

June 2014

LATINCOM: The ComSoc Portfolio Conference on Communications of Latin America

By Pedro Aguilera, ComSoc LA Region Director and LATINCOM 2013 General Chair

The 5th edition of LATINCOM 2013, the Latin American Conference on Communications, with the theme “Communication Services, Bringing Quality to the People,” was held in Santiago de Chile November 24-26. The Technical Program Committee (TPC) selected 45 papers from a total of 115 submissions received from all over the world. The venue, located in the heart of the capital of the country, was the Intercontinental Hotel and Convention Center, a perfect place for authors to find good accommodations, restaurants, and excellent facilities to present their work.

More than 120 registered attendees participated in the symposia. Four Tutorial courses addressed the following topics: “Data Center Networking,” presented by Prof. Malathi Veeraraghavan; “The Evolution of Public Safety Mobile Communications through LTE Technology,” presented by Prof. Oriol Sallent; “On Security Issues in Content Centric Networks: Vulnerabilities, Attacks and Countermeasures,” presented by Dr. Antonio Rocha and Dr. Celio Albuquerque; and “Future of Optical Communication Systems and Networks,” presented by Fabio Pittala and Lorge Lopez Vizcaino. Four keynotes addressed the following topics: “Visible Light Communications: Future Smart Lighting and Data Communications All in One,” by Prof. Zabih Ghassemlooy; “MANET Formulation Considered Harmful and What is Next?” by Dr. Zhensheng Zhang; “Twin Photons: Applications to Satellite Laser Ranging, and to Classical and Quantum Optical Communications,” by Dr. Sergio Torres; and “Network-as-a-Service: Network Virtualization and Programmability,” by Prof. Nelson Fonseca. The conference included two industry forums (with the participation



Attendees of LATINCOM 2013.

of Gustavo Marambio, CTO of Movistar Chile, Luis Uribe, CTO of ENTEL Chile, Raul Lazcano from the Telecommunication Ministry of Chile, and Flavio Mariotto from CPqD Brazil), 16 main track sessions, and four Communication Workshop sessions.

The organizing committee was congratulated for their good job, characterized by the perfect timing of the entire conference program and the good quality of the selected papers, tutorials, and keynotes.

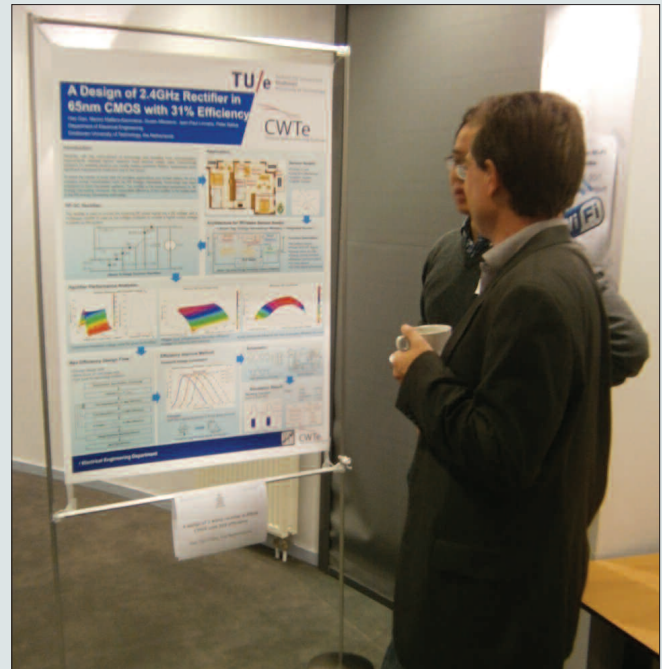
LATINCOM 2013 was made possible thanks to the great effort and unconditional collaboration and support of numerous volunteers organized in different committees and task forces. Special recognition should be given to the extraordinary work of the TPC, which was led by Michael Devetsikiotis and Nestor Becerra, and to Nelson Fonseca, who was the Steering Committee Chair and mentor of the LATINCOM conference.

20th IEEE Symposium on Communications and Vehicular Technology (IEEE SCVT 2013), Namur, Benelux

By H. Nikookar, Chairman of the Benelux Joint Chapter on Communications and Vehicular Technology

The 20th edition of the annual symposium of the Joint IEEE BeneLux Communications and Vehicular Technology Chapter was organized by the IEEE Benelux Joint Chapter on Communications and Vehicular Technology and was held on Thursday, November 21, 2013 in Namur, Belgium. The Symposium was chaired by Laurent Schumacher, University of Namur, and Luc Vandendorpe, Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium. The Symposium was sponsored by the IEEE and was supported by Le Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique (FNRS), BEP - L'agence de développement économique durable en Province de Namur, and Agence Wallonne des Télécommunications, Belgium. The symposium aimed at giving Ph.D. students in the Benelux the opportunity to present their ongoing work, to identify colleagues working on related issues, and to contribute to their doctoral training thanks to keynote speeches.

