

EXPWAY launches enhanced FastEPG™ v1.5 for IP networks

Paris, August 23rd 2005 -

EXPWAY of France has launched *FastEPG™ v1.5*, an enhanced multi-media Electronic Program Guide (EPG). It is an application that can be used with digital video recorders, set-top boxes, and the latest TV sets. Viewers can use EPG to find, book, view and review content; it will also be an essential differentiator element for operators, helping them to strengthen their brand. EXPWAY will be showcasing its technology at the IBC trade show in Amsterdam in early September 2005.

As the main interface to entertainment, the EPG needs to be efficient, simple and rich. EXPWAY has developed *FastEPG™*, an end-to-end EPG transport solution over IP based on the *TV-Anytime* standard and compliant with the *Digital Video Broadcasting DVB-IPI* specifications.

FastEPG™ manages the import, storage, transmission, reception, caching and querying of XML EPG data, for both broadcast TV guides and video-on-demand catalogues. *FastEPG™* allows updates, in pull (unicast), push (multicast) modes, and hybrid (mixed) modes.

Enhanced quality of service is ensured, since using the *BinXML™* format (an XML-based language developed by EXPWAY) allows the transmission of large quantities of metadata to a mobile terminal, and to store these metadata in their compressed form on the terminal. Local navigation within the '*mini-database*' is then done extremely rapidly, avoiding the lengthy network-access times that usually decrease the performance and usability of WAP/HTML standards applications and plague the user experience.

Additionally, the support of XML content fragmentation by the *BinXML™* format makes it possible to limit the data uploads to the sole updated metadata fragments. More than a simple usage comfort, this mechanism enables users to enjoy dynamic services with almost real-time partial updates.

The ergonomics and presentation developed over the *FastEPG™* application mean that it is fully flexible and customisable. Content description can be provided in several languages to fit in with the viewer's preferences. *FastEPG™* also allows for the easy insertion of extra data, providing operators or content providers with means to push related materials (advertisements, information, etc.). Additional services can be made available — *FastEPG™* can become the framework for designing and implementing access to additional services such as games, emails, and other interactive interfaces.

FastEPG™ is tailored to the needs of users

FastEPG™ is available in a range of formats. *FastEPG™ for Operators* allows operators to manage their interaction with viewers and deliver added-value services, while strengthening their brand.

FastEPG™ for Broadcasters allows broadcasters to generate EPG streams, while minimizing transmission costs and maximizing the quality of service.

FastEPG™ for Manufacturers provides a unique client-side solution with high performance and minimal resources consumption. Specifically, FastEPG™ allows manufacturers to design their hardware with a cost-effective approach.

FastEPG™ for Viewers provides viewers with a set of advanced features, such as multi-criteria research, possibilities to set alarms on the user's favourite programmes, and easy access to pay-per-view programmes.

FastEPG™ carries an array of unique benefits

The Electronic Program Guide ensures *efficiency of use*: It is the framework that will guide the end-user through the programme offer. Its characteristics enable it to grasp the attention of the viewer. FastEPG™ is based on the most efficient technologies on offer, such as compression and transport to allow reliable downloading of EPG information.

FastEPG™ provides *a complete framework* ranging from the provision of metadata all the way through to manifold partnerships and all the necessary modules on the client to organize, filter and present the programme offer to the viewer.

FastEPG™ capitalises on *a range of attractive features*: It allows operators to build their EPG over a wide range of descriptive fields describing TV programmes and on-demand-content. This rich set of information allows content providers to implement several usage models in order to promote and access their programmes (by genre, by name, through a keyword search, also including programme trailers or promotional links).

FastEPG™ provides *the tools to inform viewers* about programme rescheduling, delays, TV/movie/series genres, keywords, cast lists, chapter-based summaries and now/next programme support. Besides, standard FastEPG™ provides unique *conformance to key TV standards* such as DVB and MPEG. This means that the user is never locked into a costly and stagnant proprietary solution. The technologies implemented through FastEPG™ have been developed by the key players in the DVB domain, including the largest manufacturers, operators and broadcasters.

FastEPG™ is *a uniquely flexible solution*: It allows all actors along the delivery chain, starting from the content owner all the way to the manufacturer, to efficiently construct a business model around content delivery. For instance, by using FastEPG™, an operator can provide unique content-access services to its customers and differentiate these services from its competitors'. A content owner can promote its content by providing a rich set of descriptive information and can ensure that the content is well represented.

FastEPG™ revolutionises the end-user experience

Personalization is a significant feature of EXPWAY's FastEPG™ platform. Imagine a given user who gets slightly lost during his (or her) first contacts with the EPG interface and the numerous channels that are available. EXPWAY's solution can help the user, here: once guided through the personalization process, the EPG interface can be modified according to the individual user's preferences. Moreover, the user now gets programmes suggestions, which meet his (or her) specific needs.

With a group of users in a given household, all the viewers can benefit from EXPWAY's EPG platform. Take a family, with parents and two children, who have very different entertainment tastes. In order to keep mutually satisfactory access to TV programmes, family members can use *the multi-users option* of their EPG. At system start-up, each individual user can access his (or her) environment with specific parameters. The option may be turned off, if family members wish to watch TV all together.

FastEPG™ navigates better thanks to rich metadata language

By using rich metadata language, FastEPG™ makes it possible to develop simple and efficient navigation methods that are functionally richer than what classical navigation offers (of the type found

within hierarchical menus). The EXPWAY platform enables the user to access content by genre or sub-genre; to carry out keyword searches; and to go by *groups of content*, while groups can be either pre-defined, on the basis of content (e.g.: a group of episodes in a television series), or arbitrarily identified (e.g.: 'weekly selection', 'all goals of the last championship evening', etc.).

Searching and filtering content with the help of criteria such as programme prices, availability date, live video requests, and so on, is also an option. Results can be obtained and listed as per the selected criteria (e.g.: 'sort by date', 'sort by price', etc.). All this facilitates navigation and enhances the benefits, to the user, of the FastEPG™ solution.

About EXPWAY

EXPWAY is headquartered in Paris (France). The company will be attending the IFA consumer-electronics trade show on DIBCOM (Booth # Hall 2.1 – Stand # 212) from 2 to 7 September 2005 in Berlin (Germany) and the IBC audio-visual technologies trade fair from 9 to 13 September 2005 in Amsterdam (The Netherlands) — Booth #M151 in the *Mobile Zone*.

EXPWAY is a leading provider of intermediation software solutions between content providers and consumers. EXPWAY provides Electronic Content Guide and Multimedia Search Engines targeting high-value content discovery systems and solutions dedicated to broadcast and mobile networks. It draws its expertise on its proven and world-class patented binary XML technology, BinXML™, already adopted as the binary XML transport format by MPEG-7, TV-Anytime and DVB standards. EXPWAY solutions are suitable for constrained environments and devices such as mobile phones and digital TV set-top-boxes. EXPWAY was created in 2000.

For more information please contact sales@expway.com or go to: www.expway.com