

## Communications & High Tech

# The service delivery platform is dead. Long live SDP 2.0!

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The communications, high-tech and media industries are facing a period of unprecedented change as the traditional lines separating their marketplaces blur and disappear in an age of convergence. Over the past half decade, service delivery platforms (SDPs) have emerged as critical, strategic tools for service providers looking to succeed in this business environment by increasing their speed to market for new products and services.

If a service delivery platform is to continue to help service providers meet their needs and serve their customers more effectively in the coming years, such solutions must adapt to the ever-changing technology and consumer environment. Accenture believes that first-generation service delivery platforms have now run their course. Companies that expect to achieve and sustain high performance in the coming years must make the leap to the next generation—to SDP 2.0.

### Today's complex service creation and delivery environment

A service delivery platform is a standardized service creation and execution architecture that accelerates the introduction of new applications and services by creating a dynamic, demand-driven developer community with incentives and tools for rapid innovation. An SDP provides a common set of functions and a common way of viewing the underlying network.

For several reasons, the service-creation and -delivery environment has outpaced the ability of

traditional service delivery platforms to keep up. The growing need to collaborate with other companies to create revenue-generating innovations is one factor. A recent survey conducted by Accenture with the Economist Intelligence Unit showed, for example, that 60 percent of service providers had more than 10 co-design partners per product development project. Such a collaborative environment increases opportunities for innovation, but it also introduces more risk and, potentially, more cost, unless companies take steps to make their development environment more efficient and effective.

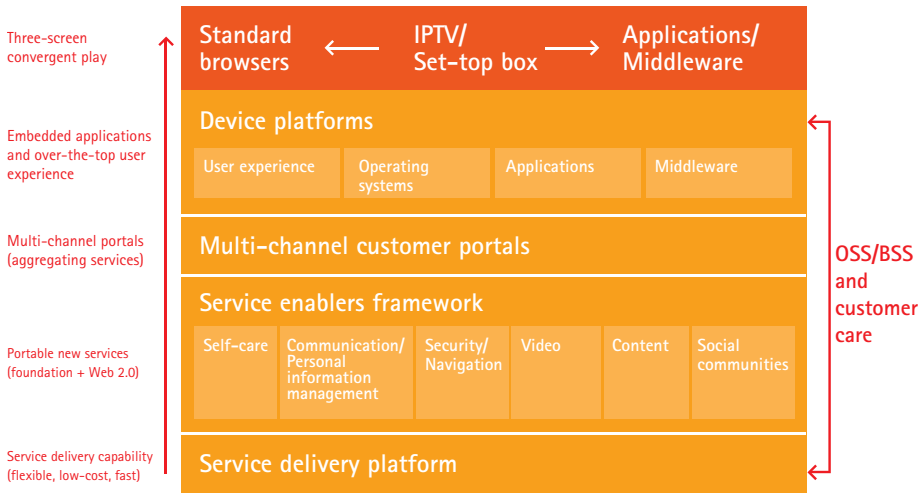
A second factor is the need to create consumer services that build upon a suite of capabilities that have been dubbed "Web 2.0." Today's Internet environment, especially as it intersects with wireless and broadband services, is creating an unprecedented wave of user-generated content and of services that treat the consumer not just as an individual but as part of a larger social fabric of extended family, friends and colleagues.

Developing SDP 2.0 capabilities to account for this complex development environment is a challenge that must be met if providers are to achieve and sustain high performance in the age of convergence.

### The Accenture SDP 2.0 framework

Accenture's SDP 2.0 framework (see figure, next page) supports an effective and cost-efficient environment for creating value-added services across what is now frequently referred to as the "three

## The Accenture SDP 2.0 framework



screens" of the typical consumer—computer, television and mobile device.

### Device platforms

At the top of the framework are the device platforms containing the operating system and the enabling middleware. Equally important are the embedded applications focused on creating a compelling user experience across multiple devices.

### Multi-channel customer portals

Essential to developing differentiated and customer-centric capabilities via SDP 2.0 is the customer portal—multi-channel applications that enable the creation, sharing and distribution of personalized content, as well as access to self-service capabilities.

### Profitable services

SDP 2.0 enables powerful capabilities for consumers: voice, video and other content; social communities; search and navigation; and a variety of self-service customer care activities—not only to hold down costs but to provide the kind of real-time information access that many consumers have come to expect.

### Service delivery platform foundation

SDP 2.0 builds upon all the functions and features that have made service delivery platforms essential tools from the beginning:

- Support for dynamic, flexible creation of end-user services that run over networks.
- Reduced business and financial risks in service development.
- Consistent provision of services to end-users.
- Controls over the execution of those services to make them cost effective.

To those basic services, SDP 2.0 adds vital new capabilities such as on-boarding, unified user information, flexible policy management, service management and control, and an open service-creation environment. It also enables things such as mashups, mobile widgets, application presence, network presence, location-based services and so forth.

The benefits available to providers from SDP 2.0 are significant. One SDP 2.0 implementation implemented by Accenture at Turkcell—a major European mobile communications provider and the leading operator in Turkey—reduced the time required to bring new services to market from several days to one day. Turkcell also increased subscriber usage of its online services. Just one month after the launch, wireless application portal usage rose nearly 3,000 percent.

### Keys to success with SDP 2.0 implementations

Turkcell and other providers who have worked to evolve their service delivery platforms toward 2.0 capabilities have found the following insights to be especially critical.

#### Assess your current capabilities.

Conduct a rapid diagnostic of the existing capabilities of your service delivery platform, looking at architecture and technology, governance framework, organization and processes, and available resources and skills.

#### Clearly define SDP component priorities.

Based on the components of SDP 2.0, map priorities onto a phased delivery scheme by identifying, prioritizing and linking business requirements for new

services to SDP building blocks. This process also avoids the temptation of a big-bang approach to implementation, which is very difficult to manage.

#### Make sure the SDP supports a broad set of services.

In a 2.0 world, the SDP does not implement services by itself; rather, it provides the foundation and the capabilities to create, execute and support services. This vision eliminates the risk of designing an SDP point solution (which would enable just one or a few services) while at the same time enabling a service-creation process that is aware of SDP components—that is, which components are needed to enable which services.

#### Link SDP capabilities to services.

Linking core, access and enabler capabilities to services allows companies to align business priorities with the availability of the required capabilities, while speeding up definition of the SDP target architecture.

### Conclusion

Leading service providers today are focused on growth—which, in turn, demands more effective service innovation and more rapid service creation to cope with a hypercompetitive marketplace. Developing SDP 2.0 capabilities gives providers the opportunity to drive toward high performance by mitigating development and delivery risks, and speeding new services to market—all while lowering costs and helping to increase the impact of limited resources.

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