

A Business-to-Business
Newsletter from CompuServe

CompuServe RLA Links Mobile Workers to the Corporate LAN

The mobility of today's corporate workforce, driven by explosive sales of laptop PCs, high-speed modems, graphical user interfaces (Windows) and local area networks (LANs) also demands ready access to reliable wide-area networks. To meet the demand, CompuServe Incorporated's Network Services Division has launched "CompuServe RLA," a powerful remote LAN access service offering with the mobile professional in mind.

GartnerGroup, a research and consulting firm based in Stamford, Conn., recently noted several factors accounting for the tremendous growth in this particular market. Some of them include: an increasing reliance on network services to facilitate day-to-day business activity, an explosion in the use of laptop computers, an increase in number within the ranks of the mobile sales force and a larger overall base of "telecommuters."

These same elements have prompted CompuServe to respond with a premier remote LAN access service. CompuServe officially announced and demonstrated CompuServe RLA at the recent ComNet'94 trade show held in Washington, D.C. In use by customers since November,

CompuServe, giving them access to all data and applications resident on the LAN.

While the majority of CompuServe's several hundred domestic and global POPs currently support 9,600 bit-per-second (bps) dial access, CompuServe RLA customers can also access the CompuServe Network at speeds up to 14.4 kilobits per second (kbps) in 23 U.S. cities. Support for the V.32bis standard for 14.4 kbps dial-up access is scheduled for a total of 60 U.S. cities by April 1, enabling faster screens and file transfers. CompuServe is also testing dial-up network access at speeds of 28.8 kbps. When made available to the public at a later date, this capability will conform to TSS's V.34 standard, scheduled for ratification in early summer.

Features and Benefits

CompuServe RLA supports up to 24 users simultaneously, delivering the look and feel of a locally-attached workstation. The server provided by CompuServe that attaches to the user's home-office LAN is a 486-based PC, along with an Eicon® X.25 card for the network-to-server link or Host Network Link (HNL) connection and a network interface card (NIC) for the customer's network operating system (NOS). The server is stackable, so that more than 24 simultaneous sessions are possible. Embracing a "remote node" solution for LAN access while ensuring data integrity and a more cost-effective solution, CompuServe RLA also requires users to clear up to six levels of security before LAN access is granted.

► "Responding to demand for better mobile computing" "Responding to demand for better mobile computing, CompuServe RLA is the first packaged service that leverages the benefits of a value-added network, while delivering the performance that customers want. Demand is already tremendous," notes Greg Moore, CompuServe's director of network marketing. "CompuServe RLA is a fully-managed solution that includes the server, software and communications link. Customers can rely on CompuServe's service, support and cost savings for their remote access needs for excellent performance over a wide area network, particularly with client/server applications."

CompuServe has added TCP/IP to the suite of protocols supported by the CompuServe RLA LAN server. Customers using any of the popular remote TCP/IP software packages supporting the PPP protocol stack will be able to access TCP/IP services within the LAN. Additional protocol capability includes support for NetBIOS, IPX/SPX and NetBEUI, with others to be announced later.

Tangible benefits include significant cost savings for LAN communications:

CompuServe's end-to-end management allows customers to free up resources currently used in managing their corporate WAN. Intangible returns on investment are seen in improved productivity due to faster, consistent access to critical LAN applications.

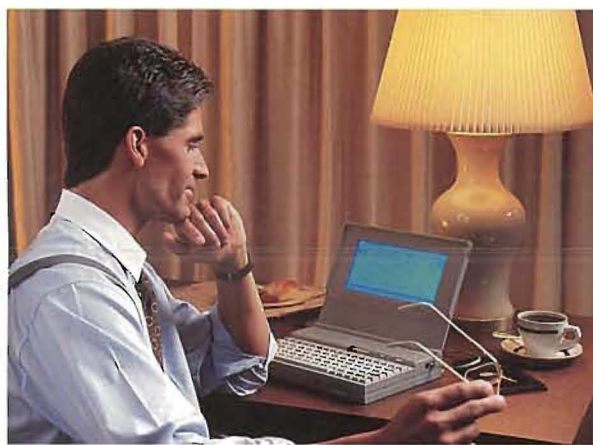
The Need for Speed

Recognizing speed as a concern within a remote LAN access application, CompuServe has responded by taking steps to minimize transfer time, both across the network and between the network and LAN-attached server. X.25 HNLs that connect the server to the CompuServe Network are available at speeds of 128 kbps and 256 kbps to accommodate a greater number of simultaneous users at higher data rates. HNLs supporting T-1 speeds (1.536 mbps) will soon be announced.

