

## Siemens gets pieces of Chinese IPTV deal

By Vince Vittore

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Siemens announced today it has signed a deal with Shanghai Telecom, a subsidiary of China Telecom, and Shanghai Media Group to provide its Home Entertainment solution as part of a 5000-home field trial. The deal marks Siemens' second major announced IPTV contract since it acquired middleware vendor Myrio earlier this year.

Under terms of the deal, Siemens will provide an end-to-end system for a trial in the Shanghai borough of Pudong. That system will include the Gigaset M358 IP set-top box, which has been adapted for the Chinese market, Tandberg compression and Verimatrix security software.

"There will be a 5000 user trial until end of February, and in March they start a large-scale rollout," said Ryan Petty, director of product management for Siemens. "The intention is to do a full-scale test solution with the 5000 subscribers and then just keep going."

For Shanghai Tel and SMG, the trial will be test of the best-of-breed approach. Previously the carrier signed a deal with UTStarcom to provide its end-to-end IPTV system for a similar trial. The overall goal, according to Petty, is to reach 400,000 subscribers by the end of 2008.

"They're not afraid to dual-source the entire solution," he said. "That's quiet different from what you see in Europe and North America."

For Siemens, the contract holds a lot of symbolic significance because it will give the vendor the opportunity to show that its system can scale up to the level required by large U.S. and European carriers. Additionally, it will be the first large-scale test of Siemens' MPEG 4 (H.264) set-top box, which Petty said was key to Shanghai Tel's decision to go with the vendor after a lab trial against Microsoft in August.

"We've been able to demonstrate the most stable solution from the vendors that have been tested," he said. "We've also been able to show a workable H.264 solution, which was key to the customer."

ST's plan is to deliver a single stream of video over a 1.5 Mb/s stream to each home in the trial market. That differs drastically from the bandwidth requirements of carriers like AT&T, Verizon and BellSouth, which are looking at IPTV services that will require at least 20 Mb/s to each home. However, in the Chinese market where the TVs-per-household rate is low, a single stream will work just fine, Petty said.

ST's plan also veers away from other large carriers' in its reliance on network-based personal video recording. As part of the company's service, which will include 50 channels and 1500 hours of VOD content, it will offer several applications that require it to cache content on video servers. Among those applications is what Siemens dubs TV of Yesterday in which users can call up any content from the previous two days on 10 different channels. Additionally, the company is supporting a time-shifting application that allows users to rewind programs on any channel up to 30 minutes regardless of whether they were watching the channel or not.

"What we've done is created an information service based on our browser so both [Shanghai Tel] and Shanghai Media can provide information to users," Petty said.



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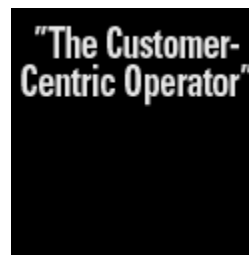
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