



Pike & Fischer

A BNA Company

Broadband Daily

Strategic Analysis of the broadband industry

[HOME](#) [ABOUT US](#) [SEARCH THE COLLECTION](#) [LOG IN](#)



[Subscribe Now](#)
Free Trial

Telecom Industry Touts Apps on the TV

June 19, 2008

News & Analysis

by Scott Sleek

LAS VEGAS—Telecommunications companies and their vendors are no longer focused on the mere deployment of IP-based television, and instead are touting the wealth of interactive applications that are being developed to run across them.

New and upcoming IPTV applications are on display in force at the NXCComm08 show here. And the applications that people are talking about are designed to become true differentiators, rather than simple “me-too” video on demand and digital video recording. Software and middleware vendors are taking advantage of IPTV’s two-way capabilities to enable TV-based text messaging, voicemail and social networking heretofore limited to the Web.

These steps are occurring as the telecom and consumer electronics industries rush to seamlessly integrate the Internet, Web-connected devices and the TV.

“Two years ago, people at NXCComm were talking about convergence,” said Meredith Flynn-Riley, CEO of Woburn, Mass.-based unified communications enabler Integra5. “Now you’re seeing it put into action.”

Integra5 is showing off its caller ID to the TV and PC applications at this week’s show. The offering includes a call log and network address book all available on the television set, along with landline and wireless voicemail alerts, email alerts, and text messages on both TV and PC screens. The

company's i-Inform application suite also allows service providers to deliver targeted or broadcast customer relations management messages, such as service maintenance notifications or new product announcements. Service providers can also provide customers with personalized content alerts on relevant news, sports and weather, and an i5 I-Click app allows viewers to either click to call or watch additional information on banner ads.

So far the company has secured Tier 2 and Tier 3 service providers as customers, but reports that the big carriers and cable operators are starting to show interest.

Microsoft is another company aggressively pursuing the TV applications market.

Last month, Microsoft TV announced its Microsoft Mediaroom Presentation Framework, which provides applications developers with a toolkit to create new Web-based applications for the TV. Mediaroom Presentation is currently in beta testing.

Microsoft has already developed one tool with TNT that pulls content from NASCAR's website so that fans can get specific information about drivers while viewing a race. The offering can bring up a picture-in-picture view of that driver's car-cam, allowing the end user to see the race through the driver's eyes.

"You can actually watch what's going on in Carl Edwards' car, and hear him talking with the pit crew," said Paula Reinman, director of marketing at Microsoft TV.

The next big leap in interactive IPTV is incorporating social networking. Vendors and service providers at the show are working on features that will customers who TV-based chats with their buddies during TV programs or sporting events.