Vodafone NZ is a hybrid TV project which was undertaken with a view to developing a high definition TV (HD) personal video recorder (PVR) set top box for Vodafone in New Zealand.

The central business case was to provide HD content on a PVR box to a subscriber base that only had access to a simple, standard definition box using a brand new user interface.
The Case

Vodafone have an existing Hybrid Fibre Cable (HFC) network with 80,000 subscribers using an older SD set top box. They wished to compete in the market against a Sky satellite service that offered HD and a PVR feature. This project was to deliver a competing multi-tuner cable set top box with HD and PVR, with an outstanding UX and feature set capable of surpassing the Sky service. The service re-used some existing head-end products but deployed new middleware (from Digisoft), new DRM (from Verimatrix) with a new set top box Edgcore.

The Solution

The middleware solution to compliment the Edgcore hardware was a Java based HAL/OS with a HTML5 UX/UI. The server application (Iris Server) was integrated into the Vodafone legacy provisioning servers. A standard DVB-C cable head-end is in place in Vodafone consisting of 3 transcoders and multiplexers producing a total of 230 cable channels. The solution utilizes a premium multi-tuner HD Set Top Box with internal PVR capability and is managed by the powerful Digisoft Iris Service Delivery Platform which seamlessly integrates into the existing OSS/BSS infrastructure. The server solution manages entitlements, software updates, templating and theming plus monitisation.

The system supports over 230 channels, with fast channel tune times, and a split between the regions so that different service options based on geo-locations are available.
Technological Advancement

The technological advancements we sought to achieve in this project were as follows:

- Deployment of a new set top box with more tuners than in the previous model, setting a new standard in the market
- Support for HD content in a Simulcrypt DRM environment with two Conditional Access (CA) vendors (Irdeto and Verimatrix)
- Skinnable user interface with dynamic banner ad insertion
- Open design to allow extensions to the service to add features such as Video On Demand (VOD), browser, games, social applications and adaptive bit rate streaming
- Option to display banners adverts for monetisation and notification on specific interfaces including the TV Guide or Pay Per View screen

Customer Experience

New features now available to customers over and above a better HD and 500 Gig PVR include the ability to have 3 DVB-C tuners for recording multiple shows simultaneously, and a far better user interface. Customers also have the option of a companion application, a second screen device that allows users to remotely review the EPG then record, delete and manage program listings.

The new Vodafone VOD service launches in October, allowing consumers to have a catalogue of catchup TV, box sets and premium films which they will be able to view on tablet or smart phones.

Learn more about Digisoft.tv’s flexible and modular solutions by contacting us at sales@digisoft.tv, call +353 (0)21 491 7272 or visit www.digisoft.tv