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概要: This paper presents a regulatory framework for converging services in telecommunications and its application to the Japanese case. Converging services are those of close substitutability from different sectors or industries. Examples are POTS and IP-telephony, cable and satellite services, etc. The paper starts with explaining a method for constructing a desirable regulatory framework for converging services, and then applies it to the Japanese case emphasizing the process of moving from the present regulatory framework to a new desirable one.

The first part of the paper begins with classifying the communications activities comprising a network. It considers two attributes of a communications activity as the criteria for classification: the first is the location of a communications activity in the network considered as a planar graph (such as access lines, routers, and trunk lines), and the second is the location of a communications activity in the network considered as a stack of functional layers (such as infrastructure, IP or ATM system, and information contents). Thus, each communications activity is classified into an entry of a two-dimensional matrix. A regulatory framework is an assignment of a mode of regulation (such as competition with free entries, price-cap regulation, etc.) to each