Partnership to Drive Advanced Technology Solutions

IAA interviewed Lee Fook Sun, President of ST Electronics and Iain Clarke, Corporate VP & GM, Asia Pacific, Motorola Solutions on the collaboration between ST Electronics and Motorola Solutions to accelerate secure broadband solutions and specialised applications for government and enterprise.

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L: Iain Clarke, Corporate Vice President Asia Pacific, Motorola Solutions
R: Lee Fook Sun, President, ST Electronics

At CommunicAsia 2016, Singapore Technologies Electronics Limited (ST) and Motorola Solutions signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to co-create innovative technologies for advanced secured communications in public safety, national security and enterprise sectors. ST Electronics brings to the partnership experience in the design and implementation of large-scale, mission-critical solutions as well as cyber security expertise.

The collaboration aims to accelerate the development of specialised technologies for high security mission-critical broadband, cyber-security solutions and purpose-built applications, all of which will be made commercially available in each company's solution portfolio.

IAA: Tell me more about some of the technologies that will be developed through this partnership?

Iain Clarke (IC): One of the key technologies is going to be around enabling a broadband network for use particularly in the public safety environment. As such, applications that enable broadband networks and seamless connectivity between existing radio networks and broadband networks.

Lee Fook Sun (LFS): Motorola is a global house for equipment suppliers. Today, public safety networks have more or less shifted from voice to multimedia and broadband. I think there are a lot more opportunities for us to come together. Motorola provides the entire infrastructure and we can contribute in regards to end-to-end-security and encryption. On top of that, there is seamless connectivity. From there, we can develop applications that can help enhance public safety.

IC: We have a platform called Wave. This platform enables you with the ability to pull up an application on a smartphone and push-to-talk (PTT) on broadband networks and devices so that critical, time-sensitive information flows quickly and securely between mobile workers, teams and citizens. It would be that kind of technology we would aim to work together on, not just in Singapore, but in other countries too.

IAA: What role would each company play in this partnership?

LFS: What we can do is complement each other. We can develop cybersecurity solutions to protect the data, the endpoints, transmission systems and on top of that, we can develop applications that will open what they have provided as part of the infrastructure. This is really complementary.

IC: The word "complementary" is very important here. We do have complementary offerings. I know that Singapore Technologies (ST) is not looking to become a manufacturer and clearly Motorola is in the manufacturing space. We design and build things, but we are very keen to be able to leverage some of the capabilities from a cyber perspective. This is what ST brings.

LFS: We look at complementary, not just from a technology perspective but also geographical as well, because Motorola has a global reach with customers all over the world. This is a win-win for both sides.

IAA: Who approached who first in this partnership?

IC: We have had a business relationship with ST for over 10 years. We have done a variety of transportation projects together, not just in Singapore but in places like Taiwan as well. We worked together on large public safety networks here in Singapore, so we have known each other for a long time. There is also a certain number of colleagues on my team who are ex employees of ST as well. We are located close-by in the same business park. There are a lot of things that bring us together.

IA: There is a lot of talk about the Internet of things (IoT). Does IoT factor into this relationship in terms of current or upcoming projects together?

LFS: IoT is designed to connect things together so you really need bandwidth connectivity. If you have millions of devices, you need millions of connections. If you are going to make use of non-dedicated networks, for example, a public network, it is going to be very costly. Developing infrastructure for a private network is where us and Motorola can come in; to develop a narrow band or a broad band private network that will allow internet connectivity. Motorola provides the infrastructure, while we are very good at the end points, sensors, a big data, analytics and so on. This is how we can help each other.

IC: We have a number of ventures that we have invested in around the world. As an example, we have been working with a gun manufacturer around technology. When the gun is pulled out of the holster, an alert goes to a control room and the body worn video camera starts playing. The control room can then see what is happening when the officer pulls the gun out of the holster.

Investments that we have made in the companies that are producing this technology will be available to the partnership as well. It is about working backwards from what our customers require, what the technology can deliver and what we can deliver as well.