



HR Awards Top Ethernet Providers

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Two repeat winners graced the stage as [Heavy Reading](#) handed out its Ethernet Service Provider of the Year awards yesterday, part of the closing day of *Light Reading's* Ethernet Expo.

The awards honor the North American carriers that have been at the forefront in providing Ethernet services *and* promoting the concept. Both parts are important, because while customers are reportedly enthused about Ethernet services, carriers still have a few kinks to work out. (See [Ethernet's Missing Pieces](#).)

Note that yesterday's awards pertained only to North America; a European set was handed out at Ethernet Expo London in May. (See [Trio Lands Ethernet Carrier Awards](#).)

To review last year's North American winners, see [HR Presents Ethernet Provider Awards](#). For this year's winners, keep reading...

Winners Circle

Representing this year's award winners, from left to right: Jamey Heinze (Level 3), Keao Caindec (Yipes), Michael Marcellin (Verizon Business), and David Strauss (Optimum Lightpath)

Market Leadership Verizon Business

[Verizon Business](#) is on a roll, beating out [Time Warner Telecom Inc.](#) (Nasdaq: [TWTC](#) - [message board](#)) and [Yipes Enterprise Services Inc.](#) to take this category for the second time, and also grabbing a Leading Lights award earlier this week. (See [LR Names 2007 Leading Lights Winners](#) and [Slideshow: Leading Lights Awards 2007](#).)

Verizon Business has shown "very impressive growth" during the past year, *Heavy Reading* senior analyst Stan Hubbard says. The provider has also continued to be a cheerleader for Ethernet services and a highly visible contributor to the [Metro Ethernet Forum \(MEF\)](#) .

Product Portfolio Level 3 Communications

Some observers wonder if [Level 3 Communications Inc.](#) (Nasdaq: [L3](#) - [message board](#)) has taken on too many pieces, especially if you include the content delivery network (CDN) acquired from [Savvis Communications Corp.](#) (Nasdaq: [SVVS](#) - [message board](#)) But in terms of the services available, Level 3 has built up an impressive menu, Hubbard says.

"They've got a strategic commitment to putting Ethernet throughout the network, and they're really able to leverage the price advantages of 'optical-plus-Ethernet.' "

The other two finalists for this award were [AT&T Inc.](#) (NYSE: [T](#) - [message board](#)) and Verizon Business.

Innovation
Optimum Lightpath
and
Yipes Enterprise Services

For the Innovation award, *Heavy Reading* got innovative, as Hubbard decided to split the spoils.

[Optimum Lightpath](#) won the "regional" award, largely for its intensive marketing campaign in the eastern United States. "Their sales and marketing efforts have been among the most innovative in the industry," including consumer-targeted ad campaigns and online videos explaining the benefits of the technology, notes Hubbard.

[Yipes Enterprise Services Inc.](#), meanwhile, received the "national/international" innovation award, making it a repeat winner like Verizon Business. The global network Yipes is developing -- thanks to its acquisition by [Reliance Communications Ltd.](#), which is expected to close soon -- was a big factor here. On top of that, Yipes has shown some forward thinking in its service level agreements and targeted applications. (See [Yipes! Here Comes a Spending Spree](#) and [Yipes Launches Electronic Trading Service](#).)

The third finalist, left out of the winner's circle, was [XO Communications Inc.](#) (OTC: [XOCM](#) - [message board](#)) But Hubbard gave XO good marks for adding hundreds of new customer sites and for "taking advantage of some of the next-generation optical technology," referring to the company's use of [Infinera Corp.](#) (Nasdaq: [INFN](#) - [message board](#)) gear. (See [XO Picks Infinera Again](#).)

— Craig Matsumoto, West Coast Editor, [Light Reading](#)