



Love Your DVR? Use It Everywhere, With Anything

Since digital video recorders have become a mega-hit with consumers, cable is in a position to leverage DVR capability to extend TV content and personal media around the home, and even outside of it.

Driven by the dramatic consumer adoption of DVRs, Motorola, a leader in cable, mobile and other consumer technology, quickly recognized that consumers want to not only time-shift their media, but to place-shift them as well.

From the earliest days of the DVR's existence, Motorola has been involved in meeting that consumer demand by defining, developing, and launching a set-top platform that enhances DVR functionality to include multi-room DVR and the ability to move and share media, including video, music and photos stored in a personal computer.

The result, Motorola's FollowMe TV (FMTV) solution, consists of a combination of digital set-tops or connected devices, related firmware, and enabling application software. The combined technologies power a new paradigm of media mobility throughout and beyond the home.

The primary goals of the FollowMe project were to: a) develop a whole home ecosystem using enabled digital set-tops and existing wiring that would enable subscribers to connect their digital devices to share media throughout the home; and b) enable cable operators to benefit from incremental service offerings and increased customer satisfaction and retention.

The key application is multi-room DVR. Originally launched in 2005, it enables content recorded on a single DVR set top to be displayed by multiple set tops around the home. Now, by connecting a PC to this network, video, music and pictures stored on the PC can be displayed on the TV without the need for new wiring.

FMTV leverages DVR set tops with enabled software and home networking technologies, including MoCA (Multimedia over Coax Alliance) specifications. FMTV currently is being ported to tru2way, so that Motorola tru2way set-tops will be interoperable with other devices, such as HDTVs, that are also compliant with tru2way and MoCA.

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In the future, Motorola says it will continue to evaluate other IP-based technologies, including wireless standards such as 802.11n, in order to provide expanded connectivity options for in-home and mobile devices.

Multi-room DVR has been launched in the telco arena and many cable MSOs are exploring FMTV's capabilities. Motorola says it currently is working with key MSOs on the development and trial of FMTV-enabled MoCA set-tops (Motorola's DCX models) this year.

Lessons learned: The consumer adoption rate for extending DVR capabilities reportedly is high among competitive video operators offering them, and subscribers are willing to pay incrementally more for these services. Sticky applications such as DVR and multi-room DVR are helping service providers to attract and retain subscribers. Not surprisingly, the growth rate of networked set tops is increasing and has been estimated by Parks Associates to reach 18 million homes by 2012.

Larry Robinson, VP Americas, digital set-tops, for Motorola Home & Networks Mobility, says, "Through the successful launch of the multi-room DVR, the market has demonstrated that consumers instantly understand, embrace, and recognize value in the ability to move media content throughout their home, for a seamless entertainment experience. It is a service that competitors are using to attract and retain subscribers and to gain market share."

The tru2way Guide, www.ctam.com/tru2way

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