



## Cisco Tangos With Tazz

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[Cisco Systems Inc.](#) (Nasdaq: [CSCO](#) - [message board](#)) leapt into the policy management market with both feet today by striking an OEM deal to rebadge technology from policy control specialist [Tazz Networks Inc.](#) (See [Cisco Rebadges Tazz.](#))

The arrangement won't cause any major shocks, as the two companies already have a close working relationship, most notably at [BT Group plc](#) (NYSE: [BT](#) - [message board](#); London: BTA), where Tazz is one of Cisco's partners in the metro nodes of the carrier's next-generation network, the 21CN. (See [BT's 21CN: Metro Partners Under Wraps.](#))

But the deal is significant for two reasons. It gives Cisco a position in one of the hottest emerging technology areas, policy management, which will become increasingly vital to service providers seeking to effectively, and profitably, manage the delivery of multiple IP services to broadband customers. (See [Policy Control Heats Up.](#))

Cisco is calling its product the Broadband Policy Manager, or Cisco BPM.

The move gives the IP equipment giant an instant policy management story, something that some of its key rivals such as [Alcatel](#) (NYSE: [ALA](#) - [message board](#); Paris: CGEP:PA) and [Redback Networks Inc.](#) (Nasdaq: [RBAK](#) - [message board](#)), but particularly [Juniper Networks Inc.](#) (Nasdaq: [JNPR](#) - [message board](#)) with its SDX-300 (a Unisphere product), already have in their marketing arsenals. (See [Alcatel Launches Service Manager](#), [Redback Intros Policy Manager](#), and [Juniper Boosts IPTV.](#))

Cisco says only that Tazz's technology is "a component of the Cisco Broadband Policy Manager" that is "designed to enable deployment of advanced applications over IP Next Generation Networks." In an email response to a request for comment, Cisco added: "Tazz is one of many Cisco OEM partners contributing to the development of the Cisco IP Next Generation Network Architecture."

The arrangement also gives Tazz, a small specialist that has been developing systems in this field for some years, a major foot in carriers' doors, market credibility, and, reckons the company, the potential for greater insight into operators' plans.

"For Tazz, this will open a lot of Tier 1 doors we couldn't have opened ourselves, and we expect to see customers and revenues from this relationship very soon," says Tazz VP of marketing Chad Dunn. "It'll also give us visibility into the carriers' roadmaps and the way they see certain standards and strategies, and allows us to adjust our future product development accordingly."

That upswing in business opportunities also means Tazz will need to raise further working capital: Dunn says the company, which has been growing fast recently, will "be going out to raise more money later this quarter." Its most recent funding round was in May 2005. (See [Tazz Pockets Another \\$6M](#), [Tazz Adds VPs](#), and [Tazz](#)

[Goes to Scotland.](#))

For Cisco, he adds, it gives Cisco the opportunity to sell IP services management technology to any carrier, whether they use Cisco's edge routers or not, as the Tazz technology is vendor agnostic.

*Heavy Reading* senior analyst John Longo also sees this as a positive move for the minnow. "This is very good for Tazz. The agreement signifies what I believe will be the trend toward different vendors, with expertise in specific areas, providing different elements in an overall solution," which, adds the analyst, is consistent with the next-generation framework architecture standards, such as IMS (IP multimedia subsystem), being developed by bodies such as [3rd Generation Partnership Project \(3GPP\)](#) and [European Telecommunications Standards Institute \(ETSI\)](#). (See [IMS Guide](#) and [ETSI Drives Convergence Standard.](#))

"It will be difficult for any one vendor to be the best at all levels -- transport, control, and application," so OEM deals and partnerships are the way forward, adds Longo.

A recent *Heavy Reading* report tagged Tazz as having "the most extensive policy control offering at present." (See [Policy Control Is Key.](#))

The arrangement looks to have come as the market for policy management and quality of service (QoS) control technology is about to take off as IP services that require greater applications and subscriber management, such as VOIP and IPTV, take off.

Tazz's Dunn says that although Tazz hasn't seen many big policy management contract awards from the wireline carriers yet, "RFP and RFI activity has gone through the roof recently, and a number of big decisions are about to be made."

That view is shared by another specialist in the market. [Operax AB](#) executive Claes Vemmerik says there has been "a lot more activity in the fixed-line market lately, especially from Tier 1 carriers that are looking at ETSI's TISPAN [standards work] as their blueprint." He says that as sensitive services such as VOIP and video are introduced into the network, "over-provisioning [of capacity] becomes a questionable scenario. The carriers will need bandwidth control."

— Ray Le Maistre, International News Editor, [Light Reading](#)



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