



Volume 3, Issue 10 - 21 March 2007

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Industry News

IPTV Companies to Set a Single Global Standard

Nine founding companies of the Open IPTV Forum say they want results fast and will hammer out tech requirements for a single global standard by September and a set of specifications by year-end.

The Open IPTV Forum includes Ericsson, Panasonic, Philips, Samsung Electronics, Siemens AG, Sony, AT&T, Telecom Italia and France Telecom...but not Alcatel-Lucent and Microsoft (market leaders and alliance partners in IPTV networks and software.)



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If all IPTV systems work together, the new industry can avoid the type of market debacle now unrolling in hi def DVD formats-- and make it easier (and cheaper) for consumers to buy and use IPTV systems and services.

For more info, go to [Open IPTV Forum](#)

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Price Fixing in Pro Video Tape, Says EU

EU Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes must be working overtime: Last year, her commission levied an annual record of €1.84 billion in cartel fines.

Now she's after videotape makers like Sony, Fujifilm, Hitachi Maxell Ltd and others. The European Commission says it has filed a Statement of Objection against "a cartel" in videotape made especially for TV stations, independent TV and advertising film producers,

Statements of Objections are a formal first step in European antitrust investigations. After receiving a statement, companies have two months to defend themselves in writing. They can also ask the Commission to hear their case at an oral hearing in one month after the written reply has been received. Only after having heard the company's defence can the Commission take a final decision, which may be accompanied by fines of up to 10% of a company's worldwide annual turnover. The fine can be reduced or eliminated for companies that cooperate with the investigation.

Commissioner Kroes is making plans to encourage victims of illegal monopolies and cartels to sue for damages. Kroes has made fighting cartels one of her main priorities for her five-year term (begun in Nov. 2004.)

For more info, go to [EC vs Videotape Cartel](#)

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CEDIA Mandates Certification for all UK-based Pros

More than 130 CEDIA UK members have already attained certified status and they'll be the happy ones: CEDIA announces professional certification will be mandatory for all UK-based CEDIA ESP (Electronic Systems Professional) members from January 2008.

All UK based CEDIA ESP members will need to have at least one certified member of staff in full time employment by this date to validate their membership of the Association. This certified status qualification can be achieved by success in either the CEDIA Installer Level 1 and 2 or Designer Level 1 examination. CEDIA-certified professionals must then take a minimum number of continuing education units (CEU's) each year to maintain their status. Units are allocated for attendance and completion of courses on the CEDIA Education programme and CEDIA-approved manufacturer training courses. Mandatory certification will be rolled out to include all CEDIA Region 1 members in the near future.

The next available date to sit CEDIA Installer Level 1 and 2 (or Designer Level 1 examinations) will be at CEDIA Expo, 25-28 June 2007, ExCeL London.

For more info, go to [CEDIA UK](#)

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Texas Pacific Group Acquires Control of JVC Brand

Private equity firm Texas Pacific Group wins a bid to acquire controlling interest in the JVC brand from Matsushita. JVC, founded in 1927 and developer of the first-ever VCR technology in the 1970s, will have a sale price of about \$680 million.



For more info, go to [TPG](#)

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Projection & Screens

NEC Shows Mini-Projector, Pen Networking at CeBIT

Although it's not yet on the market, NEC's new NP1 mini-projector with LCD technology offered a glimpse of the future at CeBIT.

At only 8.5 cm wide, 15 cm long and 3.5 cm thin, this gadget fits inside any shirt pocket or handbag and weighs only 210 grams. The NP1 mini-projector runs on rechargeable batteries (2 to 3 hours) or the power unit. Very bright LEDs illuminate three transparent LCDs in the primary colors of red, green and blue. These low energy-consuming LEDs emit less heat than other projector lamps, lasting up to 10,000 hours. The NP1 can easily handle any projection surface up to A3, and comes with integrated USB and mini-USB ports.



Another interesting product: a **Pen-style Personal Networking Gadget Package**. NEC visualizes the connection between the latest technology and the human, as the form of a pen. P-ISM is a gadget package including five functions: a pen-style CPU, a cellular phone with a handwriting data input function, virtual keyboard, a very small projector, and camera scanner. P-ISMs are connected with one another through short-range wireless technology. The whole set is also connected to the Internet through the cellular phone function.

For more info, go to [NEC at CeBIT](#)

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INNOVATIVE SUPPORTS...



