

The Best In Tech: When There's a Need, There's a Solution

July 3, 2007 - For those looking for a solution, there's a technology.

With this issue of The BRIDGE, the editors list their favorite technologies, the solutions everyone should watch closely and the gadgets that are stirring up the multiplatform beehive. The companies and their contraptions listed in the publication are attempting address certain needs among all user groups . for better or worse.

For starters, there are the notorious devices. Slingbox has gained attention for its delivery of home-based video content to consumers on the move, but has run into trouble with Major League Baseball for giving users access to out-of-market games.

And there are plenty of successes, such as Cedar Point with its VoIP platform and ICTV with its interactive offerings.

On the consumer side, there's the Sat-Go mobile product from DIRECTV and the emergence of AppleTV. And on the industry side there's high-tech advertising solutions and much-needed help with bandwidth management.

The technology action begins on the next page...

Watch This Space: Ad Solutions for a High-Tech Cable World

The advertising space and how to gauge its performance is becoming more complicated each day. That has the cable business thinking about the next steps it needs to take to fulfill an advertiser's requirements.

For starters, small MSOs are looking for a quick and cheap solution to get ads in front of customers. And to address the demand, [AdGorilla] earlier this year took the wraps off its [AdGorillaq] division to deliver ad-insertion equipment to medium and small cable operators.

Cable pioneer Dan Ryan founded [AdGorilla], which is based in suburban Denver. The company's RevGen division is building ad-insertion equipment starting as low as \$5,500 per system, which compares favorably to some systems that can cost as much as \$100,000. The system takes up less than a foot of rack space, and that's ideal for a small headend.

"There are still many cable systems across the country bypassing their local ad insertion avails, thus missing out on ad insertion revenues and system marketing promotions," says Ryan. "[AdGorillaq] will focus on developing custom fit, low-priced, reliable hardware and software solutions for commercial advertising insertion equipment that will allow more systems to capitalize on the many benefits of local ad insertion."

The Comcast Media Center also is lending a helping hand to MSOs with its advertising distribution network.

The "ADN" is an internet-based technology that delivers advertising content directly to a headend. The service allows for a more timely distribution of advertising content. It also provides reports on spot previewing and usage tracking for programmers and MSOs.

"The ADN gives tremendous advantages to cable systems, especially when it comes to dropping ads in (to channels or shows) that are much more topical," says Gary Traver, COO of Comcast Media Center. "It's a much more convenient advertising mechanism."

The center started testing the ad network last summer. Traver says the ADN will make a strong push in the third quarter...

-Michael Hopkins, excerpt from The Best in Tech: When There's a Need, There's a Solution from The BRIDGE (July 3, 2007 Edition)