Web players enlist for coordinated June 6 launch of IPv6

January 19 2012, by Nancy Owano

IPv6 is a new version of the Internet Protocol that is designed to succeed the existing Internet Protocol version 4.

(PhysOrg.com) -- The Internet Society has made it official. Last June's dress rehearsals are over; June 6 of this year is official World IPv6 Launch Day, where a new system of numerical addresses will be used to connect users to websites. A lineup of supporters for the launch date was announced this week. Seven ISPs, two home networking equipment manufacturers, and a number of web companies at the time of the writing have come forward to pledge enabling the new protocol.

The ISPs participating in the World IPv6 Launch have agreed that at least 1% of their wireline residential subscribers who visit participating websites will be able to do so via IPv6 by June 6. The ISPs who have promised this are AT&T. Comcast, XS4all, Free Telecom, Internode,

KDDI, and Time Warner Cable.

In the case of home-network equipment manufacturers. Cisco and D-Link say they aim to enable IPv6 on their home router products. Facebook, Google, Microsoft Bing, and Yahoo are the four websites that have announced support for IPv6 for their web sites. IPv6, popularly tagged as new phone numbers for the world's web sites, is the Internet address system that replaces protocol IPv4, which is about to run out of space.

Every device connected to the Internet is assigned an IPO address, a string of numbers to allow other devices to see where the data is from and should be sent to. The old systems has about 4 billion such IP addresses; the new system, IPv6, will have over 340 trillion trillion trillion Internet addresses.

While the space problem is solved, a transition of this nature is no flip-a-switch deal, hardly seamless, for one fundamental reason. IPv6 is incompatible with IPv4. The transition will involve work on the part of operators to support the new world web order. According to the Internet Society, most Internet users will not feel any effect. According to the Internet Society's site, "in rare cases" users may still experience connectivity issues when visiting participating websites. "Users can visit an IPv6 test site to check if their connectivity will be impacted. If the test indicates a problem, they can disable IPv6 or ask their ISPs to help fix the problem."

System technicians, meanwhile, will probably hear the term "dual-stacked" quite often this year before and after the June event. Facebook will be dual-stacked, according to reports, for example, meaning it will support access via IPv4 and IPv6.

Google's Erik Kline, IPv6 Software Engineer, Tokyo, in this week's

announcement of its participation on June 6, said that "if your ISP isn't on board yet, ask them to join us. It will take years for the Internet to transition fully."

Kline said that the majority of users shouldn't notice, "but check out our test page and help article if you think you might run into difficulty."

The Internet Society which is organizing the June 6 day, would be the first to acknowledge that this transition is going to take some work. Leslie Daigle, the Internet Society's chief information technology officer, told [NetworkWorld](#) that the June day is more of a start than deadline date so that by that point the participants have agreed to start their production deployments.

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