traffic (45Mbps) with traditional traffic speeds with our Phase One offering lets existing customers take advantage of installed infrastructures as they continue to migrate to carrier services," stated Raup. "It also gives new customers the flexibility to mix circuit types and speeds in a single switching platform."

Phase Two of the HSSP, scheduled for the end of Q2 1999, adds support for up to 384 Fast Ethernet ports, bringing test and circuit management support to routed/switched networks. Follow-up interfaces planned for the HSSP include OC-3 and HSSI. As requirements dictate, the HSSP architecture allows for modification of the major switching components to accommodate speeds up to 1 Gbps, enabling future support for Gigabit Ethernet and Fibre Channel circuits.

"The HSSP architecture and interface set will address all significant circuit types for years to come," stated Raup. "It is a platform designed to take users to their future networks, while giving them maximum control over physical infrastructures today."

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INRANGE Technologies Corporation, an SPX company, is a provider of physical-layer switches for WAN and switched/routed networks; channel switches and channel extension products for copper- and ESCON-based mainframes and SCSI- and PCI-based servers; fiber management systems; automated storage management solutions; and performance monitoring and testing systems for digital and analog networks. Headquartered in Mount Laurel, New Jersey, INRANGE Technologies sales and support offices in the United States and around the world.

SPX Corporation is a global provider of industrial and vehicle solutions including process and electrical controls, network technologies, service solutions to franchised vehicle dealers, and components and service support to vehicle manufacturers. The Internet address for SPX's Corporation's home page is www.spx.com.

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