CompuServe RLA also shows impressive performance in the delivery of data from the home-office LAN to the remote user via the CompuServe Network. Through the incorporation of "spoofing," the server filters LAN acknowledgements, thereby ensuring transport of only data specifically requested by the user, be it a text file with color and varied fonts or a graphics file. As anyone who witnessed the CompuServe RLA demonstration at the ComNet'94 show will attest, CompuServe's remote LAN access offering is indeed a robust solution with the delay-sensitive, mobile professional in mind.

To find out how you can benefit immediately from CompuServe RLA or from any of the other CompuServe Network Services offerings, contact your local CompuServe account team or call toll-free, 800/433-0389.

► An explosion in the use of laptop computers.



CompuServe RLA is a packaged, end-to-end solution that meets the rapidly-growing need for remote LAN access.

Architecture

The CompuServe RLA turnkey solution is comprised of three main components: client software, the CompuServe Network and a communications server attached to the user's home-office LAN. CompuServe gives customers a free site license to distribute as many copies of software as needed, minimizing start-up costs.

Laptop-equipped remote users simply make a local dial-up call into any CompuServe point-of-presence (POP) in the United States and around the world. Local dial capability provides a flexible, economical alternative to 1-800 or long-distance dialing access. Once inside the network, their call is routed to a server provided by



FRAME-NET UPDATE

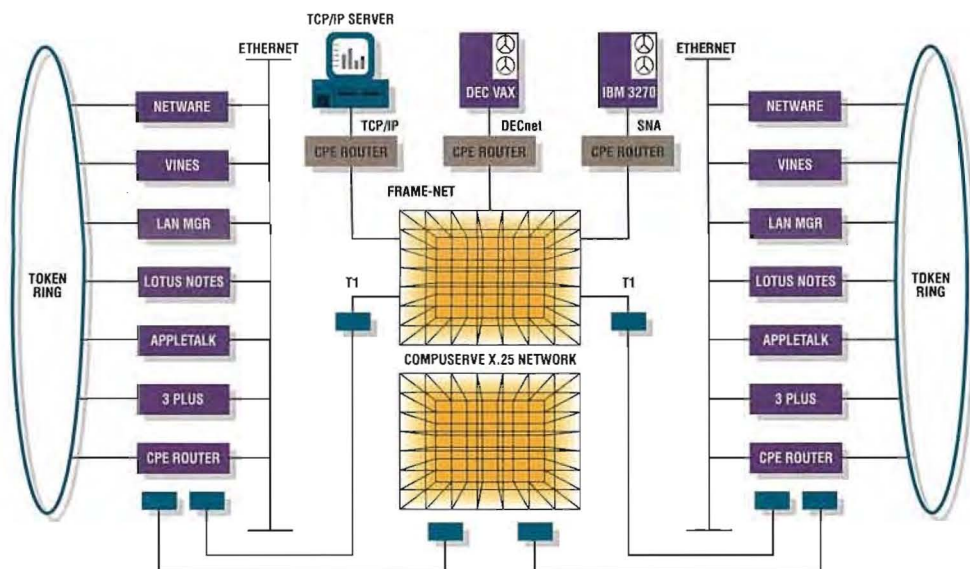
Compliant-Tested CPE Vendor List Grows

Since the announcement of its production availability in late 1991, CompuServe's global frame relay service, FRAME-Net, has received numerous requests for compliance testing from vendors of customer premise equipment (CPE). In order to aid our customers in determining which equipment has tested for compliance for their particular environment, CompuServe has built a Frame Relay Compliance and Testing Lab, located at corporate headquarters in Columbus.

The lab provides customers with information relative to their selected frame relay CPE device's compliance with CompuServe's FRAME-Net. It also provides them with any technical installation hints discovered by the Frame Relay Lab personnel and a list of all compliant products. It is important to note

that the results of the compliance testing conducted by CompuServe in no way should be interpreted as an endorsement of one CPE device over another. Compliance testing is a means of verifying that a particular CPE device functions in the FRAME-Net environment.

