Press Release

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AT-SKY

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Thomcast Partners with AtSky to Provide Rich TV Solutions For European Broadcast Networks

Mediacast, Excel, London- May 21, 2001- Thomcast, the worldwide leading designer and manufacturer of solutions for multimedia broadcasting is presenting an advanced Push multicast end-to-end offer, using the AT-SKY integrated SkyNetwork solution and based on its OpenMux® real-time software multiplexing kernel. Through this agreement, Thomcast will resale the AT-SKY solution, which aims at enabling an end-user to easily create his own bouquet of available Web-TV channels.

The SkyNetwork solution has been developed to broadcast Web-TV services through high-speed MPEG-2 DVB satellite links and digital terrestrial networks. The high bandwidth MPEG-2 networks will enable rich-media IP content, such as video streaming, to be multicast with high quality, thus avoiding the restitution disadvantages of standard Internet connections.
The system includes the SkyCenter system, at the broadcaster end, which performs the collection of data (Web, Music, MPEG, MP3, etc), their sorting into Webcasting channels, and the administration of these channels prior to their broadcast. At the reception end, a low-cost reception box connected through the USB port to a PC running the @Sky Navigator enables the end-user to play previously stored or live Internet content.

The entire system relies on Thomcast's OpenMux to provide a complete integrated DVB databroadcasting system. OpenMux is a multiplexing kernel that can simultaneously handle various types of inputs — including single program transport streams, multiple program transport streams, private data, Internet Protocol (IP) frames and radio signals — and then generates an MPEG-2 DVB/ATSC transport stream output.

Serge MAL, General Manager of the Multimedia and Digital Systems Unit of Thomcast, comments "Our strategy is to strengthen our leadership in Europe for IP broadcasting in delivering service solutions around our OpenMux technology. We are delighted to partner with AtSky as we think their approach represents a major step, both technically and economically, to provide internet content and Web-TV channels over high bit-rate broadcast networks".

Jean-Yves LE ROUX, Chief Executive Officer of AT-SKY adds, "The @SkyNetwork technology is the first one really dedicated to the mass-market and fully compliant with satellite, cable and terrestrial networks. Thomcast and AT-SKY are focusing on the same markets and I am really proud to work closely with them".

Thomcast's MPEG2 solutions :

About OPAL
Opal is based on OpenMux technology and is the solution of choice for stations broadcasting internet files within the MPEG-2 DVB or ATSC transport streams. Opal offers an outstanding new feature, the Virtual Channels. This feature allows a multiplex bandwidth to be divided into several virtual channels, each virtual channel including several services or PIDs (Packet Identifier Data). By setting priorities and parameters to each service, the bandwidth is shared between different services and managed dynamically.

About Coral
Coral enables the real-time broadcasting of interactive data files such as MHP files, OpenTV(tm) , Mediahighway(tm) within MPEG-2 DVB or ATSC transport streams. Compatible with any DVB or ATSC compliant networks including satellite, cable or terrestrial, CORAL allows broadcasters to develop, manage and deliver "higher-value" broadcast content by performing real-time multiplexing of heterogeneous data from multiple sources.

About Amber
The Thomcast Amber product family includes 1U and 2U re-multiplexers and DVB-SI/PSIP processors. The remultiplexers support re-multiplexing of multiple program transport streams to create new customized multiplexes, and the DVB-SI/PSIP processors perform the filtering, injection, or extraction of DVB-SI / PSIP tables within MPEG-2 transport streams. The Amber Remultiplexer creates a fully MPEG-2 DVB or ATSC compliant output multiplex, supports Thomcast SmartData technology for interaction with Thomcast OpenMux servers, and has the ability to scramble the output services, using low cost, flexible, and easy-to-manage proprietary solutions.

AT-SKY's solution
AT-SKY is the first company in the world to come up with a complete broadband network infrastructure, including the operating software platform @SkyCenter managed by the bouquet operator and the end-users receivers @SkyPilot with their navigation software @SkyNavigator.
The @SkyCenter management platform is based on the the Infocast™ software which has been developed by TDF Technology, a Division of France Telecom in charge of terrestrial broadcasting solutions. Infocast™ allows creating and operating a Push Multimedia service. Web sites, video, pictures, text or audio files are pulled, collected, and gathered in groups like thematic channel and broadcasted on the network.
AT-SKY has developed a specific component ASIC -@SkyChip-. The @SkyChip is implemented in the receiver @SkyPilot but can also be used in set-top boxes, stand-alone IP receivers, PCI cards, etc…in order to filter and manage the files broadcasted in DVB mode, as well as Multicast & Unicast modes. The @SkyChip allows patented copy protection, conditional access and profiling mechanisms.

About Thomcast
Thomcast, a wholly owned subsidiary of THALES (formerly Thomson-CSF), designs, develops, manufactures and markets equipment, systems and solutions in the field of:

- Terrestrial Transmission (radio and TV)
- Digital Video Processing and Multimedia Distribution
- Broadband Wireless Communications (1.7 - 3.6 GHz)

for broadcasting, cable TV, satellite and telecommunication services providers worldwide. Thomcast has deployed its systems in 168 countries.

Visit Thomcast at Mediacast- Booth G10.

About AT-SKY
The company was established in January 2000 by Jean-Yves Le Roux, then Executive VP of SCM Microsystems, in charge of the Digital TV Business Unit.
AT-SKY's R&D department combines a strong expertise on the full Broadband Network and the key technologies involved (in-house silicon expertise and design, software and hardware developments). With already 10 patents pending, AT-SKY leverages on a strong intellectual property.
AT-SKY is right at the center of the more pronounced convergence between the telecom, the Internet, and the TV industries.

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