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JUNE 16, 2004
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Belgacom to Trial Interactive TV

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MUNICH -- Belgacom, the largest Belgian carrier, is planning a pilot of interactive digital television (iDTV) for this fall. Siemens won a frame contract for the delivery and installation of an end-to-end turnkey solution. iDTV uses a television set as the central hub for entertainment services. The Belgian iDTV project is the first order for Siemens Surpass home entertainment that was presented at this year's CeBIT.

With iDTV, customers can get access to an attractive service bundle of online services to their home TV sets via broadband access. In addition to an extensive offer for digital television with far-reaching types of interaction (electronic TV guide, digital video recorder, super teletext, participation in TV games, etc.), iDTV also provides users with access via the telephone line to services such as video-on-demand, local information, e-shopping and the possibility to surf and e-mail via the television.

Using these applications requires a set-top box connected to a DSL telephone line and the television set. All online services operate via the Internet Protocol (IP), with the carrier controlling the Quality of Service (QoS) to ensure trouble-free provision of the services.

For its TV-centric online services, Siemens works closely with a number of preferred partners. Among them are Myrio for the middleware to enable the application, nCube for the Video on Demand server, Verimatrix for content protection system, and Tandberg Television for the video broadcast equipment.

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