

CIX Router Timeline

November 1990 – April 1991:

Meetings to discuss the formation of the CIX begin between UUNET, PSI and CERFnet¹ All the technical meetings took place in the Reston, Virginia area sometimes at Bill Schrader's home sometimes at local Pizza restaurants.

April 10, 1991:

- CIX Autonomous System Number 1280
- Autonomous System Name: CIX-AS1
- IP Address block: 149.20.00/16
- Domain Name: CIX.NET

Registered by Mark Fedor of PSInet with Network Solutions, Reston, VA

Summer 1991:

CIX router established in PSInet POP (Point Of Presence) in Washington DC interconnecting PSInet and UUNET. The CIX Router was established and operation before the MAE (Metropolitan Area Ethernet) that was located on Gallows Road, Tysons Corner, Virginia. It is doubtful whether the CIX Router was ever in the MAE facility owned and operated by MFS. Some CIX founders recollect that the router was first set up in downtown Washington DC before being "service launched" from its Santa Clara, California location.

The testing and validation of the concept of interconnecting multiple Internet Service Providers using a router was done using a Cisco AGS provided by PSInet. When commercial service was established in California using the Cisco 7500 that was used the remainder of the period of operation.

¹ The name CERFnet has no connection with Vint Cerf. California Education and Research Network (CERFnet) was established and operated by General Atomic under the management of the San Diego Supercomputer Center at the University of California San Diego. Unlike the other National Science Foundation supported regional networks CERFnet was privately owned by General Atomic. CERFnet was however connected to the NSFNET because the center with which as associated (San Diego Supercomputer Center) was an NSF supported center. CERFnet was more aligned with PSInet (which had been spun-off New York State Regional Network (NYSERNET) than with ANS that operated and ran the NSFNET under the consortium managed by Merit Inc. comprised of IBM, MCI, and the University of Michigan.

Fall 1991:

New location for the router is established in PSI POP in Santa Clara, San Francisco Bay Area. Router is to be accessible via T-1 access line and PacBell SMDS service. CIX Router member networks now include Sprint that had built and launched its own commercial Internet backbone and becoming the first traditional telecommunications carrier to do so. MCI only provide the capacity for the NSFNET and had no operational or design role in its development. MCI did not establish commercial Internet service until the shut-down of the NSFNET.

April 1996 CIX re-locates to Palo Alto Internet eXchange (PAIX), Palo Alto, California. The primary rationale for the relocation was to allow the operation of the router to be in a “neutral” facility not owned by PSInet or any of the other now large US commercial Internet backbone operators. From this time until its closure in 2001 connection to the CIX Router was one of the most important first steps any startup ISP would make along with connection to the MAE now called MAE-East.

Connections on both coasts were considered essential so that traffic to be exchanged between backbone networks did not have to be carried cross country. Later Chicago would be added as place for mid-country traffic exchange.

December 1 2001

CIX Router turned down

After the NSFNET had been turned down the CIX members either outgrew the organization, UUNET was first acquired by MFS and then MFS by Worldcom, CERFnet was first acquired by TCG which was in turn acquired by AT&T. PSInet grew to be one of the largest Internet carriers in the world with network infrastructure on every continent.