Click above for more information

Control & Integrator Solutions

First Mini HDTV Camera

A new mini hi-res camera, so tiny it fits inside the cramped cockpit of a racing car, was shown at CeBIT by the Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits IIS. Several licensees will soon be putting the camera into production.

Measuring 4 by 4 by 8 centimeters, the camera is smaller than a bar of soap and can even be accommodated in a cramped racing-car cockpit or a ski jumper's helmet. "The MicroHDTV model is one of the smallest HDTV cameras currently available," says Stephan Gick, group leader at the Fraunhofer IIS.

With its format of 1920 x 1080 pixels and a variable frame rate of up to 60 frames per second, the camera meets all the requirements expected of a professional HDTV production. All parameters - such as color settings, white balance, image format and frame rate - can be controlled using the integrated software. All it takes is to open a web browser, connect the camera to the notebook via a local network and set the desired parameters.



"Because the camera is so small and can be controlled via the Internet, it can deliver pictures of scenes that could not be viewed in the same way before - for example, recordings of sports events or applications that require the camera to be installed in difficult-to-reach places," says Gick. Another of the camera's advantages is that it can be operated using

standard optical systems.

For more info, go to [Fraunhofer Mini HDTV](#)

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AMX: Five Star Control for 5-Star Danish Hotel

One of Denmark's finest hotels, the Skt. Petri Hotel in Copenhagen, has installed AMX via Scandinavian audiovisual systems integrator, Informationsteknik. The AMX control system was required to reflect the 5-star status of the hotel in providing easy-to-use operation of the venue's conference equipment, while providing maximum flexibility to accommodate guests' requirements.

Converted from one of Copenhagen's most famous department store buildings, the hotel features a 300 capacity grand ballroom, which doubles as a conference facility. Able to be used as a single room or as two separate function rooms, the ballroom is equipped with a flexible AV solution controlled by an AMX NetLinX controller and two Modero touch screen panels.

One of the panels is fitted into the conference room's rostrum, which was purpose-designed by Informationsteknik and also houses the NetLinX controller, a microphone and speaker light. The second touch panel is provided for speakers who prefer not to use the rostrum.

Two ceiling-mounted LCD projectors are designed to display images onto two motorised screens, which can be hidden from view when the room is being used as a ballroom. When the room is being used as a single, large conference hall, one of the projectors can be moved along its mounting rail to a central position in the room, with images displayed on a large, transportable screen.

The two halves of the room are built as two independent units with one, common technical room - each room having its own mobile AV-rack, which can be connected to any of several access points in the rooms. The installation also includes a Yamaha digital mixer, Autopatch matrix switcher, Turbosound speakers, ETC spotlights and a WolfVision visualiser.

For more info, go to [AMX Hotels](#)

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Listen Shows New Infrared & 863MHz Tourguide System

Listen Technologies present their new products at Prolight & Sound show in Frankfurt. At booth K.20 in hall 8.0, with their Infrared Audio Systems, they'll show how if you turn away from the IR radiator, you still have clear audio reception.

They also introduce their 863-865MHz Tourguide and Wireless Audio Distribution System. Based on experience for this system in the American markets, these systems can now be used all over Europe.

Listen Technologies Corporation manufactures and distributes wireless audio products used in auditory assistance, language interpretation, soundfield and tour group applications by factories, museums, houses of worship, entertainment facilities, governments and other entities.

For more info, go to [Listen Tech](#)

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The advertisement banner features a blue background with silhouettes of people in a meeting. On the left, the DLP Texas Instruments logo is displayed. The main text reads: "ONE TECHNOLOGY. EVERYTHING YOU'RE LOOKING FOR." followed by "AND SO MUCH MORE." and a "2000+ LUMENS" badge. On the right, there is a search bar with the text "SEARCH FOR DLP® PROJECTORS, DEALERS AND PRICES." and a yellow "go >>" button.

Click above for more information

Displays

Now Tokyo's Latest Fashion Trend: LCDs

OK, maybe it is just an excuse to look at the models (I mean the LCD ones), but Japanese clothing designer Emiko Miki blended tradition and high tech for her autumn/winter collection presented during Japan Fashion Week (ready-to-wear show in Tokyo.)



For more info, go to [Tokyo](#)

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Californian Launches "Wearable" Monitor

OK, imagine a virtual monitor floats in front of your eyes at what seems to be about 6 inches away. The weight of the visor rests on your forehead and the back of the neck. Moving your head makes the monitor move...



Fitting 95% of the world's head geometries (and imagine those that can't fit!), HEADPLAY Personal Cinema System (PCS)--the next frontier in portable entertainment-- currently sports a resolution of 800x600 pixels. Headplay is working on a high-def version and collaborating with Nvidia.

