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Can the IoT Rekindle Consumer Love for Cable Operators?

As the Internet of Things (IoT) continues to evolve and find its true value proposition, creating perhaps equal parts excitement and confusion along the way, a few trends are emerging. One trend is the emphasis on connected devices that increase efficiency. Smart-home IoT services help residents

live their lives securely, more efficiently and more comfortably. This is more than just a network of Web-connected devices—it's an entire intelligent service that combines inputs from a variety of diverse sensing and input devices in a house, and enables easy management and control of most of the home's systems and appliances.

But consumers want more than efficiency gains from IoT devices. They want their *experience* with these devices to be efficient. The IoT is still unfamiliar territory for most consumers, and they are not sure how much they want to integrate IoT devices into their daily lives. They definitely don't want to set up and maintain multiple platforms within the home. They want *one, consolidated system* that is easy to use, so they can get on with the benefits. This is where cable and TV operators have a huge advantage.



Ahead of the Game

Operators are already the primary provider of internet services for consumers. Many operators are also extending these Internet services into Wi-Fi support services, helping consumers to install and maintain their internet connectivity everywhere within the home. As those consumers increase their adoption of IoT devices, they will become ever more attached to and dependent on their internet connections—and, by

extension, the companies that provide them.

This puts operators in a prime position as the holders of the keys to connectivity. Even better news? Operators already have a tremendous customer base, along with marketing and billing systems, call centers for support, and trucks on the road. Some operators are already deploying security services bundled with other service subscriptions. The set-top box is the gateway for these service offerings, effortlessly connecting numerous home sense-and-control devices in a single, integrated set of smart-home applications.

Set-top Boxes as Turnkey Solutions

But there's much more potential here. Smart-home services like remote control of doors, thermostats and lighting, all centrally monitored and controlled by the set-top box or gateway, represent enticing opportunities for cable and service operators.

These new, high-value services can provide increased customer loyalty, along with additional revenues. By offering a turnkey solution, operators can position themselves as providing relatively inexpensive services—just a few additional dollars on top of the monthly fee already paid by subscribers.

Rekindling Consumer Love Doesn't Come for Free

As cable and TV operators are losing subscribers to new competition, including streaming solution companies like Netflix and Amazon Prime, as well as pay-TV providers like HBO and Showtime, operators must look for fresh revenue streams that will improve dismal churn rates and set a course for an improved bottom line throughout the coming years.

Many operators are rightly looking at the IoT as the key to renewed consumer interest. But to capitalize on their advantages, operators must invest in their wireless networks to keep pace with the increase of data usage and transmission from connected devices. They must also learn how to deal with

data and understand data analytics. And they'll need to retrain their installation and support crews.

Establishing New Long-term Relationships

In short, the IoT represents tremendous opportunities for operators. It enables them to retain more current subscribers, attract new subscribers and provide new services. There are also less tangible benefits. By digging into IoT services, operators will increase their customer knowledge, which will lead to ideas for new services. Operators will be known as innovators and leaders, and have an early adopter image, which will also increase consumer love and loyalty and set the stage for longer-term success.

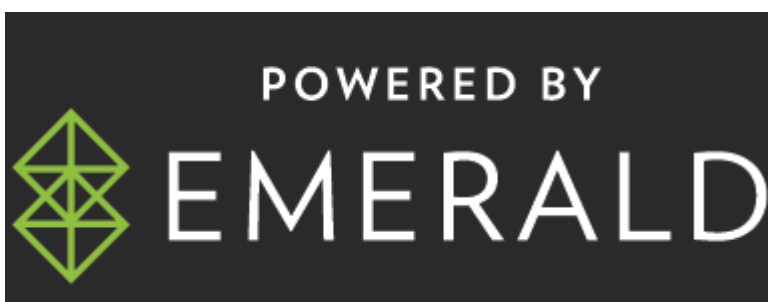
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