CHAPTER 1

Product Overview

About IP/TV

IP/TV is a client/server application that delivers live or prerecorded, on-demand or scheduled programs to an unlimited number of users over any IP-based local or wide-area network.

IP/TV brings movie-quality video to the user's computer, eliminating the need for dedicated video cabling, monitors, or special viewing rooms. IP/TV Version 3.0 supports a wide variety of audio/video formats including MPEG1, MPEG2, MPEG4, and H.261.

IP/TV is used in applications such as broadcast TV to the desktop, video on demand, computer-based training, distance learning, corporate communications, manufacturing process monitoring, and surveillance systems.

To view a seven-minute video that describes IP/TV's capabilities, click **Introduction Video** on the Cisco IP/TV Installer CD.

IP/TV Components

IP/TV consists of three separate components: IP/TV Viewer, IP/TV Content Manager, and IP/TV Server.

IP/TV Viewer

IP/TV Viewer lets you view programs. A program is an audio, video, or text transmission over the network. The Viewer has a customizable user interface that displays a list of scheduled and on-demand programs. IP/TV Viewer allows you to subscribe to any of the listed programs, and plays the program at the scheduled or requested time. You can also browse among all currently running programs.

IP/TV Viewer gets program information from the IP/TV Content Manager, and displays programs served by IP/TV Server or other servers. It can also display programs multicast from the Internet's Multicast Backbone (MBone) or from other servers that transmit in MBone-compatible format.

IP/TV Viewer can run as a standalone application, a helper application activated by a Web browser, or a browser plug-in. It runs on Windows 95, Windows 98, and Windows NT 4.0.

This guide provides information on how to install and use the IP/TV Viewer.

IP/TV Content Manager

IP/TV Content Manager is used by the system administrator or broadcast administrator to set up and manage IP/TV scheduled or on-demand programs, channels, recordings, and file transfers among IP/TV servers.

IP/TV Content Manager runs on Windows NT 4.0, and can be accessed from Netscape 4.05 or 4.5x, or Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.x or 5.0. The browser must have support for Java and JavaScript enabled.

The *IP/TV Content Manager User Guid*e provides information on how to create scheduled and on-demand programs. Refer to the *IP/TV Administration and Configuration Guide* for information on how to install, configure, and administer the IP/TV Content Manager.

IP/TV Server

IP/TV Server, which is controlled by the IP/TV Content Manager, multicasts and records scheduled programs, unicasts on-demand programs, and transfers files according to the schedules defined in the IP/TV Content Manager. IP/TV Server runs on Windows NT 4.0.

The same server can be used for live encoding with a video capture card and for serving prerecorded files.

Refer to the *IP/TV Administration and Configuration Guide* for information on how to install, configure, and administer IP/TV Server.

New Features in IP/TV Release 3.0

IP/TV Release 3.0 introduces the following new features:

- Video enhancements

  Quality for low-end and high-end video for live and prerecorded has been improved. IP/TV extends high-quality video by including MPEG2 at full resolutions (720 x 480). Additionally, IP/TV enhances low-end quality by supporting MPEG4 for low-bitrate streams.

- Management enhancements

  Management of IP/TV video services has been extended to support multiple IP/TV Server groups and IP/TV Viewer sets. IP/TV Server groups allow the user to group servers based upon video content, geographical locations, or any combination there of. IP/TV Viewer sets allow the administrator of an IP/TV system to create Viewer sets to pull content from specific IP/TV Server groups. The enhanced management features allow for flexible video service management schemes.

- Data integration enhancements

  Data Integration has been greatly enhanced for easier delivery of nonvideo and audio data types.Web Presenter provides the ability to send information via web pages along with audio and video.

  IP/TV has incorporated the ability to support Advanced Streaming Format (ASF) content, which support many features such as content markers. Content markers are used to “mark” specific places within a stream for quick location indexing.

- Windows Media Technology (WMT) integration

  IP/TV has integrated WMT with IP/TV to provide the best of both intranet and Internet streaming video.

- Client enhancements

  IP/TV client enhancements include easier to use video controls and enhanced plugin capabilities.