The small monitor fits under the visor. Data gets converted to visual images, which are then projected by a LCOS chip (Syntax-Brilliant), a complex mirror controlled by a processor. The Headplay system bounces the images off of nine different mirrors inside the unit to size them for the eyepieces.

This accompanying info station interfaces with digital/video cameras, TVs, PCs, and video game consoles. The Liberator's two USB host ports allow for downloading of content from portable storage devices at burst speeds up to 480 megabits per second. The USB client port provides an interface to import media files from your PC or notebook. The compact flash connector provides reading speeds up to 7 MB per second, and writing speeds up to 1.25 MB per second; it also allows for the attachment of optional memory or devices.

People who wear glasses should remove their eyewear before putting on the viewer. The settings can be adjusted to accommodate their prescriptions.

For more info, go to [Headplay or Headache?](#)

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Audio

Beyerdynamic Celebrates 50 Years of Ribbon

The M 160 ribbon microphone reaches its 50th birthday. The manufacturing process hasn't changed since 1957 when it was first produced. "Because the physical laws which mark the special quality of ribbon microphones are still of course valid today, " explains Beyerdynamic MD, Wolfgang Luckhardt.

Originally developed as an alternative to the then extremely expensive and sensitive condenser microphones, even today ribbon microphones remain the best alternative in many recording situations. As the microphone has no electronic components, apart from the transformer, the linear sound characteristics are authentic and interference is minimal in comparison to other types of microphones. Ribbon microphones are particularly well suited to recording string instruments, pianos and drums as well as saxophones and electric guitar amps.

To celebrate, beyerdynamic releases 200 limited special edition M 160 microphones worldwide in the original chrome-plated housing. A further 50 will be offered together with an M130 as M/S stereo sets.

For more info, go to [50 Years of Ribbon](#)

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Distribution News

Smart-e Appoints ProdyTel in Germany

German distribution company prodyTel signs a contract with UK audio and video distribution equipment company Smart-e Limited to become its sole distributor for Germany. The agreement extends the availability of Smart-e's range of HD compatible multi-format video matrix switches and AV equipment to Austria and Switzerland, as well as across Germany.



Jon Lane Smart-e's managing director said "The approach from prodyTel came at the right time. Our sales across Europe have expanded rapidly over the past two years, and we have been seeking distributors in several European countries which could give our customers the high level of product support required. prodyTel is a highly regarded distributor of audio conference and media remote control systems, and has the experienced teams to provide the dedicated technical support to our customers located throughout Germany, Austria and Switzerland."

UK based Smart-e designs and manufactures a wide range of multi-format video matrix switches that combine high bandwidth (400MHz) video and high quality stereo audio switching with integral CAT 5/5e/6/7 and 8 structured cabling distribution. The entire range is HD compatible with matrix sizes starting at 4x4 (4 inputs/4 outputs) and can grow to 64x64, accommodating use in residential, commercial and education environments.

Photo: (left to right) Christian Schiele, Sales Director and Jan Wintersberg, Managing Director, from prodyTel

For more info go to [prodyTel](#)

For more info, go to [Smart-e](#)

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Prase Engineering Takes on Audica Professional for Italy

Ennio and Alberto Prase met with Audica's sales director, Derek West, at ISE to shake hands on an agreement to distribute Audica Professional in Italy. While it sounds like a mutual admiration society, it seems a good fit.



Ennio Prase says, "With every conceivable type of loudspeaker available in the market it was difficult to imagine that anything new could be radically different – but Audica is just that. With MICROseries, Audica has designed a system with such style and innovation that it is a real advance, and that is a great compliment to their design capability. This is the first product in a long time that has had our engineering and management teams together enjoying an evaluation with such great enthusiasm". He continued, "The product's ease of installation and zoning flexibility are perfect for applications like retail stores and corporate AV that demand style and audio quality".

Derek West was equally enthusiastic; "Not only have I know Ennio and Alberto as friends for many years, but I have always regarded Prase Engineering as a reference distributor, for their integrity, ability and technical standards. With such an appreciation of style, technical excellence and quality, we view Italy as one of Audica's key international markets and I am really pleased that we will be distributed by a company that I believe to be one of the most professional anywhere in the world".

