Access for All – the Convergence of TV and Internet as a new means

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(Barrier-free) Access for All

The need for accessibility services

• Some political Background (UNO, EP, ITU)
• HbbTV – an open ETSI Standard
• HbbTV – an ideal means for access services to all
• Cooperation is necessary between broadcasters and CE manufacturers

My message: Whatever access system we offer, it will be of benefit to us all (sign language may be the only exception). Connected TV is a marvellous new possibility for Audiovisual Media Accessibility.
The need for access services

- About 15% of the World’s population (about a Billion people) suffer from more or less severe disabilities that hamper the access to telecommunication services.

- Ca. 16% of the adult Europeans have health problems that make the consumption of broadcast programmes difficult or impossible.

- With age, an increasing number of people have hearing and/or viewing problems as well as reductions in mobility that make the control of apparatuses difficult, e.g. operating the TV remote control.

- Hardly none of our fellow citizens beyond the age of 80 has an adequate sense of hearing. International organisations have been acting for many years in order to make available technical means that alleviate or enable, for people with disabilities, for the elderly but also for minorities, the access to TV services.
2006: UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities *

- Article 9: Accessibility to information, communication and other services, including electronic services and emergency services
- Article 21: ... Access to Information: Encouraging the mass media, including providers of information through the Internet, to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities;
  - Recognizing and promoting the use of Sign Languages

* in Germany ratified on 24.02.2009

http://www.un.org/disabilities/
EU, National, EC

- **2008: Declaration of EU Parliament: Subtitling of all Public Service Television Programmes in the EU**

- **National laws:**
  - 2010: 21st Century Communication and Video Accessibility Act (USA)
  - 2010: Equality Act (UK), etc.

- **Audiovisual Media Services Directive (2010/13/EU of 10.03.2010)**

- **Art. 46: Access to audiovisual media:**
  "The right of persons with a disability and of the elderly to participate and be integrated in the social and cultural life of the Union is inextricably linked to the provision of accessible audiovisual media services. The means to achieve accessibility should include, but need not be limited to, sign language, subtitling, audio-description and easily understandable menu navigation."
ITU Resolutions

• Resolution 70 (Johannesburg, 2008) of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly

• Resolution 58 (Hyderabad, 2010) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference

• Resolution 175 of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (Guadalajara, 2010)* instructs all three ITU Sectors “to take into account the needs of persons with disabilities in the work of the ITU”

*Res. 175: „Telecommunication/information and communication technology accessibility for persons with disabilities, including age-related disabilities“
Decision of ARD (German Television) from September 2011

• For people with hearing disabilities:
  - In national TV channels, subtitles for all new programme items until end of 2013
  - Increasing amount of subtitling in the regional programmes provided by ARD members

• For people with viewing limitations:
  - Audio description for all fictional formats and all nature films in the national TV programme

• The ZDF (Second German PBS network) followed suit
  • Significant increase in barrier-free TV programme items

→ Very positive reaction by the associations representing people with disabilities
Going Digital Helps Accessibility in Television

- Analog TV allowed already for various kinds of access services to TV
  - For the elderly
  - For people with special needs

- Digital TV provides more opportunities
  - Improved presentation
  - Adaptation to individual preferences
  - Hybrid delivery: IBB (Integrated Broadcast-Broadband) systems like HbbTV (ETSI) or HybridCast (ARIB)
For a description of the HbbTV and the HybridCast System see Report ITU-R BT.2267

Free Download via the ITU website

http://www.itu.int/pub/R-REP-BT/en
HbbTV® (Hybrid Broadcast Broadband TV) – An Open ETSI Standard

- The HbbTV consortium together with a large group of supporters jointly developed the HbbTV specification to create a global standard for hybrid entertainment services
- Current version: ETSI TS 102 796 v1.2.1 (November 2012)  
  First ETSI standard (version 1.0) in June 2010
- Work ongoing on version 2.0 (with support of the EU project HBB-NEXT)
- All references under www.hbbtv.org
- The HbbTV specification does not depend on a particular broadcast link nor on a particular IP link. It may be applicable with either or connection, but gains most momentum in a connected environment to broadcast and broadband
Outlook HbbTV 2.0

