



## Bringing Technologies Closer Together

**It doesn't seem to matter who you speak to in the industry at the moment** – they all agree that convergence is a burning issue. The concept of using different types of technology together to fulfil an application is slowly but surely becoming a reality. Satellite and terrestrial networks can be very effective partners and can support a wide range of applications at any time and in any place. The emergence of Mobile TV as a serious contender in the global marketplace has brought hybrid, converged systems to the fore again and, as you read this, trials are taking place to ascertain the viability of hybrid networks that enable us to watch TV on the move.

Countries in Asia such as Japan have already embraced convergence within their telecommunications market but the EMEA region is investigating the possibilities of hybrid networks too. The idea of using technologies together that we would naturally assume are poles apart may seem alien but the potential is huge. Hybrid systems can be used in all walks of life from making money in business and enterprise to saving lives through disaster recovery. Surely the pulling together of technology can only be a positive step.

Mobile TV is, as yet, an unknown quantity and only time will tell if it will take off but indications show that it will be extremely popular. With regional growth predicted all over the world in the next couple of years HDTV, IPTV, DTH and Mobile TV are all set to be major drivers. It's going to be TV heaven for consumers with a range of choices in how they watch, where they watch, the picture they watch and the content they watch. It will demand a change in people's behaviour and although the manufacturers and service providers are pushing these new modes of TV as the next big thing, will the ordinary person in the street want to change? Will they want to be able to watch TV wherever they are? There is already a profile of the typical Mobile TV user – male, 20-30 years old, living in urban areas using their device during commutes to and from work. The answers to these questions remain to be seen.

There is no doubt that the opportunities that broadcast convergence will bring are huge and the impact upon the industry is extremely beneficial. There is a definite blurring between the lines and the result will change our experience as consumers of TV and entertainment but will also have an impact in many other areas of our lives as this convergence will allow seamless, ubiquitous coverage across the world opening the door of communication for all. By combining the strengths of satellite, terrestrial and even wireless technology to achieve the same goal what can be achieved is phenomenal.

Broadcast convergence is happening and the fight to capture the viewer's attention is well and truly on. ●

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