



Success Stories

BitBand powers Video On Demand at Agder Energi

The Customer

Agder Energi is one of Norway's largest power companies and is located in southern Norway operating out of Kristiansand. Agder Energi has over 150,000 customers connected to over 18,000 km of power lines. Agder Energi operates business areas other than energy through subsidiaries. Four of them are involved in broadband network and triple play service provisioning:

iVISJON www.ivisjon.no - provides content and content rights management. iVISJON is also providing the TV portal. iVISJON is 50% owned by Agder Energi.

élla kommunikasjon (élla) www.ella.no - technical integrator and owner of head-end equipment and network. Ella is 96% owned by Agder Energi

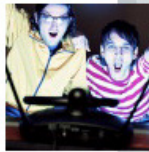
Agder Energi Bredbånd AS www.ae.no (AEBB) - owner of the fiber network, over which broadband services are based. AEBB is fully owned by Agder Energi.

LOS www.los.no - planned to market the solutions provided by élla and iVISJON to the public

Why choose BitBand?

The emerging IPTV/TelcoTV industry is looking for solutions that can provide the proper functionality, scale and cost at any stage of the service implementation phase. BitBand presents this unique combination. Through its Vision servers, BitBand offers various scales of building blocks, which can be best suited for the customer's service characteristics, such as initial number of streams and amount of content, and their growth patterns. Scaling the system by clustering allows seamless and virtually unlimited growth, in a pay-as-you-grow scheme. BitBand Vision servers, implemented as true plug & play appliances, are the simplest to install and operate.

Content distribution and server management by BitBand Maestro renders the system highly scalable through manageability. All these factors were crucial for a new service provider, integrating its own solution.



"To support our goal we needed a unique solution, enabling us to execute the trial, at the same time scalable and open to additional functions.

BitBand has provided us with such a solution: a simple to implement system, yet reliable and stable, with easy growth capability. Together with BitBand we made careful steps forward and added functions like network recording with repetitive recast of local news. We are now adding BitBand's lightweight solution for content protection - SecureStream V2.0. This will allow us to receive and stream prime live channels and VOD content."

August 2003, Product Manager Bjarne Karlsen at Ella.

"Our work together with Agder Energi has been an exciting and educating experience. This brave company undertook to become the first Nordic 'New Generation Service Provider', offering triple-play over FTTH. We began the process having only the integration with Kreatel STB. Together with Agder's dedicated and cooperative team, we underwent the integration with ORCA, launching a first trial. Step by step we added Maestro, Network Video Recording and now we are in the midst of implementing SecureStream."

Arnon Mick, Director of Product Management at BitBand



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The Project

Background:

Many utilities turn to offering services in new areas, to secure future earnings and growth, building on their customer base. The traditional distinction between different business domains, such as supply of energy, providing communication and delivery of entertainment content, is quickly fading. Companies achieve synergy by expanding into new revenue generating services.

Élla kommunikasjon was founded by Agder Energi in 1997, to build a fiber based network for providing broadband services (LAN to LAN and Internet access) for the business sector. In 2000 this was already a well established service, and Agder Energi started seeking new services, which could be provided over this fiber network, employing its largely unused bandwidth. It then decided to provide triple play for the consumer market.

Beginning:

Providing TV channels and TV based services were the key to success and the development effort was mostly aimed at this target. Early in the process, Agder discovered that this was a young industry. Agder Energi decided to form élla as its in-house system integrator. It then chose its vendors - BitBand VOD system, Orca RighTV iTV middleware, Tandberg Television live streamers and Kreatel IP STBs. Shortly before that, this group of vendors formed a coalition dubbed "fast-track", to quickly integrate their offerings into a low-entry then pay-as-you-grow solution.

Realizing that a partner was needed, who could provide content, Agder Energi joined with the local media house Federlandsvennen to establish iVISJON, owned 50% by each. iVISJON was finally launched at October 24th of 2002.

In its field trial, Agder provided 40 live channels (including some radio channels) and selection of 25 VOD titles to 500 subscribers. Other services included games and local content, provided from the local newspaper and the local TV station.

Going forward:

Moving towards full commercial operation, LOS was established in May 2003, as the marketing and customer service arm, today serving approximately 1000 customers, planned to double by the end of the year.

Agder Energi plans to reach 25,000 customers in its region. Expansion to other regions is considered. In order to quicken the process of reaching more homes, a DSL project was also launched. This project is in its pilot phase, reaching full service status this year. The key to this project is to reaching more customers to a lower cost without losing the quality of content as it is provided over fiber.

There has also been a pilot project providing educational VOD content to 35 schools, located in the Kristiansand area. The project was done with the Norwegian governmental movie institute (Norsk Film Institute - www.nfi.no). The project is now closed and the product is owned by "NorgesFilm" (www.norgesfilm.no), who will commercialize this.

