Managing mobility

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Mobile networks are expanding today at an outstanding rate both in terms of size (number of customers) and scope (areas of coverage). There are many types of mobile networks currently in service: cellular voice, satellite messaging, wireless personal communications, etc. In addition, a number of diverse technologies are used to provide these services, and more are to appear in the future. Managing mobile networks poses many interesting challenges primarily related to tracking user mobility and integration with the existing network management systems of wireline networks.

This panel attempts to highlight the network management issues facing mobile networks. First, we take a close look on how wireless networks can be managed, by examining the cellular voice network and the Iridium wireless personal communication service. We highlight the commonalities between managing different wireless services and the main differences with managing wireline networks, and examine how current areas of research in network management can help meet the management challenges of the wireless world. The discussion will attempt to highlight research areas that need to be explored further and identify the technologies (either standards-based or proprietary) that will play a key role in managing the wireless environment.