



# MEF MINUTE QUARTERLY

THE MAGAZINE OF THE **MOBILE ECOSYSTEM FORUM**

APRIL 2021 | ISSUE NO. 01

**Members Update**

**MEF CONNECTS, MEFFYS & AGM**

**Is Covid The “Big Bang” of Digital Payments?**

**GDPR Fines: a 40% Increase in 2020**

**Ready, Steady, 5G: a quick uptake expected,  
but what will be the impact?**

## 5 MINUTES WITH... iBASIS



In our 5 minutes with profiles, MEF members talk about their business, their aspirations for the future and the wider mobile industry. This week, Ricardo Martins, VP of Global Messaging introduces [iBASIS](#)

### What does iBASIS do?

In fact very simple; we are the carriers' carrier: iBASIS carries the international voice, mobile data and messaging traffic for carriers, mobile operators and service providers worldwide. We are specialized in that, we do only that, independently and securely.

Thanks to iBASIS' DNA in IP technologies and real-time communications the iBASIS multi-service IP-based network is one of the preferred networks by carriers and mobile operators worldwide.

Two years ago, we also expanded our portfolio to introduce a new global IoT connectivity offering and we are now dynamically growing this business, leveraging our unique eSIM and global architecture to serve all vertical markets of IoT service providers.

### When did you launch and what growth have you seen?

We are just about to celebrate iBASIS 25th anniversary! And in 25 years, iBASIS grew from start-up to one of the largest international carriers in the world, driven by innovation in VoIP, quality monitoring, fraud management system and more recently global IoT architecture.

iBasis started out as a voice over IP company in the late nineties. It merged with the wholesale arm of KPN in 2006 and successfully entered the mobile IPX business servicing the 4G roaming market globally in 2013 which has now grown into the world's 3rd largest IPX globally.

Since 2018 and the acquisition by Tofane Global which resulted in the consolidation with Altice International Carrier Services (ICS) in Portugal, France and Dominicana, and in 2020 with NOS ICS, iBASIS accelerated its growth to offer customers greater scale and innovation.

Continue to the next page ►

# INTERVIEWS

By leveraging the company's wholesale trading expertise platform, and advanced analytics tools, we have been able to accelerate the deployment of our P2P and A2P solutions. Over the past year, we completed the mobile messaging solution portfolio. The solutions include Application-to-Person mobile messaging (A2P) for real time communications and SMS firewall solutions to protect mobile operators against illegitimate routes usage.

## What are your main goals?

iBASIS built a strong reputation of quality partner in international voice, being one of the largest carriers in the world, then with the launch of LTE and 4G services we became the most trusted partner for mobile network operators. As a wholesale specialist, we design complete and customized solution to offer the reach, quality and security that requires our tier one customers – the open peering policy, advanced analytics platform are a few



examples of the innovation iBASIS brings to the market.

Now my goal is to become the preferred and most trusted partner for P2P and A2P messaging business. We have already a strong track of records including Portuguese speaking countries, LATAM, Asia Pac where we are offering open connectivity to the top major players in China. iBASIS also continues to strengthen its strategic partnerships with Altice Dominicana, KPN, NOS, Portugal Telecom, SFR, TDC and help them to secure more revenues from SMS – define relevant termination price and enforce it while protecting their subscriber base from unsolicited SMS and spam.

Our goal and our execution plan at iBASIS, which involve engineering, operations, product and commercial team is to offer a unique MNO engagement model for monetization of international A2P SMS traffic with strong focus on network protection.

## Where do you see yourselves/the industry in three years' time?

Forecasting is the most difficult thing during these pandemic times however some key trends have been confirmed, even accentuated over the past year. I'm expecting that they will be the same over the coming years. The need for greater secured network has been demonstrated last year when we observed the explosion of all types of SMS scams.

That will remain one of my key objectives, addressing all security aspects. We provide solutions not only to help carriers capture more revenue from their SMS business, optimizing

Continue to the next page ►

# INTERVIEWS



access to their infrastructure, but we also put in place the proper mechanisms to protect their subscribers from these risks and vulnerabilities.

As a global connectivity provider, it's critical to implement for our customers the proper connectivity solution. As such an enabler, we are making the bridge between OTTs and mobile operators. A2P messaging is one of the few sectors which continues to grow globally, many changes happened in 2020 with some verticals decreasing while other verticals such as authentication, transaction confirmations, alerts were on the rise. The trend is very promising for the upcoming years.

## What aspect of mobile is most exciting to you right now?

Since the inception of mobile communications, end-users have been able to receive SMS seamlessly even while roaming. SMS communication still remains one of the most reliable and efficient ways to connect to and benefit

from a wider reach than Internet apps have. Mobile operators can reach almost the entire population thanks to the broad coverage of their 2G, 3G and 4G networks and the diverse types of mobile devices on the market and get confirmation that messages (SMS) are delivered to the handsets.

During the COVID-19 crisis, SMS has proven to be a reliable, simple way to relay information or alerts to everyone – even populations not equipped with smart phones or digitally connected via social media. Over the past several weeks, SMS/A2P traffic types have changed (e.g. retail marketing traffic dropped at the beginning of the lockdown as shops were closing). However, traffic grew in multiple areas such as transaction confirmation, authentication, one-time password use, notifications and alerts. Governments,

Continue to the next page ►

# INTERVIEWS

health authorities and agencies are also relying on SMS/A2P for time-critical communications.

Right now, as a community we do have two main exciting projects to tackle how to keep SMS/A2P universal and competitive while staying ahead of the fraudsters.

## What's the most critical issue that will hit mobile within the next 12 months?

I can mention one of them because this is a priority for iBASIS in 2021 – security and helping operators to be compliant with regulatory bodies. One of the key evolutions of our business and new areas of expertise are about security and it's now being embedded in the entire organization and the portfolio.

We have recently enhanced our antifraud management systems and platform, we just launched a new signaling security portfolio, and with our SMS firewall solution, we have now a deeper and larger scope of expertise to fight all types of international frauds.

Transition from legacy services to new virtual services, CPaaS, APIs, core services are the same

## Apart from your own, which mobile companies are the ones to watch in the year ahead?

Collaboration is key in this industry and it gives me the opportunity to work with many different partners and experts. Haud is certainly one of them, they have a strong track of records and they have a very in depth knowledge when it comes to messages screening, Machine learning and algorithms technology.

I'm also watching Sinch innovative strategy through M&A is critical to their overall corporate strategy. Like Tofane Global, IBASIS Parent company, Sinch growth strategy relies on acquisitions to improve scale, reach and also profitability in the SMS market. They're also innovating through complementary technologies to broaden their offering and strengthen their relationships with mobile operators.

Another remarkable company is Twilio, which is transforming the communication landscape through virtualization and APIs while embedding all legacy communications like SMS, Voice, Videos into web, desktop or any new software app. Their innovation and how they enable developers' innovation is becoming critical for many enterprises' communications and has accelerated since the emergence of the coronavirus which forces all kind of businesses to accelerate their digital transformation.

As a middleman, we at iBASIS, also help our operators and service providers' customers to offer and expand their business and enterprise solution offering as they leverage our global reach via cloud numbering or direct calling capabilities integrating in high demanding collaboration applications such MS teams ▲



**RICARDO MARTINS**  
**iBASIS VP GLOBAL ESSEGING**