- Currently in specification definition phase
- Move to HTML 5 plus update to other current web technologies
- Interfaces for second screen (smartphone, tablet)
- Synchronising streams delivered by broadcast and broadband
- Advanced graphics
- Adaptive streaming – more features
- Downloadable fonts
- Push VOD via broadcast (incl. protected content)

http://www.hbb-next.eu/
HbbTV characteristics

HbbTV is simple to provide and simple to use

• Signalled in the DVB
  • If signalled in the DVB stream, the “RED BUTTON” function is available
  • Click on it and the start page appears that provides access to all services offered by the broadcaster or by a group of collaborating broadcasters
  • HbbTV can also be applied in connection with DVB Radio services

• HbbTV fulfills all broadcasters’ requirements
  • Open, standardised, functionally flexible due to JavaScript engine, cross-linking options TV - Web, minimum dependency from device portals / maximum control over usage of own TV signal, potential for value apps, …

• HbbTV allows very easy content generation
  • High synergy with current web technology (HTML-based, CE-browser)
Static and dynamic linking of broadcast and Internet content

Example for Instantiation \(\rightarrow\) “Red Button”

- Seamlessly tying linear and non-linear (online) services together
- Maintain full control of brand and consumer awareness
The RED BUTTON function

When selecting a TV programme, the „RED BUTTON“ signals possible access to HbbTV services
Examples of using HbbTV

Launcher application at the first national programme

After pushing the RED BUTTON on the remote control the START PAGE appears
Examples of using HbbTV

Application of Electronic Programme Guide

Selecting the EGP gives directly access to catch-up TV (if emission has already passed)
Application of Extended Text Service

Selecting ARD Text provides access to an enhanced type of Videotext
Using HbbTV for barrier-free TV

Adapting the Text Services

in colour

in size
Using HbbTV for barrier-free TV

Subtitles on Command

Demo at IFA-12&13 – could be applied in practice
(synchronization technically solved but still to be implemented in the specification)

Menu to select size, appearance and position of subtitles

Selection of personally adjustable subtitles
Using HbbTV for barrier-free TV

Sign language on Command
Demo at IFA-12 and 13
Could be applied in practice (synchronization still to be implemented in the specification)

News via broadcast – signer via Internet

- Signer video streamed via the Internet and superimposed with the broadcast TV signal
- Requires synchronization of both services (HbbTV 2.0 in development)
- Requires second video player in the TV set (the alternative is a composed video stream via HbbTV)

NOTE: Signer image can be adjusted in size and position on the screen
Using HbbTV for barrier-free TV

Video Clip Demo

- **Subtitles:** Appearance, size, position are selectable
- **Signer:** Position and size are selectable

Watch this and more videos at:

http://www.youtube.com/user/hbbnext

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQi6ZytFcyE
Use of HbbTV in combination with a 2nd Screen
The demo at IFA-12 and IFA-13
Use of HbbTV in combination with a 2nd Screen

The principle

Any display device that allows connection to Internet can be used

Source: HBB-NEXT
IRT development: Generic 2nd Screen framework

Generic 2nd Screen framework
• allows generic device coupling of TV and 2nd screen
• one time coupling can be used by many services
• provides communication path between TV application and 2nd Screen
• easy to use for all kinds of applications
• developed within EU funded project

IFA 2012 demo in cooperation with rbb

the rbbtext application starts on the TV screen
IRT development: generic 2nd Screen framework

IFA 2012 demo in cooperation with rbb

no device coupled yet – the coupling overlay shows up
IRT development:
Generic 2nd Screen framework

IFA 2012 demo in cooperation with rbb

the QR code is scanned with the tablet PC
IFA 2012 demo in cooperation with rbb

the device connection is established
IFA 2012 demo in cooperation with rbb

the TV application can now start any web application on the 2nd screen
IFT development: Generic 2nd Screen framework

IFA 2012 demo in cooperation with rbb

the TV application can be controlled via the tablet
IFA 2012 demo in cooperation with rbb

via the tablet the TV application can be made invisible
Conclusions (1)

- Whatever access service we offer for the elderly or people with special needs, it will be of benefit to us all (sign language may be the only exception)

- Recognize the enormous potential of Integrated Broadcast-Broadband TV (such as HbbTV) as a marvellous new possibility for Multimedia Accessibility

- There is a need for cost-effective production techniques (semi-automated processes) but, at the same time, there is a need for quality standards for access services
Conclusions (2)

- Make access systems **mainstream**
- Continue **cooperation** between content providers (e.g. broadcasters) and CE manufacturers
- Develop according **applications for hybrid broadcast-broadband services**
- Encourage broadcasters (especially in developing countries) to offer the access services for the elderly and for people with special needs (to the benefit of all users, incl. children, minorities, but really all of us)
Thank you for your attention

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http://www.hbb-next.eu