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Starent May Have Nortel Win



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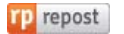
12/20/2014

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Speculation surrounding a tie-up between Nortel Networks Ltd. (NYSE/Toronto: NT) and Starent Networks Corp. has surfaced once again, with an analyst report suggesting the wireless router startup has struck an OEM deal with the Canadian incumbent.

Earlier this month Nortel was confirmed as a supplier of Sprint Corp.'s CDMA 2000 1x EV-DO network. According to a statement from Sprint, Nortel will deploy its "new Packet Data Service Node 16000" product as part of the agreement (see [Sprint Invests in EV-DO](#)).

PDSNs are packet core network devices used in CDMA network systems. In their next-generation guises, they add sophisticated service creation, billing, and IP traffic management capabilities to this strategic point in the network (see [Having a Flutter on the GGSNs](#)).

Nortel has so far maintained a surprisingly low profile over the launch of its new PDSN kit, arousing analyst suspicions that the vendor is gearing up for a possible OEM announcement. Such a move would jibe with earlier reports that Nortel is in talks with Starent over the possible use of its PDSN product within "a handful" of the incumbent vendor's North American CDMA carrier customers (see [Nortel Scotches Starent Rumors](#)).

"We feel that the new Nortel PDSN 16000 is an OEM version of Starent's ST16," opines Current Analysis's Peter Jarich in a research note published this week.

Jarich cites the following details as "overwhelming evidence" of such a deal:

The rumors of a relationship between the two vendors have been circulating around the industry for a while. When Nortel announced the Services Edge Router 5500 – a successor to the Shasta platform, which was at the heart of its Univity PDSN – but failed to indicate its use in the PDSN's evolution, this relationship seemed more likely. Now, the limited details that are available on the PDSN 16000 support this notion of a relationship. Both products consist of a 16-slot chassis supporting 500,000 sessions. Both can act as an FA and HA in the same chassis. Both promise support for a number of value-added services, including content charging, video and audio caching, firewall protection, and virus screening. Notably, Nortel even refers to "in-line" services, a term with which Starent has taken the lead.

A deal with Nortel would certainly be a massive win for Starent. "Twelve or eighteen months ago, customers might have been hesitant to work with a start-up like Starent," notes Jarich. "Since then, however, the vendor has proven its merits in the market, even winning an OEM with [Samsung](#). Furthermore, with all due respect to Samsung, a Nortel OEM would take Starent to the 'next level.'" (See [Starent Teams With Samsung](#).)

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A Nortel spokesman declined to comment on the accuracy of the report, saying the vendor "has not announced any OEM relationships regarding its equipment to be deployed with Sprint."

Starent was unavailable for comment at time of press.

Presuming the report holds true, Jarich argues Starent could yet secure a future OEM deal with Nortel for its GGSN (Gateway GPRS Support Node) wireless router kit, deployed in GSM networks. "Nortel needs to detail whether or not its new PDSN product implies that a new GGSN is also in the works. Most companies base their PDSN and GGSN products on a common platform. Nortel is no different. As such, a new PDSN would imply that a new GGSN will follow, which is a possibility since Starent offers both PDSN and GGSN products."

— Justin Springham, Senior Editor, Europe, *Unstrung*

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Is it possible that the recent UTStarcom patent infringement lawsuit against Starent (<http://www.unstrung.com/docume...>) is causing its OEM partners to re-think the long term viability of the Starent product? After all, the patent infringement deals with the fundamental technology used in the Starent product.

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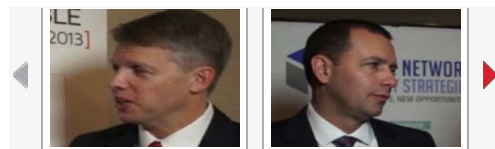
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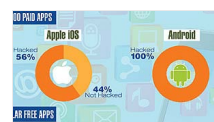
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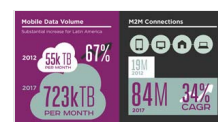
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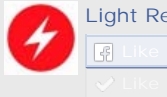
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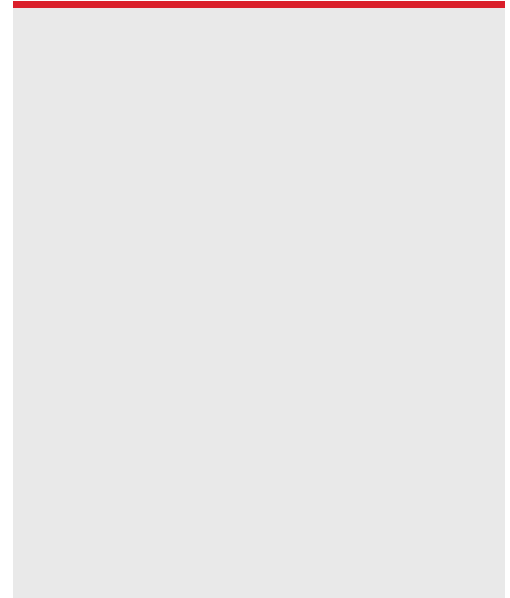


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