

TMC'S ADVISOR

Practical Advice on Data/Voice/Video from Telecommunications Management Consultants Inc.

Last Word

By Ellen Koskinen-Dodgson

Awesome App with 1984 Implications

Passengers on the world's largest cruise ship, Royal Caribbean's Oasis of the Seas can rent iPhones that use GPS to track the location of friends. They can put asset tags on their children and track them too. DeFi Inc. provides the custom software application and the network to support tracking, chat, voice calling, keeping up with the daily events, making reservations and getting real-time news.

That sounds like fun, but how long can it be before it's normal to buy dog and child tracking as a residential application...or employee tracking as a business app? Shades of '1984'.

LTE Networks are a Step closer with Voice Standard

LTE (Long Term Evolution) networks, sometimes known as 4G (or 4th generation mobile) have passed a major hurdle now that major carriers have agreed on a standard for how to handle voice. LTE has a theoretical capacity of up to 100 Mbit/s for the downlink and 50 Mbit/s for the uplink.

Most major mobile carriers in Canada and the United States and several worldwide carriers have announced plans to convert their networks to LTE. The world's first publicly available LTE service launched in

Stockholm Sweden and Oslo Norway in December 2009.

magicJack: at it Again with Femtocells this Time

magicJack inventor and founder Dan Borislow has sold five million magicJacks over the past (very) few years. He sells customers the small USB device plus a local telephone number for a small annual charge. The customer plugs the device into their computer, plugs their telephone into the device, which connects to magicJack's network through the customer's own broadband internet connection. They can then call anywhere in the US and Canada without additional charge for the year.

A magicJack with femtocell technology has been announced for release in the spring of 2010. This device allows a cell phone to connect wirelessly to the magicJack and through the computer in the same way to the network when a customer is using their cell phone at home. This technology is promised to work with GSM cell phones from any carrier, even an old GSM cell phone without any paid service plans with a carrier.

Panasonic Videoconferencing and 3D Content on TV

Panasonic has announced separate partnerships with Skype and DirecTV



to bring videoconferencing and 3D programming, respectively, to its Viera Cast HDTVs, available this spring. Under the Skype partnership, users will be able to make voice and video calls to other Skype subscribers and make voice calls to anyone. In addition, users will be able to set up voice conference calls with up to 24 other parties.

Panasonic will sell a specially designed camera and microphone that can be plugged into the TV. The TV will connect directly to the Internet. Customers can access Amazon Video On Demand, Google's YouTube video and more.

Under the DirecTV partnership, Panasonic will be the exclusive sponsor of DirecTV's 3D channels, which will deliver movies, sports and other entertainment from content producers, including CBS, Fox Sports/FSN, NBC Universal, Turner Broadcasting System and others.

[Two other 3D networks have also been announced. One is a joint venture of Sony, Discovery Communications, and IMAX, and the other is from Walt Disney's ESPN.]

Cisco CEO Big on Video

John Chambers is a video evangelist. Cisco has purchased several video companies in recent years including Tandberg and Pure Digital, the maker of the handheld Flip video camera. Cisco will trial new video in-home telepresence technology that will be trialed in the U.S. this spring, with Verizon Communications and in France later this year with France Telecom. Cisco will provide set-top boxes and cameras, with consumers using their existing HDTVs.

Home telepresence can be used for monitoring a person's health, with the ability for a patient at home to talk in videoconference with a doctor.

Cisco and the Olympic Winter Games

Cisco will be providing a "medianet" -- a media-aware IP-based video network infrastructure -- to NBC during the network's coverage of the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Winter Games, Feb. 12-28. Cisco says its video infrastructure will enable real-time editing by NBC personnel in Vancouver, New York and Las Vegas, and will allow for the transfer of gigabyte-sized files of content between locations. Content will then be delivered to three screens: TV, PC and smartphone.

Intel is Heading off in All Directions

"Computing is no longer confined to your computer -- it's everywhere," Intel Chief Executive Paul Otellini says and it sounds like Intel wants to be everywhere as well. Intel was talking

about all kinds of products at the Consumer Electronics Show

Online Apps Store

They've launched the beta version of an online applications store for netbooks, the Intel AppUp Center. Otellini expects other consumer electronics companies to partner with Intel in expanding the categories of applications over time to include software for PCs, handheld gadgets, smartphones, appliances, TVs and other devices based on Intel processors.

Wireless Display

Intel announced the Intel Wireless Display, which is available with the chip maker's latest Core processors for desktops and laptops. The technology enables users to stream videos, photos and other content from the PC to a high-definition TV over a Wi-Fi connection. Laptops from Dell, Sony and Toshiba and a TV adapter by Netgear are available Jan. 17 with Wireless Display.

Smart TVs

Otellini demonstrated the use of Intel's system-on-a-chip product used in digital TVs. The platform enables the creation of user interfaces for searching and managing programming and stored video and for accessing Web services, such as YouTube. It can also be used to run a variety of downloaded applications.

Smartphones and Tablet PCs

They also demonstrated an LG-built smartphone with a five-inch screen running Intel's Moorestown platform, scheduled for release this year. They also showed a Moorestown-powered

phone in which a person could remove the device's display and use it as a tablet PC.

Moorestown is a system-on-chip that will be accompanied by Intel's Moblin operating system, which handles voice calls, and will compete with ARM-based products from Nvidia, Qualcomm, and Texas Instruments.

Interactive Signage

They announced a Core i7-powered interactive sign for a retail store that could be used by retail customers for in-store navigation.

Power Management

And last but not least, the showed a prototype of a home power management system that could monitor energy use in every device in the home and suggest ways to reduce consumption.

Farewell and Thank You

All of us at TMC bid a fond farewell (soon) to Roldan Babar, an experienced data communications technician and new Canadian who joined TMC on a Canadian work experience practicum three months ago. He's been a real asset to TMC, particularly in his assistance with re-launching the **Advisor**. Roldan is ready to be employed in the Vancouver marketplace and we recommend him as a real team player. He can be reached at roldan@tmcadvisor.com.

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