The lab was designed specifically for the Frame Relay CPE Testing program. The lab houses two separate and isolated Ethernet and Token Ring networks, and each network has Novell NetWare, Banyan VINES, LAN Manager, AppleTalk and 3Com+Open network operating system servers. The lab also has two T-1 links into CompuServe's FRAME-Net. These links are utilized to interconnect the two isolated networks in the lab, utilizing the CPE devices to be tested. This diagram describes the topology of the network used in the CPE Testing program:



This is a current list of companies whose CPE has passed compliance testing:

3Com Corporation, Santa Clara, CA
Advanced Computer Communications,
Cupertino, CA
AMNET, Framingham, MA
Cascade Communications Corp., Westford, MA
Cisco Systems, Menlo Park, CA
Cray Communications, Annapolis Junction, MD
CrossComm Corporation, Marlborough, MA
Dynatech Communications, Woodbridge, VA
Eicon Technology, Lachine, Quebec, Canada
FastComm Communications Corp., Sterling, VA
Frame Relay Technologies, Costa Mesa, CA
Hewlett Packard, Roseville, CA
IBM, Research Triangle Park, NC
Motorola/Codex, Boston, MA
Proteon, Inc., Westborough, MA
Retix, Santa Monica, CA
Sync Research, Irvine, CA
Synoptics Communications, Inc.,
Santa Clara, CA
Teleglobe, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Verilink Corporation, San Jose, CA
Wellfleet Communications, Inc., Bedford, MA
Xyplex, Inc., Foxborough, MA

For more information about items in Communication Solutions, contact your CompuServe account representative or CompuServe's Network Services Division, 800/433-0389. FAX 614/791-9298.

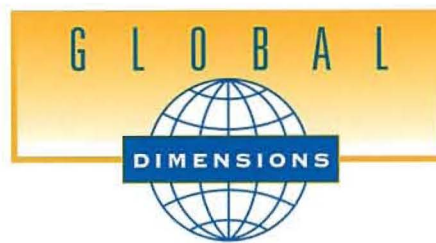
Newsbriefs

NetView/6000 Platform to Manage FRAME-Net

CompuServe Network Services will offer customer network management services based on IBM's NetView/6000 platform during the first half of 1994. The initial release will provide network monitoring capabilities to FRAME-Net customers, and statistical reporting will cover Permanent Virtual Circuit (PVC) utilization, data rates and historical information on routers and Channel Service Units (CSUs). Customers may use their existing SNMP manager, NetView host or opt for a workstation provided by CompuServe. NetView will eventually encompass all Network Services' offerings.

Overseas Services Expand

Asynchronous dial access is now available from Israel and Hungary into the CompuServe network via ISRAEL-Connect and HUNGARY-Connect. The links are made possible by private gateways between CompuServe and partners in the two countries. Dial access in Israel supports up to 2,400 bps, while dial access in Hungary supports up to 9,600 bps.



CompuServe & Visa: A 10-Year Partnership

In December, CompuServe Network Services and Visa U.S.A. celebrated 10 years of network partnership that has reshaped the retail industry. Serving retailers at the point-of-sale (POS), the CompuServe/Visa alliance has accounted for the processing of more than 2.5 billion payment card authorizations, delivering more convenient, efficient and faster service to consumers. Visa has issued over 316 million cards, including more than 157 million in the United States.

Visa selected CompuServe in 1983 to be the provider of dial-up POS network services for VisaNet, the bank card association's global POS authorization and settlement network. In 1984 the relationship grew into one of the first nationwide packet networks with customized software, and by the following year, the network's tremendous success led Visa to choose CompuServe as the exclusive provider of dial-up POS network services. Response times are now as low as five seconds for authorization.

Currently, the CompuServe/VisaNet POS network carries transactions in the U.S. and Canada. Cross-border transactions from Mexico and Brazil will begin in the near future. The CompuServe/VisaNet alliance has been contacted by interested banks in other countries and is now investigating additional opportunities in other Visa International regions. The partnership's decade of POS experience will be leveraged to bring economical, effective POS networking solutions to merchants and banks anywhere in the world.

"CompuServe is very proud of its long-standing relationship with Visa, the world's largest provider of payment services," comments Bob Massey, executive vice president of CompuServe's Network Services Division. "CompuServe and Visa will continue to lead the way in transaction authorization and settlement services in this country and abroad."

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