

IPTV vs. OTT advantages / disadvantages?

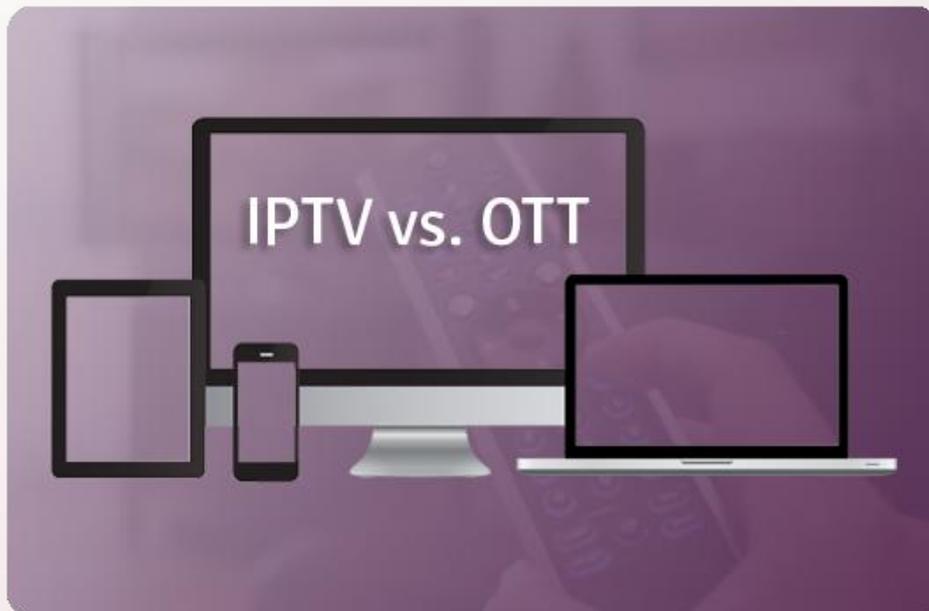
White Paper by Plum



Introduction

Digital television has conquered the market and pushed out Analog television. To some, it is clear that the same thing will happen with Internet Television. But there are still many unresolved questions about implementing iTV and how. Two main concepts appeared – IPTV and OTT. Which solution is better and what does “better” mean in this case?

Which solution is better and what does “better” mean in this case?



There are two types of Interactive TV: IPTV (Internet protocol TV) which is streamed only inside operators network, and OTT (Over The Top) which is streamed over the internet. They both have their advantages and disadvantages.



OTT

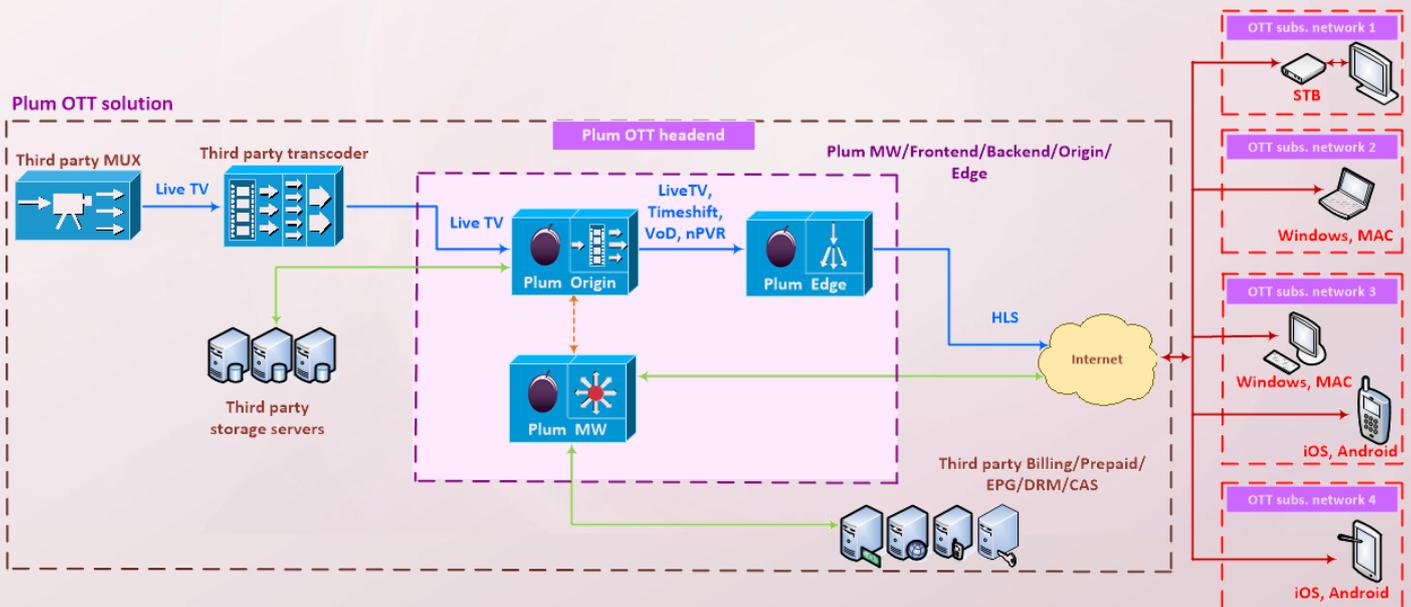
OTT is internet television that is offered over the internet. It is used when a provider wishes to reach new subscribers and not only his own.

Users can access it from any network, service is not restricted to only provider's network, subscribers only need internet connection. It is not streamed only in network of the operator who is offering iTV service so this kind of service is good for gaining new subscribers. This kind of iTV offers all the benefits of interactive TV, new functionalities but also accessibility. Subscribers can access the content anywhere, anytime and on any device. Mobile and web applications come as a highlight in this case.

The disadvantage is that the internet connection can vary in quality, network is not under provider's control. This problem can be solved generally, using multiprofiles for streams that would allow streaming to take place even if internet connection is poor. This way the quality would decrease but service would still be available.

OTT can be implemented by:

- Cable operators (HFC, FTTx Technologies)
- Telco operators (xDSL Technologies, 3G, 4G)
- Internet providers (Wi-Fi, 3G, 4G)
- Content providers
- TV houses





Conclusion

Both concepts for iTV have advantages and disadvantages. IPTV is in a controlled environment but doesn't really offer full iTV experience, and OTT does offer full experience but it is streamed over unmanaged networks so quality of service can vary. The "better" model depends on what is important for operator and on his business model. New users or just improving offer for existing users.