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IPTV Software Company, Myrio, in OEM Agreement with Siemens

--Myrio's IP Video Platform to be Sold with Siemens' SURPASS Platform

IPTV software company, Myrio, last month signed a worldwide OEM agreement with Siemens, which calls for its Myrio IP Video Platform to be integrated and sold with the latter's SURPASS product offering--touted by Siemens as a "turnkey," modular, end-to-end platform targeted at telcos looking to offer the so-called "triple-play" of video, voice and data services over DSL. The Myrio platform will be offered under the Siemens brand. The platform, which is Java-based, consists of 2 core elements: Myrio TotalManage, a backoffice subscriber and content-management application, and Myrio Interactive, an end-user application. To date, Siemens has announced only one deployment of SURPASS: with Belgium's incumbent telco, Belgacom. That deployment will see Myrio's platform supporting a variety of ITV services and working in tandem with nCUBE's (note: nCUBE is in the process of being acquired by C-COR) VOD platform (including its video servers and its nABLE backoffice management system), a content-protection system from Verimatrix, and video broadcast equipment from Tandberg Television.



According to Myrio's VP of worldwide sales and marketing, Roger Shanafelt, Siemens chose to work with Myrio because "we're scaleable, we're open, and we're built on standards. This gives Siemens flexibility in choosing other members of the value chain to bundle into the Surpass offer, and also provides their customers with flexibility," he told [itvt]. "If Siemens' customers have a preference for a platform that isn't within the primary SURPASS offer, they can customize it quite easily, thanks to the open architecture that we've incorporated into our system. In general," he continued, "Siemens is taking a very unique position in the market: a much more open approach than [IPTV competitors] Alcatel or Microsoft, which are offering a very closed architecture, and thus require customers to use Alcatel- or Microsoft-endorsed solutions."

The OEM agreement with Siemens--which Shanafelt pointed out strengthens Myrio's position against such competitors as Microsoft by aligning it with a well-known company with huge resources and a global presence--formalizes a long-standing working relationship between the companies: "We've already been working with Siemens for a couple of years, initially as reference selling partners, calling on accounts together, and more recently, in the past 9 to 12 months, we've been collaborating on creating a compelling value proposition, which has now involved into SURPASS," Shanafelt said. Its relationship with the German technology giant reflects Myrio's long-term strategy, he explained: "Securing distribution through large members of the video value chain, such as large systems integrators like Siemens has been a core push for Myrio for at least a year and a half now. We'll continue to look for partners with a global scope and with a commitment to IP video, such as Siemens is demonstrating. We believe that our open architecture and our embrace of IP standards will allow us to appeal to operators by driving down their costs--which in turn is going to drive large integrators like Siemens to want to embed our platform in their IP video solutions." Its relationship with Siemens is apparently already paying off for Myrio: "Siemens has over 160 local companies around the world, and we are actively involved with supporting local broadband service providers in many of the countries that they operate in," Shanafelt said.

[itvt] asked Shanafelt whether ensuring that the SURPASS platform supports interactive TV has been a priority for Myrio and Siemens: "Yes, we're actively collaborating on developing the proper API's and extensions to the platform to support interactive applications," he said. "Those are going to vary depending on the region, because various regional standards are emerging. An example of the things we're doing is an interactive videoconferencing capability: Siemens is integrating a SIP interface with their set-top box and the Myrio IP video platform to enable video telephony on the television. We're also working on a number of other interactive applications, such as gaming." [itvt] asked Shanafelt whether the partners plan to integrate MHP support into the platform: "I think parts of MHP will be embraced, though I'm not sure that all of it will be, because MHP was really defined around DVB," he said. "There are a lot of things you can do with IP that you don't need to use MHP for. However, because of all the ongoing development of applications and content using MHP, there needs to be some way to interface with that, so I believe you'll see us doing integration work with MHP as well as with OCAP for North America."