tele.net

Enea Openwave: Empowering Indian telcos

June 2020

Enea Openwave provides video traffic management and 5G core solutions to mobile operators globally. With India witnessing a surge in video traffic in the wake of the Covid-19 crisis, the company is keen to bring its global experience to help Indian telcos manage this traffic and monetise it. *In an interview with tele.net, Indranil Chatterjee, senior vice-president (VP) of products, sales and marketing, and Kishor Panpaliya, VP of Americas and APAC, Enea Openwave, talk about the company's solutions and strategies...*

Indranil Chatterjee,
Sr VP, Product & Sales

Kishor Panpaliya,
VP, Sales (Americas & APAC)

How are telcos responding to the unprecedented data demand on their networks? What role can Enea Openwave play in this regard?
Globally, operators are finding it difficult to keep networks up and running, and are experiencing downtime due to the stress of increased demand, mainly from streaming. To help with network congestion, the European Union has asked Netflix and YouTube to reduce their streaming quality to prevent the internet from collapsing. This could reduce Netflix traffic on European networks by around 25 per cent.

Operators that use Enea Openwave's mobile optimisation technology can manage mobile streaming data and deliver standard definition (SD) video without straining the network, thus achieving valuable bandwidth savings. In fact, research has found that subscribers could not notice any difference between SD and high definition (HD) viewing on their handsets.

A major Tier 1 operator in India developed a mechanism, within a few days of the Covid-19 outbreak, to feed the core network with radio congestion indicators. Based on the congestion status of the network and location behaviour, the operator can take proactive action in real time to manage video traffic and deliver a consistent service to subscribers without impacting essential services.

How are telcos managing the congestion due to surging encrypted video traffic?
Encryption protocols from Google, Facebook and others continue to darken mobile networks for telcos. At any given point, operators need to ascertain quickly the source of content on their networks (Netflix, Amazon, YouTube, etc.) to manage the quality of experience (QoE). Operators need to know the definition of video, whether it's a live stream or download, the codec being used to deliver the video and the device it is being delivered to.

Operators cannot manage what they cannot see. They need much more than conventional traffic management technology to gather data and make informed decisions. To gain insight through analytics, operators need to abandon the old appliance-based deep packet inspection approach and adopt pure software solutions such as Enea Openwave's video traffic management solution.

What kind of opportunity does 5G offer to Indian operators? How is Enea Openwave helping them in this regard?

The economics of 5G investment, coupled with government policy, spectrum allocation, readiness of standards, etc., is one of the concerns for deployment. However, telcos have already started modernising their network infrastructure to accommodate the coverage and data capacity needed. They are trying to ensure that the next generation of radio and core network infrastructure is staying true to 5G principles. For example, the core network is getting distributed towards the edge, which helps reduce latency, improve customer's internet experience and reduce transport costs. Due to the exponential rise in data traffic, operators can no longer afford to route the data traffic centrally and have, hence, adopted the strategy to cache, optimise and monetise at the edge. Infrastructure in these edge data centres is being built with cloud technologies like NFV and SDN, which will make it 5G ready.

We are currently working with some of the major Tier 1 telecom groups worldwide including Vodafone, Orange and Zain. We have also recently deployed our traffic management solution for a major Tier 1 Indian telco.

What is your strategy for the Indian market?

Our strategy for the Indian market is twofold. First, we intend to leverage our global Tier 1 deployment expertise and our major local presence to create a win-win scenario for Indian network operators with our tried-and-tested all-IP traffic management and cloud data management solutions. Second, we have mature original equipment manufacturer relationships with major network infrastructure vendors that have a significant market share in India and are actively engaged in migrating the packet core domain to NFV. Openwave Mobility solutions have been pre-integrated and certified as virtual network functions on their platforms, offering Indian customers an alternate option for procuring our solutions.

We aim to empower Indian telcos so that they can prepare and manage the growing tide of encrypted data and network congestion while maintaining QoE, and maximising RAN efficiency and overall profitability.

We have more than 50 Tier 1 mobile operator deployments worldwide and we are in the deployment phase for our 5G products in some of the advanced countries already. We have designed our platforms to ensure a smooth migration and inter-op between 4G and 5G and we can leverage that expertise in India to help operators.