

Microsoft Shatters the PC-to-Television Barrier, Releases First Details on Extenders for Windows Media Center

New devices from Cisco's Linksys division, D-Link and Niveus Media to bring the ultimate audio/video experience to any room in the home.

DENVER — Sept. 5, 2007 — Watching a live TV broadcast in the living room, pausing it, and then effortlessly resuming it at the same moment from the bedroom or kitchen will soon become even easier, as Microsoft Corp. provides a first look at the new Extenders for Windows® Media Center platform, which will power a variety of devices to be released this holiday season. A wave of new cool, quiet, home-theater-quality devices from companies such as Linksys, a division of Cisco; D-Link Corporation; and Niveus Media Inc. may incorporate new features, including live high-definition (HD) video, wireless networking and expanded support for audio and video formats such as DivX and Xvid.

The new Extender devices, which will be unveiled later this month in a variety of innovative form factors and price points, unleash the pictures, music, video content and live TV from a PC running Windows Vista® Home Premium or Windows Vista Ultimate for viewing and listening on a big-screen TV display for the ultimate entertainment solution.

"With more than 60 million Windows Vista equipped PCs in use worldwide, there are many customers eager to bring the simple and elegant Media Center experience to the televisions in their homes," said Dave Alles, general manager for eHome at Microsoft. "The new Extenders for Windows Media Center make it easy to get a wide range of personal and Internet content not only on someone's main TV but on all the TVs in the house. Whether it's a high-def show recorded from digital cable, new Internet video, or your personal library of pictures, music and videos, it's all on your television — just a remote-click away."

New extenders will be available in a wide range of form factors, including both stand-alone set-top boxes and integration with other devices such as DVD players and televisions, so now connecting to a PC running Windows Media Center is even more convenient and seamless than ever. New support for Wireless N high-speed technology means there is no need to run Ethernet cables throughout the home to watch HD video in up to six rooms at once.

Extenders for Windows Media Center are also, for the first time, enhanced to allow support for popular video codecs such as DivX and Xvid, along with continued support for Windows Media® Video HD files. These extenders will also lead the industry in supporting the ability to send protected HD content to additional rooms, including recorded TV from over-the-air Advanced Television Systems Committee or Cable Card tuners and movies and music available from providers such as CinemaNow, MovieLink LLC and Napster LLC. Extenders also support Media Center features such as Reuters news feeds, National Public Radio broadcasts, up-to-date sports reports from the FOX Sports Lounge, and subscription music from XM Radio. At the same time, these devices support Parental Controls built into Windows Media Center, allowing parents to choose the content their children are allowed to view.

Consumers have already logged millions of hours of use on Xbox 360s as Extenders for Windows Media Center. Microsoft is working first with Linksys, D-Link and Niveus Media to deliver quiet, high-quality products, and the company will be expanding the Extenders' platform to other companies in the future. The new Extenders for Windows Media Center are being demonstrated at the Microsoft booth at the CEDIA EXPO 2007 in Denver Thursday, Sept. 6 through Sunday, Sept. 9.

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