The symposium program covered both the physical layer and the networking aspect of communications and vehicular technology. The conference program included two keynote talks: "Software Defined Networking (SDN)" by Hagen Woesner (EICT, Germany); and "Machine-to-Machine Communications" by Jesus Alonso-Zarate (CTTC, Spain). The first keynote talk provided a short wrap-up of trends in networking leading to the lately popular SDN. The talk tried to identify the main drivers that led to the current split between data and control plane. One example use-case of an in-car WiFi communication system was discussed where the potential of SDN for the convergence of different fixed and wireless access technologies was explained. The second keynote talk focused on the unprecedented communication paradigm of machine-to-machine (M2M), facilitating 24/7 ultra-reliable connectivity between a prior unseen number of automated devices, which is currently gripping both industrial as well



Poster chat.

as academic communities. New challenges posed for technology and the vast amount of smart-applications and the new markets that such type of communication will open were discussed. The talk provided an academic, technical, and industrial overview of key aspects of wireless M2M networks, including both a technology and a market perspective. The symposium program accommodated 10 oral presentations and 10 posters.

The symposium was live tweeted with hashtag #SCVT13. A total of 29 delegates attended the Symposium: twenty-two (22) from the Benelux, two (2) from Germany, one (1) from France, two (2) from Greece, one (1) from Ireland, and one (1) from Spain. The Symposium had 25 paper submissions and the acceptance ratio was 75%. The Best Student Paper Award went to Brian Niehöfer from Technische Universität Dortmund (Germany) for his contribution entitled "Smart Constellation Selection for Precise Vehicle Positioning in Urban Canyons using a Software-Defined Receiver Solution."



Best Student Paper Award ceremony.



SCVT 2013 audience.

VITEL 2013 International Workshop on Telecommunications: Infrastructure for Fulfilment of the Digital Agenda and Beyond: The Case of Slovenia

By Tomi Mlinar and Marko Jagodic, EZS-SIKOM, Slovenia

The workshop took place May 27–28, 2013 in Slovenia, at the Congress Centre Brdo pri Kranju. The Programme Committee, chaired by Tomi Mlinar, decided to select “Infrastructure for fulfilment of the Digital Agenda and Beyond: The Case of Slovenia” as the appropriate theme for the VITEL 2013 International Workshop. The event was organized by the Electrotechnical Association of Slovenia (EZS), the Slovenian Society for Electronic Communications (SIKOM), and sponsored by the IEEE Communications Society of Slovenia. The Workshop included 27 speakers, with more than 150 attendees.

In May 2010 the European Union adopted the Digital Agenda as one of the seven key initiatives of the development strategy Europe 2020, recognizing that a good ICT infrastructure and its effective use are crucial for the digital society and economic progress. The Digital Agenda requires EU Member States to take appropriate local measures for its realization by 2020. At the 29th VITEL International Workshop we addressed infrastructure aspects for ensuring this initiative which provides basic broadband at least at the speed of 30 Mbps for all European households by 2013, with the possibility of connections at 100 Mbps for half of European households by 2020. It is estimated that the infrastructure for the realization of the EU objectives needs 200 billion euros. Someone would say that the Digital Agenda defined ambitious targets, but we already see that in the most developed Asian countries this has already been achieved and their economies are strong and growing.

In Slovenia more than two thirds of the households are using broadband, and more than 10% of the households have optical access to the Internet. That is not bad, as it places Slovenia on the average level of the EU. However, in recent years we have witnessed stagnation. The idea of the Programme Committee of the International Workshop was to highlight these problems and find suggestions for what should be the relevant national objectives in this area and how to achieve them.

The International Workshop VITEL addressed several main aspects: strategic, technological, economic, and organizational. The fact is that next-generation networks are being built for 30 to 50 years, so the question of the Workshop was what strategic objectives will persist for the period beyond 2020 and how the Republic of Slovenia can benefit from the instruments and resources of the EU budget for the period 2014 to 2020.

The introductory speech was given by Nikolaj Simic, chairman of the Slovenian Society for Electronic Communications. He gave an excellent review of the content of the Digital Agenda for Europe. Guest speakers from the European project ENGAGE (High Speed Broadband for Rural Europe) shared practices and models of construction of open broadband networks in some EU countries (Finland, France, Sweden, and Germany). The second set of contributions was about the development strategy of the electronic communications in Slovenia, the role of the



Tomi Mlinar (left), Chairman of the Programme Committee and Zoran Vehovar, Vice President of the Management Board of Telekom Slovenije.



