



FLO TV, mophie to bring mobile TV to Apple units

FLO TV, a wholly owned subsidiary of Qualcomm, is teaming up with mophie to create a series of products that will bring live mobile TV to the iPhone and iPod touch platforms. The products, which are expected to begin shipping in the first half of this year, will bring the FLO TV mobile-TV service to the mophie juice pack, letting consumers view their favourite live entertainment, sports and news on their iPhone and iPod touch units.

The new products integrate mophie's intelligent case design with a built-in FLO TV receiver that allows iPhone and iPod touch users the ability to watch live TV at the flip of a switch. Consumers can also utilise the device as back-up battery power in between charges.

ActiveVideo continues CloudTV growth

ActiveVideo Networks, a provider of cloud-based interactive-TV solutions, has expanded its relationship with Tag Networks to extend enhanced-gaming experiences to broadband-connected CE devices.

The combined solution, which leverages Tag Networks' scalability with ActiveVideo's ability to deliver Web-based content as a single MPEG stream, brings popular, brandname games to any connected device or digital set-top box.

The CE integration builds on the existing cable partnership between Tag Networks and ActiveVideo, as well as on recent milestones by both companies.

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Pushing for common IPTV standards



With a number of telcos in the world already offering content deployment in the guise of IPTV, shouldn't IPTV standards worldwide be unified to make content delivery more successful? **Mike Feazel** finds out more ...



The Asia-Pacific region is likely to continue leading the trend towards IPTV growth, ABI Research predicts. "Massive countries such as China and India are still very much inhibited by the lack of sufficiently broad bandwidth, but they are expected to be high-growth markets in the years to come," says ABI Research senior analyst Serene Fong.

While Internet protocol TV (IPTV) is growing rapidly as a competitor to satellite, cable and broadcast TV, many say it would grow even faster if a wide series of international technical standards were developed to assure that everyone in the world could get a wide array of content, delivered at a high quality.

Telecom companies see IPTV as the "silver bullet" to help spread broadband worldwide, giving them a big leg up over traditional TV companies. However, a new study by Arthur D Little, an international management consulting firm, warns that the lack of a single worldwide IPTV standard could at least delay that dream.

One result of the standards setting process is IPTV innovation that is "too slow", says Nokia Siemens Networks' head of media, Brook Longdon, at TelcoTV conference last November. Longdon believes that companies need to stop pushing their own technologies at the expense of industry-wide standards. "I'd say it's time that we, as an industry, did a better job of coming together and putting some of that aside," he says.

Industry officials see a parallel

in the development of multiple standards for digital TV (DTV). They as well as government groups see the development of proprietary DTV standards for regions, and even for individual countries, as beneficial for local industries. But the result has often been higher costs for consumers and TV providers, as well as a less-satisfactory viewing experience, which in turn slowed the take-up of DTV services.

Broadband industry groups are trying to avoid a similar situation by unifying as many IPTV standards as possible.

"IPTV network and management standards are critical to the success and growth of IPTV worldwide, from many standpoints," says Robin Mersh, COO of the Broadband Forum, which includes dozens of service providers, equipment makers and industry groups. The Broadband Forum is working to unify IPTV standards worldwide.

Mersh adds that standards are "crucial" because they make it possible for a service operator, anywhere in the world, to select equipment and

software "with confidence, knowing that his IPTV investment will deliver what it promises".

Standards also are important for the IPTV viewer, some of whom, suffered from inadequate quality of service in early deployments, Mersh reveals. He says consumers "simply want a simple installation and to switch on his device and see a quality of service delivered".

For service providers, "it is the sheer emergence and acceptance of standards that enables an operator to invest with confidence in IPTV", Mersh adds.

But there is still no widely accepted IPTV standard, says Erik Almqvist, head of Arthur D Little's telecom and media practice. As a result, he says, the industry "risks lower interoperability and higher costs". Almqvist explains that proprietary standards can work in some cases, but that is unlikely to work for the IPTV set-top box (STB) market due to the need for a high level of global demand to drive down costs.

However, several sometimes-competing groups are working on IPTV standards, including the Broadband

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