



Why we can't wait for 2010
Dean Evans, Editor, Digital Home



The future is bright, say the analysts and futurists. But not until 2010...

In 2010... 65 million people will watch mobile TV. According to a report from Juniper Research, 65 million people worldwide will be watching streamed video or TV on their mobile phones by 2010. The research suggests that the largest number of users will be in Japan (8.7 million) and the US (8 million).

NTL and O2 are trialling a mobile phone TV service in Oxford using widescreen Nokia 7710 handsets and the DVB-H broadcast standard. Sky also plans to beam programming to mobile phones, while Orange has recently launched its own Orange TV service. Take-up of these new services, however, will be determined by pricing and by the availability of key content (football, news, etc.) to all mobile phone networks.

Online selling will be worth \$210 billion. Futurists at Forrester Research have suggested that online retail sales will leap \$100 billion in five years as more people grow more confident buying online, price comparison sites prosper, and the variety of shops offering a full online shopping service grows.

IPTV will challenge traditional broadcasting. According to Ofcom, the “combination of mass-market appeal, rapid growth, falling prices, increasing connection speeds and innovation in video technology means that by 2010, the number of [UK] households able to view television over broadband is likely to exceed the number of households dependent on analogue terrestrial broadcasts.”

A report by the analysts at Informa Telecoms and Media predicts that the global market for TV over broadband (IPTV) will be worth \$10 billion by 2010. It claims that, globally, there are around 2.5 million IPTV subscribers, but this figure is expected to shoot up by a factor of 10 to hit 25 million subscribers by 2010.

In 2010...

Eighty per cent of us will have 10Mbps broadband. Jupiter Research predicts that 80 per cent of European homes will have a broadband connection by 2010, and this figure is likely to be higher in the UK. This compares to other forward thinking by Technology Futures Inc, which foresees 75 per cent of US homes connected to broadband by the same date, with 10–20 per cent of these subscribing to very high speed broadband services. Forrester Research is a little more pessimistic, forecasting that 62 per cent of US homes will be broadband-enabled.

By the end of 2005, says Ofcom, 99.6 per cent of UK homes will be

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connected to a broadband-enabled exchange capable of a 1–2Mbps connection. Most estimates suggest that in 2010, over half of all UK households will benefit from blended average broadband speeds of 10Mbps, which is fast enough to make them video capable.

Informa Telecoms and Media suggests that the number of global broadband subscribers will exceed 190 million in 2005 and hit 440 million by the end of 2010.

PVRs

Ofcom suggests that: “at the moment, Personal Video Recorders are used in about 2 per cent [of homes] but in 2010 that number is likely to be more than 20 per cent, allowing viewers to manipulate traditional linear broadcasting into an on-demand and self-scheduled format.”

Freeview will be more popular than Sky. According to Spectrum Strategy Consultants, Freeview will overtake BSkyB as Britain’s biggest digital television platform in 2010. Hardly

surprising given that (a) the UK will be half-way through its analogue-to-digital switchover in 2010 and (b) BSkyB operates a vast pay-TV platform with hundreds of channels and Freeview is, obviously, free...

SES ASTRA

Satellite operator SES ASTRA also expects most European households to convert from analogue television to digital television by 2010.

Growing popularity

DVD players will run home networks. Gartner believes that home connectivity standards, such as UPnP AV and 802.11n will be ratified and available by 2007–2008, leading to new waves of connected products in 2010. “As home networks grow in popularity,” says Gartner analyst Paul O’Donovan, “more people want entertainment devices like DVD players and set-top boxes to be part of them. These devices will develop into multimedia servers and have distinct advantages over PCs.”

The US will have more TVs than people. The *Seattle Times* analysed the trend for new, larger screen TVs and the demand for smaller secondary sets in bedrooms, kitchens and studies. If true, it will mean that there will be over 310,610,000 TV sets in the US alone by 2010.

Britons will spend 19 days online per year. According to a *Screen Digest* study, the average Briton spends around 53 hours per week consuming media. By 2010, the study suggests that non-digital pursuits (books, magazines, newspapers, etc.) will take up a mere 72 minutes of our week. Time spent online, using a mobile phone or playing games could account for as much as 8.5 hours per week. That’s around 19 days per year.

You’ll own a device powered by a fuel cell. Researchers at NanoMarkets have predicted that 2006 will be the year that mobile fuel cells become a reality. By 2010, they foresee a \$1.6 billion market for battery rechargers or hybrid lithium/fuel cell combo batteries for use in mobile phones, PDAs, laptops and other portable devices.

The digital home will be a reality. US research group TDG expects that global home networking will grow from 35 million homes in 2004 to over 160 million by 2010. Consequently, TDG also believes that the number of network-capable devices will increase dramatically, rising from 108 million today to a staggering one billion Internet and LAN-friendly gadgets in 2010.

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