Audience in the Congress Centre Brdo, Kranj.

national regulator in the development of infrastructure, construction of open networks, and the current status of broadband access in Slovenia and Europe. A guest speaker, Marjan Turk, director of the Directorate for the Information Society of the Republic of Slovenia, promised that the Slovenian Broadband Strategy will be revised and issued as soon as possible. The third section of speeches discussed the options to meet the objectives of the Digital Agenda in Slovenia with upgrades of the existing infrastructure and technologies, e.g. VDSL2, vectoring, DOCSIS 3.x, etc. The first section on the second day of the International Workshop discussed wireless technology, e.g. LTE as an alternative to fast optical networks, high-speed satellite access, etc. The last part of the International Workshop was dedicated to new solutions, e.g. cable networks of the 21st century and WEB-TV, and how the right standardization could contribute to the achievement of the Digital Agenda objectives.

Other speakers discussed the topology/technology ratio and the technologies best suited for the future market, the new long-term ICT infrastructure requirements of various industrial segments, and the technological boundary conditions for open networks and open access. Some economic experts estimate a need for about 400 to 500 million euros for the future modernization and expansion of the Slovenian network to meet the Digital Agenda

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Activities of the ComSoc Portuguese Chapter in 2012/13

By Luis M. Correia, University of Lisbon, Portugal

In 2012/13, the ComSoc Portuguese Chapter continued the activities of organizing seminars jointly with IST – University of Lisbon (taking advantage of this university's initiatives) and providing, through its website (<http://chapters.comsoc.org/Portugal>), a permanent list of conferences in the communications area, allowing for a better flow of information among the Portuguese technical and scientific community working in the area.

Lisbon was the host for a Distinguished Speaker Tour, on Oct. 22, 2012, by Prof. Koichi Asatani (Kogakuin University, Tokyo, Japan), who gave a talk on “Carrier-Grade Networks toward the Future: NGN and its Issues.” The ComSoc Portuguese Chapter hosted another distinguished speaker, Prof. Daniel Kofman (Telecom Paris Tech, Paris, France), on May 21, 2013, addressing “An Integrated View on Future Information and Communication Networks and Services”.

The series of talks with Portuguese speakers were as follows: “LTE,” Cláudia Queirós (Ericsson), Jan. 19, 2012; “Leadership by Innovation,” Ana Dias (Portugal Telecom), Jan. 26th, 2012; “Cloud Computing,” Graça Carvalho (Cisco), Mar. 12, 2012; “Small Cells and Heterogeneous Networks,” José Vilela (Alcatel-Lucent), June 19, 2012; “End-to-End QoS in Mobile Networks,” Paulino Corrêa and António C. Fernandes (Vodafone), Jan. 8, 2013; “Over the Top: Threat or Opportunity?” José Pascoal (ZON), Jan. 23, 2013; “Smart Grids – Synergies Between Power Network and Communications,” Fernando Gomes and Nuno Silva (EFACEC), Mar. 19, 2013; “First Learning's from LTE Rollout & Optimization: Preparing LTE-Advanced,” Luís Santo (Optimus), June 5, 2013; “Network Virtualization: Challenges and Trends of Evolution,” Jorge Carapinha (PT Inovação), Oct. 31, 2013; “Service Provider SDN,” Raul Caldeira (Ericsson), Dec. 12, 2013.



The Portugal Chapter Chair, Luis M. Correia, sided by Microsoft and Huawei representatives (Nuno Silva and Nuno Bernardo), in one of the technical meetings of the chapter.

Two seminars took place on May 24, 2012 and May 22, 2013, on Mobile Communications, essentially aiming at students about to graduate, but open to industry as well. There was a mix of topics and speakers from Portugal, covering the various industrial players in the area: “Operation and Maintenance: Key Factors for Success,” Rui Louro (CBE); “New Television Services,” Nuno C. Ponte (Optimus); “LTE: Preparing Networks for the Data Storm,” Nuno Marques (Alcatel-Lucent); “LTE,” Nuno Bernardo (Huawei); and “Applications and Operating Systems in Mobile Phones,” Nuno Silva (Microsoft). The events were well attended, attracting more than 80 people, the majority being students.

The average attendance of these talks has been around 110, with a maximum of 244. All presentations are made available at the website, thus enabling a better dissemination of the information, particularly for those who could not attend the talks. The membership has been maintained in the period, despite of the difficult economic situation in the country. ComSoc keeps being the largest IEEE society in Portugal, with 3.4 times more members than the second largest one, and 15.1 times more members than the average over all IEEE societies. In 2014 the ComSoc Portuguese Chapter will continue pursuing the same objectives, providing a service to its members.

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goals. Some analyses showed that a high level of network utilization (greater than 50%) is the key factor for the profitability of investments. Speakers from the Post and Electronic Communications Agency of the Republic of Slovenia presented European Commission measures to be taken and to be implemented by the state regulators to reduce construction costs and regulate open broadband networks. This would result in more transparent business operations, long-term sustainable investments, and technological modernization.

We are looking forward to the VITEL 2014 International Workshop, which is to be held in May 2014 in the Congress Centre Brdo pri Kranju. The title of the 30th jubilee International Workshop is “Future Networks.”