

The use of IPTV Solutions to provide Education on Demand

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“Using the latest developments in IPTV Technologies to provide
‘Education On Demand’ services in City and Rural areas.”

Abstract

The development of IPTV (Internet Protocol Television) over the last 3 years has dramatically changed the way Pay TV will be seen in the future.

However, these technologies to date have not been used by the education market, even though they offer an unparalleled opportunity for learning, and access to digital content.

Firstly to understand the opportunity one needs to know the core technology.

IPTV differs from normal TV based delivery systems in that instead of the TV being a passive device, something you watch, it is now a two way device.

In other words, a system that allows a person to interact with the content delivered to the TV.

The advantages of this are that we can now use the TV as a device to deliver a traditional LMS (Learning Management System) type environment direct to the end users home instead of via TV.

This technology is called “Middleware” and is used as an interactive and navigation device. In simple terms, a small IPTV Set Top Box (STB) has inside its software a very thin web browser.

This web browser takes a HTML or Java page, and then displays it upon the TV screen.

To the viewer, it looks exactly like a normal TV screen, as the pages are designed for viewing on a TV.

Using a simple remote control, a person can navigate through a series of high quality videos, and text pages, take tests, and be assessed on their results. Exactly the same way one clicks their way through web pages.

The advantage of using IPTV and Sat-Ed “IPTV-LMS” is that educational bodies can deliver digital content that can:

- 1 – Overcome the lack of PC Knowledge or typing skills of the student, thereby reaching all levels of society
- 2 – Provide universal access to Educational Digital content regardless where in Thailand

In Thailand, currently only 11.9 % of people can access the internet. (NETEC – Thailand ICT Indicators 2005)

The number in Bangkok is much higher, at 29% penetration; this is balanced by much lower numbers in remote and regional areas.

IPTV can also be accessed across Thailand and the region by marrying emerging IPTV technologies with next generation satellites such as iPSTAR.

Traditionally TV delivered by Satellite has been DVB (Digital Video Broadcasting, think UBC Satellite TV service). This as we all know is a one way service. You can't "Stop" "Pause" or "Rewind" the content, IPTV allows full interactivity.

By using the iPSTAR platform, IPTV content can be pushed forward to Sat-Ed Digital Library servers, where using IPTV STB's, regardless of location, people can access digital interactive content directly on a TV screen.

Instead of only people who can afford access to the Internet, who are PC literate, we can now directly provide to Farmers, Under House weavers, Small businesses and generally all people who want to improve themselves and their livelihood by a medium they can operate.

In the past, access to digital content was only for those "in the digital club", now, even illiterate people with no typing skills, handicapped people, can access content that will enrich, change, and empower them with knowledge.

Knowledge has been a precious commodity, everyone can access it, if we want them too.

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