
WIRELESS NETWORK DEPLOYMENT A PROJECT MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

by Ravi S. Bhatia, PMP

Date: January 17, 2002 (Thursday)
Time: 6:00 pm (refreshment starts at 5:45 pm)
Place: 202 ECEC, NJIT

About the Speaker

Most recently, Ravi Bhatia managed the NYC segment of Metricom's *Ricochet 2* deployment - the U.S.' first wireless mobile high-speed Internet access network, employing RF technology using a system comprised of wired access points which house antennas (WAP sites) and micro cell repeater radios transmitting IP packets at license-free frequencies (900Mhz and 2.4Ghz). The deployment entailed securing rights-of-way, and leasing, zoning, RF engineering, WAP construction, optimization and maintenance.

Ravi has 17 years of project management experience on high-visibility projects for fortune 500 clients and large institutions. This has included team building, client management, estimating, contracts management, purchasing, planning, engineering, project accounting, and cost control. Other prominent projects include the retrofit, and upgrade of AT&T's corporate headquarters at 32 Avenue of the Americas, U.S. Federal Courthouse at Foley Square and Sheraton New York Hotel restoration.

His career has spanned technical sales, business development, subcontracting, construction management and program management. He has a B.S. in Engineering (Polytechnic University), a MBA (Hofstra University) and a M.S. in Telecommunications and Information Management (Polytechnic University). He is a member of IEEE, Project Management Institute and The New York New Media Association.

About the Talk

Metricom, a wireless pioneer founded in 1985, shutdown operations in August 2001 after deploying an ambitious, nationwide high-speed mobile wireless Internet access network. In 1999, armed with a proprietary micro-cellular digital network (MCDN), and \$600 million in funding from Worldcom and Vulcan Ventures, Metricom sought to stay ahead of the looming threat of 3G by building a massive network at a frenetic pace, and effectively create a new market for mobile data. This was a mega-project that demanded the integration of numerous disciplines including RF engineering, site acquisition, project management, logistics coordination, zoning, construction management, network optimization and a group of people who were willing to take risks.

The lessons learned from the *Ricochet 2* project will be of interest to those who seek to understand the pitfalls and characteristics attendant to the deployment of a wireless network. The focus is on three key elements: design and development of a new technology, operation of a national project management matrix team, and management of a complex mix of vendor relationships, legal challenges and physical constraints. In the final analysis, Metricom may have failed due to an inability to commercialize its service fast enough to pay its creditors, but operationally, its network was acclaimed by many loyal users who regarded its service as unique and without credible substitutes.

- ◆ DALLAS, Feb. 15 /PRNewswire/ -- The following report is being issued by Billy C. Bowden of Ameri-First Securities. *No one has launched a network of this magnitude, this quickly, for less dollars, ever. More bang for less buck! Despite the disappointing modem sales, this network is coming together, and more importantly, the network is not buggy. To replicate a network with these numbers of pops, in a competing technology, would carry an aggregate cost north of 100 billion dollars*

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