

SET-TOP PLATFORMS:

Transform the TV Experience while Accelerating Time to Market and Reducing Costs



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The television screen continues to be the primary means of home entertainment, a gathering point in the living room. While there are now multiple screens and devices in the home, the living room TV is still the most popular. With a crystal quality picture, more options to customize content and surround sound to go with it, the TV maintains the power to bring family and friends together. That's why delivering an optimal TV experience is an important piece of any Service Provider's brand, with the set-top playing a key role.

The set-top evolution

It goes without saying that even though its name is unchanged, the role of the set-top has significantly expanded in the last decade. Today, set-tops serve as a platform on which TV services can be built, and on which other services like over-the-top (OTT) video can be co-delivered to subscribers. Even with set-top virtualization moving some functions to the cloud, there continues to be a need for an on-premises device in order to help control the customer experience.

As connected media devices with IP and/or Wi-Fi connectivity, set-tops are now expected to deliver high-quality, secure, premium services to the primary screen in the home - and accelerate the delivery of new apps and services. The latest set-top platforms deliver capabilities to optimize the consumer experience with features including:

- Richer user interfaces, with more detail and 3D graphics
- UltraHD content such as 4K, 8K with wide color gamut, higher frame rates and High Dynamic Range
- Improved surround sound audio
- Voice control
- Wi-Fi connectivity for easier installation and flexible location of the set-top
- The ability to stream content to tablets and phones in the home
- Smaller set-tops and Bluetooth LE remote controls for hidden installation

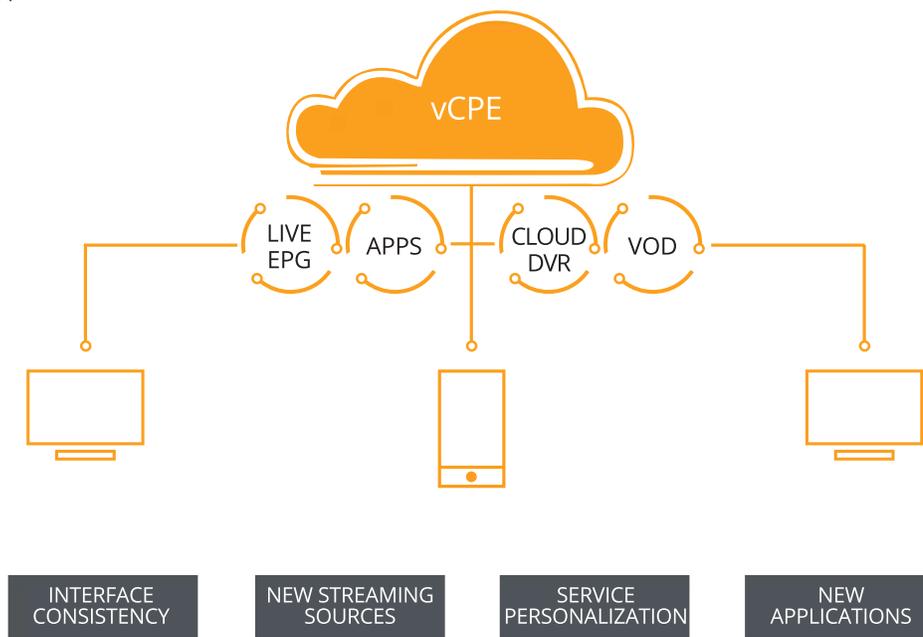
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One of the compelling parts of home entertainment is the 'look and feel' of the menu and the intuitive functionality behind the user interface (UI). The challenge is that the installed base of set-tops does not have the processing power and memory to render the graphics or run an HTML browser. These capabilities are needed to enable the interactive experience and modern appeal that help Service Providers retain customers, attract new prospects and beat out competitors. One option is to continue with the old set-top platform for the installed base and risk losing subscribers. An alternative approach is to replace the existing set-tops to support a new UI, but that carries cost-prohibitive investments and resource-straining logistics requirements. The only viable option is to take a virtualized UI approach.

The set-top software approach

By virtualizing set-top functionality, Service Providers can continue to deliver a consistent user experience on both new and current set-tops without having to do a rip and replace, which has the potential to disrupt service to subscribers and force them to accommodate an on-site appointment. With the virtualization approach, the UI is rendered in the cloud and delivered as an image in a video stream, supporting richer, graphical visuals. This solution can be accomplished by remotely installing software in the form of a small footprint 'nano client' in the set-top that relays the key presses from the remote control back to servers in the data center.



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This solution supports different levels of functionality, including the complete electronic program guide (EPG), cloud-based VOD libraries, OTT service applications, which would not have been otherwise supported by legacy set-tops. Eliminating the need to replace the on-premises equipment or undertake complex integration, the nano client software makes new applications available to both future and existing devices.

With this approach, Service Providers have a wide range of ARRIS or third-party software middleware from which to choose when implementing their new UI.

Our approach to delivering robust set-top platforms

ARRIS leverages long-standing, end-to-end expertise, coupled with a state-of-the-art supply chain, to deliver robust set-top platforms, while reducing costs and accelerating time to market for Service Providers. With more than a decade of experience in the set-top software approach, ARRIS also offers middleware software solutions that support RDK, KreaTV and Android TV™. Next-generation set-tops enable users to enjoy UltraHD content, enhanced surround sound and Wi-Fi connectivity, putting Service Providers in a position to transform the TV experience and deliver the future of entertainment.

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