

Can Intel Win in TV Services?

Written by Marco Attard
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Will Intel hit the jackpot with its **virtual TV service**? Intel plans to take over living rooms (and the TV business) with a "virtual" TV network-- offering smaller and cheaper channel bundles than those cable subscriptions. And those set-top boxes would employ Intel technology that can distinguish who is watching, potentially allowing Intel to better target TV advertising.

Intel's found the Achilles heel of the TV industry: the lack of reliability of Nielsen ratings data on audiences. TV network programmers argue the Nielsen polling system (extrapolating data from 50,000 US homes) is not valid in the digital age. According to Reuters, Intel's TV plans will prove to be a challenge as media content providers still refuse to offer Intel discounts on content licensing and unbundling.



In other words Intel aren't allowed to beat the cable companies by using content.

To combat resistance, Intel has hired high -powered industry veterans to help with negotiations.

Leading the group as GM of Intel Media is Erik Huggers, an Internet-services specialist who helped the BBC launch the high-profile **iPlayer** service. Huggers has already decided to set up an Intel center in London to work on "user experience" software for TVs. Huggers also hired as an adviser Garth Ancier, once president for BBC Worldwide America, entertainment lawyer Ken Ziffren and former MTV executive Nicole Browning.

With the help of these TV industry insiders, Intel is expected to launch the video service "before the end of the year."

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The Intel TV play serves one main purpose-- getting Intel chips into more devices. While one can find Intel processors in 80% of global PCs, the company failed to achieve success in the mobile and interconnected device fields. That's why Intel is aiming for the connected home.

Comcast recently rolled out an Intel-based STB that customers control with their smartphones. The "X1" platform will rely on data centers packed with high-end servers -- with, of course, more Intel chips.

Intel last year backed down from a push to make chips for "smart" TVs after Google TV failed to have any market impact.

Intel then formed the Intel Media business group with a mandate of promoting digital content on Intel-based platforms.

Go [Intel's Plans for Virtual TV Come Into Focus \(Reuters\)](#)