

# iWay Newsletter

## Perspectives on Interactive TV



## Time Warner - Taking Interactivity to Market

*Mike Hayashi, SVP of Advanced Engineering & Subscriber Technology, Time Warner Cable*

Cable industry engineering veteran **Mike Hayashi** has been instrumental in some of cable's best-known interactive television trials and deployments, including Time Warner's Full Service Network in Florida. Now, armed with new industry standards including EBIF and tru2way, the Time Warner Cable SVP of advanced engineering and subscriber technology is readying Time Warner Cable's network for a new era of interactivity on an unprecedented scale.

### How will EBIF play a role in Time Warner Cable's interactive agenda?

One of the big efforts we have internally is advanced advertising, and EBIF is the platform that will allow us to do bound applications. So we can do things like polling and voting, and the latest one we're working on is request for information, when

a customer requests a particular piece of information and we fulfill it. EBIF is the front-end of all that on a set-top box, and obviously there's a lot of back-end work to go with that.

### What else makes it suitable for what you aim to accomplish?

The other component of EBIF that's

### FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of iWay offers insight about cable's advanced advertising progression from Time Warner Cable's Mike Hayashi. In this interview he discusses leveraging capabilities of the Enhanced Binary Interface Exchange (EBIF) platform to support new possibilities in interactive advertising that promise to improve advertising targeting and engage audiences more effectively than ever

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obviously attractive to us is that EBIF can run on both (tru2way) and legacy devices. Our focus initially is on tru2way, but we can eventually hit the other boxes.

### **Where is Time Warner Cable in terms of deploying EBIF applications today?**

EBIF is still very early in our deployment. We've had several successful trials. But we won't get into any kind of scaled reach until Q3 or Q4 of this year.

### **How do you see the interplay between EBIF, which can run on less powerful set-tops, and tru2way or OCAP applications?**

EBIF is an interesting platform because in a way it's a middleware to both legacy and OCAP (boxes.) So some of the features that we developed that may cut across two different types of boxes. A good example of that are things like caller ID, which over time could be a good EBIF application that could run across OCAP as well as legacy boxes.

### **Do you work with third party developers?**

My primary job here is to make the platform work. But if you go to places like OEDN, they're trying to kind of have an outlet that allows developers to participate, and also to evolve the specification.

### **How would you characterize EBIF in terms of stability and software performance?**

It's a binary format, so in a way it's very thin. That's a good thing. When you look at legacy boxes, they range from circa 1996, so I have boxes that are running less than 60 MHz with 4 megabytes of DRAM. Is that a less than satisfying environment? Sure. We're going to be looking at that carefully to make sure we're not sacrificing any sort of stability. But the balance there is

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that if you decrease the number of boxes you support, your footprint goes down.

### **What's the footprint and timing for your deployment of EBIF-enabled applications?**

I don't know the exact numbers, but the first place we're going to be enabling EBIF is on our OCAP platform. Today we have north of 2 million OCAP boxes deployed. And that number is growing; so I would expect over the next seven, eight, nine months, the EBIF deployment number will get bigger.



### **What about the ability to drive scale through standardization?**

A lot of the things I've described have been available in the past from various proprietary systems. The good thing about EBIF is because the industry standardized on it, it allows the developer to be able to market their software across the industry. I think that's pretty powerful.



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