For more info, go to [PRASE](#)

For more info, go to [Audica Pro](#)

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Customer Drive: "Open Week" from AWE

Taking place from 26-30th March at its head office and training facility in Epsom, Surrey, a special "Open Week" from AWE will give customers a chance to see the latest 1080p products from the company's range, and to win a place on the AWE and Pioneer Motorsport Sensation driving day.

Delegates could win a chance to drive seven different road and race spec cars on five miles of purpose built track on 27th July 2007. High definition footage of the 2005 driving day will be available to view throughout the week. To see what cars are on offer to drive, visit www.palmersport.co.uk.

The open week will feature a dedicated 45 minute presentation, taking place each hour, to showcase the AWE range of 1080p high definition products. First up is a sneak preview of the Pioneer Blu-Ray player. Imported from the States, the UK version is set to be modelled on this and will be launched later this year. A 1080p Blu-Ray demo and technical overview of the Cineversum Blackwing and Blackwing Two three chip D-iLA projectors are also on offer. Sessions will be finished off with a 'DVD vs. Blu-Ray shootout' showing on Pioneer PDP-5000 1080p plasma and the new Cineversum Blackwing Two projector. Those attending will be automatically entered into a 'Golden Ticket' draw to win a place on the driving day.

AWE is now taking bookings for hour long training sessions at the event, for those interested in learning more about the new Pronto TSU-9600 which includes a demo of 2-way RS-232 with Escient Media Server. The open week is also an opportunity to see the latest Onkyo CI friendly products up close including an AM/FM tuner with RS-232 and DAB option and a fully loaded AVR with RS-232 and up conversion.

For customers unable to attend the open week (or keen to be entered into the draw more than just once), points can be earned each time a Pioneer screen is purchased from AWE. For every 40 points earned, installers are entered into the draw for a place on the high octane driving day.

For more info, go to [Motorsport Sensation](#)

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Conferencing

Media Saturn Group First with BT'S Video Collaboration

BT, one of the first service providers authorized to operate the Cisco TelePresence Authorised Technology Provider Program, starts off with a bang by announcing its first customer here at CeBIT. BT will supply the Media-Saturn group, Europe's biggest retailer of consumer electronics, with a new video collaboration service, "BT Unified Communications Video".

Cisco's new Telepresence Meeting solution allows users to hold virtual meetings with participants seeing life-size images of one another. The high-res, life-size, real-time video transmission service provides a platform for a whole range of new applications, including collaborative editing of documents. The images are said to be so realistic that people feel they are sitting at the same table.



The Media-Saturn group, which operates in 14 European countries, will use the system at its headquarters in Ingolstadt, Germany, and at Munich, Paris and Moscow branches. BT operates the solution to provide the necessary capacity and performance on its MPLS network (so images/sound can be transmitted with no perceived time lag.) Up to six people can sit down together, with two participants joining from each of the other locations. Expansion will eventually include all 14 countries, so Media Markt expects to reduce its travel costs substantially.

With net sales of €13.3 billion and 37,230 employees in 2005, Media Markt and Saturn are Europe's largest consumer electronics retailers. United under the umbrella of Media-Saturn-Holding GmbH, the group is based on a business model of a selection of branded products at low prices, expertise, customer service, distinctive advertising and a de-centralised structure. Every store manager is also a co-proprietor of his store and is responsible for the product range, pricing, human resources and marketing. Media Markt and Saturn are managed independently of one another and compete with each other. The group is majority owned by METRO AG and has 624 stores in 14 European countries.

For more info, go to [BT and Media-Saturn](#)

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Residential Systems & Digital Home

EHX Show Rocks

Looks like Electronic House Expo will again make the Tradeshow Week Magazine's Fastest 50 for its event, now for three years running. EHX, says co-organizer CEA, is the fastest growing trade event of the \$13 billion custom electronics industry, says CEA.

Held twice annually and sponsored by CEA's TechHome Division, this EHX Spring 2007 show featured 315 companies with a major focus on home networking, including wireless with central controls. The conference schedule featured eight Boot Camps and more than 60 conference sessions.

EHX will bring home custom electronics to Long Beach for EHX Fall 2007, which runs from November 6-9. They expect 11,000 attendees.

For more info, go to [EHX](#)

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Winners of 2007 CEA Mark of Excellence

The Mark of Excellence Awards is suppose to recognize products and companies in the forefront of innovation in the home automation industry.

Yet a note on the web site says: "A Mark of Excellence Award does not constitute an endorsement by CEA of companies or of their products or services." Well, OK...

