

Digital Convergence and Flexible Communication

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As computing and communications deliver user experiences that adapt and transit many networks and devices during daily life, the historical boundaries that separated print and digital media, personal and business computing, and wired and wireless communications are vanishing. Inexpensive, diverse personal computing devices, embedded intelligence in everyday objects, ubiquitous sensors, massive information stores, new cloud services, and natural user interfaces are all harbingers of a new world of interconnected information and entertainment services and seamless, anywhere, anytime access.

The corollary of this transformative technological change is the critical need for worldwide harmonization of communication and spectrum policies that enable more flexible and adaptive management in the face of rapidly evolving services and usage. These include new formulations of operating rights, new spectrum allocations to meet exploding data capacity needs, provisioning of high quality spectrum in important markets and recognition that historical regulatory boundaries among service types are no longer appropriate. For wireless communications, these include white spaces and cognitive and software defined radios (SDRs). Simply put, we must manage spectrum and broadband access more flexibly and intelligently to enable full access to

emerging and not-yet-anticipated converged services.

This talk will outline Microsoft's research and technology prototyping for next-generation communications, as well as its policy positions on the future of flexible communications in world of digital convergence.

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