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Independent Show - The Cavalry Arrives, Riding the Cloud
By Brian Santo, Editor-in-Chief
**CedMagazine.com - August 01, 2011**

Hosted, managed services reduce the expense of rolling out advanced features.

There's nothing new in designing products to meet the needs of smaller network operators, nor is there anything novel in hosting services on behalf of those operators. What is new is the comprehensiveness of many of the solutions and the growing range and power of capabilities being made available through the cloud.

Securing more bandwidth for more channels and to support more customers isn't going to diminish as a priority anytime soon, and that's hard enough. Some vendors specialize in migration strategies to more bandwidth, and some can help accomplish a forklift upgrade to an entirely new architecture. For some service providers, that can be perfectly adequate.

But now there's multi-room DVR and TV Everywhere and targeted advertising and social networking and advanced guides with search and discovery. … Just buying bandwidth isn't going to help if competition requires some combination of these services and features.

One of the granddaddies in this area is IBBS, which has been providing hosted broadband and VoIP services for nigh on two decades. The Comcast Media Center (CMC) has been providing its VOD in a Box service for years. Companies like Calix, CommScope and Zhone have been winning contracts from smaller service providers to provide upgrades to FTTx.
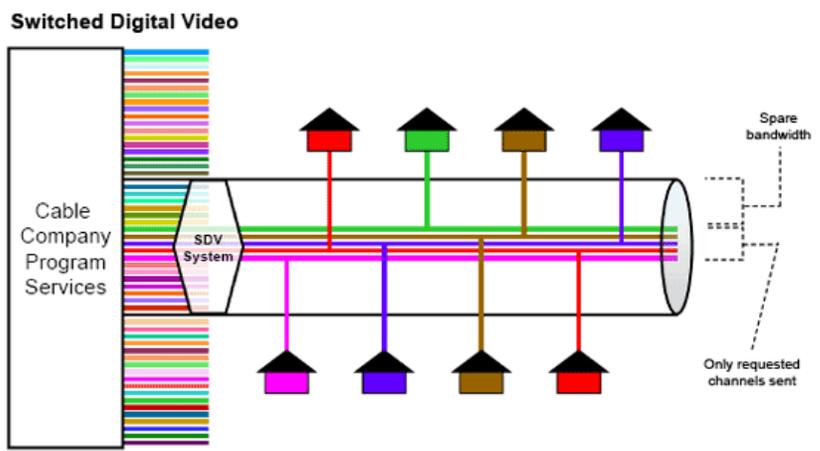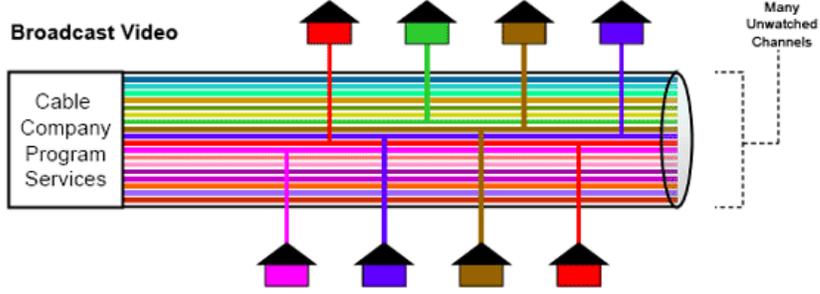
Adara Technologies provides hosted, managed switched digital video (SDV) via the cloud to help smaller operators expand their channel line-ups and offer advanced features and services. Source: Adara Technologies

Recently joining the party with new one-stop offers are Adara Technologies, EchoStar, Entone and Avail-TVN with SeaChange International.

"There are solutions out there, but they haven't brought economies of scale," noted Adara Technologies CEO Joseph Nucara. "Adara and other companies are arriving to do that."

One of the new kids on the block, Adara puts hosted and managed switched digital video (SDV) at the service of its customers. The company installs some Cisco QAMs, encryption systems and some other equipment in their customers' headends to help create an SDV tier that includes literally hundreds of channels, both SD and HD.

Otherwise, Adara customers keep using all of the equipment they already have in place. Though formally allied with Cisco, Adara's cloud-based approach makes it irrelevant, whether an operator's network is based on equipment from Cisco/Scientific Atlanta or Motorola (or anyone else, for that matter).

Nucara boasts that Adara solves both the technology and business challenges that smaller companies have – specifically, how do you offer more channels without a forklift upgrade while simultaneously migrating to IP to support advanced features and services, including video-on-demand and advanced guides?

Separately, Adara and CCI announced that they have begun working together on managed, hosted solutions.