Anyways, take a look at the link below to see the winners. Crestron took two awards. Here we'll show only

Best Installation Products: VizionWare

Hi-Wirez Active HDMI Digital Interconnects



Hi-Wirez™ combines revolutionary active digital HDMI technologies implemented in chips, which are in turn embedded in the cables. The result is superior video quality in a lighter and flexible configuration.

For more info go to [VizionWare](#)

Best Integrated Systems: Superna

Superna Digital Home



The SUPERNA Digital Home is the first solution to fully leverage standard IP home networks to provide whole-house home control, digital audio/video streaming and home automation.

For more info, go to [Superna](#)

Best Media Servers

CodexNovus



HDcodex DML-1600

The CodexNovus HDcodex DML-1600 Networked Media Player is a high definition media server that provides virtually instantaneous access to all of your movie, music and picture libraries.

For more info, go to [CodexNovus](#)

For more info, go to [2007 Winners List](#)

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NetStreams Files Patent for IP Speakers

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office formally published Netstream's patent application for IP-based networked speakers. The Company's published patent application for IP speakers relates to other NetStreams' patent applications published for IP-based networked entertainment, and marks a path for the future of audio, video and control over an IP-based network.

"NetStreams' vision is to provide hardware and software solutions to simplify, manage and distribute audio, video and control signals across an IP Network," says Herman Cárdenas, Founder and Chairman of the Company. "The IP speaker is a key element for the future of networked entertainment in a home or commercial facility. Our innovation puts the intelligence and amplification at the speaker, delivering unprecedented audio quality and accessibility over an IP network."

The patent application is for a networked speaker invention, which includes a network interface that is integrated within a residential or commercial audio distribution and control system. The result is the delivery of vocal feedback, status, and even control with the audio through the networked speakers.

NetStreams' R&D team created the world's first IP speaker prototype, and an application was filed in 2002. Once developed, NetStreams partnered with Polk Audio, an award-winning designer and manufacturer of high performance audio products and the largest audio brand of Directed Electronics, Inc. to develop the first commercially available IP speaker.

For more info, go to [NetStreams](#)

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Special Feature

Conferencing Consolidation: Cisco Buys WebEx

by Bob Snyder

If you had attended the annual CeBIT SUMMIT, you might have predicted this: Cisco will acquire WebEx, provider of Web conferencing services to SMEs, for \$3.2 billion.



Cisco announces agreement to acquire WebEx

That confirms that the biggest buzz in conferencing is exactly what Gartner's Peter Sondergaard, in his speech at the CeBIT Summit, called "the consumerization of I.T."

And here we are, only days after that speech, and I.T.'s biggest, most-feared maker of infrastructure shows you the "wallet-share" of Cisco strategy: the nuts-and-bolts of networking wants to redefine itself as a player in the consumer realm.

And what Cisco wants, Cisco buys: earlier this year, Cisco agreed to acquire closely held Five Across in social-networking Web sites and previously Scientific Atlanta and Europe's own KiSS Technology.

Cisco says WebEx fits with their vision of offering service on top of its network. Cisco executives call the addition of the WebEx service "a key product for small and medium-size businesses."

But here's what Charles Giancarlo, chief development officer for Cisco, told the press, "...it's a natural extension for Cisco's Unified Communication products to give users inside and outside the workplace a way to work and collaborate."

The key phrase to ponder is "inside and outside the workplace." Exactly Sondergaard's point: today what happens inside the workplace cannot be firewalled from what happens outside. Those days are over: "Don't even try to fight it," recommends Sondergaard.

What Cisco knows is that WebEX's services to SMBs spill over now (and will simply POUR OVER in the future) into the lives of all those SMB owners and employees. For \$3.3 million, Cisco is buying a two-for-one: SMB impact and another ramp to the consumer highway.

Microsoft LiveMeeting, watch out! Apple watch out. The buzz is that the Cisco juggernaut is on the roll, rolling over any and all obstacles to its goal of becoming a consumer brand.

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Do you have a special topic you would like to address industry-wide? We're open for **Guest Editorial** comments on the industry from Europe... Sorry, no commercials...this is just for industry issues. Contact: rAveEurope@gmail.com



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A little about Gary Kayye, CTS, founder of Kayye Consulting: Gary Kayye, an audiovisual veteran and columnist, began the widely-read KNews, a premier industry newsletter, in the late 1990s, and created the model for and was co-founder of AV Avenue - which later became InfoComm IQ. Kayye Consulting is a company that is committed to furthering the interests and success of dealers, manufacturers, and other companies within the professional audiovisual industry. Gary Kayye's rAve was first launched in America in February 2003.

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