

Mobile TV to grow significantly in 2008: Motorola

Venkat Eswara of Motorola talks about the technologies and broadcast methods of Mobile TV

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BANGALORE, INDIA: We really can't say whether 2008 is going to be the year of Mobile TV or not. But, this year is expected to witness a rapid growth in the adoption of this new entertainment medium. Key players have already launched their Mobile TV services across the globe.

Motorola is one among them. The company recently launched its Mobile TV device with advanced navigation capabilities. In an interaction with **CIOL, Venkat Eswara, senior marketing manager, Networks & Enterprise, Motorola** talks in detail about the technologies and broadcast methods of Mobile TV and also about the growth direction.



Excerpts from the interview:

Lots of trials and rollouts worldwide! Is India ready for Mobile TV?

Different broadcast technologies like DVB-H, ISDB-T, DMB use L-band – VHF and UHF spectrum. License to broadcast digital content over this band is currently happening in regions like EMEA, APAC and NA.

We believe India is prime for this market once the regulatory bodies allow the digital broadcast in the spectrum, especially considering the appetite for consumers towards content and mobile solutions.

Can you tell us something about the two delivery methods-broadcast and unicast- and how these two markets are growing? What are the challenges involved with these two methods?

The unicast network provides content to an end user on a one-on-one basis based on point-to-point connection on a dedicated transmission over a wireless network like cellular, Wi-Fi, and WiMAX.

Unicast services are best suited for user-selected and on-demand content service. The challenge with unicast service is that the network must allocate an increased number of resources to support multiple point-to-point links as the number of subscribers grows. Also, as the video is over the same spectrum of existing voice and data applications, increased subscribers on a network could potentially degrade the quality of service.

As service providers look to scale a unicast-based service, it is very important to efficiently optimize the network for bandwidth usage.

Broadcast technology (or multicast service) provides broadcasting the same content to multiple subscribers and is designed to address the bandwidth limitations of a unicast service.

Multicast technologies like MBMS are designed for 3G networks, whereas technologies like DVB-H, DMB, ISDB-T use dedicated broadcast networks. Also these broadcast technologies like DVB-H will allow the service providers to use the existing cellular networks like 2.5G and 3G for voice, high-speed data services and offload the shared content to the broadcast networks.

In addition service providers will be able to offer scalable, high-quality content service using multicast service to unlimited number of users by leveraging DVBH broadcast while maintaining the inband transmission over cellular (i.e. 2.5G or 3G) to enable contextual interactive services.

Currently service providers like Sprint and Verizon, to name the few, are providing unicast service within their existing cellular networks. Multicast service over dedicated broadcast networks like DVB-H, DMB, ISDB-T is happening in various parts of the world with significant trials and limited commercial deployments in 2008 and expected growth in 2009 and beyond.

Among the currently available broadcast technologies, which one is getting the most traction?

Different broadcast technologies like DVB-H, ISDB-T, DMB, STiMi exist. Among all the broadcast standards DVB-H is gaining the largest support among regulatory bodies, broadcasters, service providers, vendors etc.

Currently we see DVB-H trials and early parts of commercial service in areas like Europe, parts of Asia. ISDB-T is more prevalent in Japan and DMB in South Korea. STiMi is getting traction in parts of Asia and MEA. DVB-H is poised to be the globally dominant broadcast standard, although in certain countries other standards will be more significant.

What are the major issues to be addressed before making profit from increasing customer demand for mobile TV services?

Regulatory issues, spectrum availability, standards to enable interoperability to drive economies of scale, ecosystem of partners and business models are some of the major issues that need to be addressed.

There seems to have been a discussion about convergence between mobile TV and IPTV. What is your take on this?

IPTV and Mobile TV bring together the capabilities around video delivery, Internet, mobility and multi-media experiences management. It comes down to enabling personalized video solutions – mobile and tethered – and mobilizing the TV experience and delivering personalized content wherever and whenever consumers want.

Some of the experiences that can be enabled are: live TV, on-demand clips, programs saved on a DVR, and Internet video sites, and even watch instant replays while sitting in the sports stadium.

What are the opportunities that Mobile TV brings to Motorola? What do you have in store for the Mobile TV market? What are Motorola's initiatives in this space?

Motorola is committed to take a leadership position to deliver personalized mobile video solutions. Mobile TV Solutions remains an important component of our business strategy for future growth. Mobile TV is expected to grow significantly in 2008 and beyond and Motorola is in a unique position to establish thought leadership for mobilizing the TV experience and delivering personalized content wherever and whenever consumers want. Mobile TV demonstrates and integrates our core competencies in video delivery, mobility, and multi-media experiences management.

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