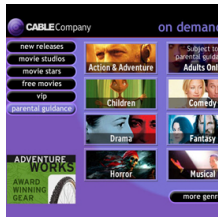


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By: Sci/Tech News Staff, -



[The Next Big Thing For Microsoft: IPTV Industry](#)

Microsoft TV-Enabled Set-Tops

At IBC2005, the International Broadcasters Convention, Microsoft announced further partner support for its IPTV software platform with a host of new set-top-box offerings and a new class of system-on-chip (SOC) that will enable the production of low-cost, high-definition (HD) set-top boxes. Hardware partners Linksys-KiSS, Motorola, Scientific-Atlanta, Tatum, and Thomson. confirmed support for the Microsoft TV platform. Linksys-KiSS announced it will provide set-top-box products supporting Microsoft TV IPTV Edition with integrated DVB-T tuners and conditional access support for European Network operators. Products will be available in December 2005. Motorola will support Microsoft TV IPTV Edition in the company's worldwide portfolio of IP-based video products, including its VIP line of IPTV set-tops, a forthcoming line of hybrid IPTV-DTT set-tops and advanced video-encoding technology. Scientific-Atlanta announced its support for Microsoft TV IPTV Edition in a new family of set-top boxes under development. Scientific-Atlanta will target both the NTSC market with its IPN series set-top family and the PAL and European markets with its IPP series set-tops. Models will range from basic SD to HD and DVR and will include optional features such as integrated IP over Coax and DVB-T support. These set-top models, which complement Scientific-Atlanta's encoder support for IPTV Edition, will be on display at IBC2005 Stand 1.471. Thomson and Intel Corporation announced that a new family of IPM11xx set-top boxes supporting Microsoft TV IPTV Edition is now commercially available and shipping to Microsoft TV customers. The IPM11xx products support a range of video codecs including MPEG-2, Windows Media Video 9 (Microsoft's implementation of VC-1, the proposed SMPTE standard) and MPEG-4 AVC. They feature the Intel 1.4 GHz Intel 854 platform with its application-handling performance, design flexibility and scalability. They also come with optional hard disk drives for both streaming and digital video recording (DVR) applications. To further stimulate the market for other IPTV-enabled set-top boxes and consumer electronics devices, Microsoft TV is working with semiconductor suppliers to introduce a class of SOC products. The first partner to bring such a product to market is Sigma Designs, which has developed an SOC capable of delivering multiple channels of HD video. Available now, this chip significantly lowers the cost of manufacturing IPTV-ready receivers. This makes it easier for network operators to reach volume deployments with HD-capable devices, helping to differentiate their services from existing cable and satellite offerings. The SOC can also be embedded inside a range of consumer electronic devices to enable consumers to choose from a variety of IPTV-ready receivers such as TV sets, set-top boxes, digital video disc players and gaming consoles. These offerings create more "on ramps" to the connected digital home, enabling great stand-alone IPTV experiences that are ultimately "better together" when connected to other compatible devices and services. Network operators including British Telecom, Swisscom AG and SBC Communications Inc. welcomed today's announcements as a much-needed development to help support their IPTV strategies.