

Launch of new P2P technology for television

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The new peer-to-peer Tribler system, based on open-source software, was launched on Friday during The Workshop on Technical and Legal Aspects of Peer-to-Peer Television in Amsterdam. The software, developed at the Delft University of Technology (Holland), offers a revolutionary way of distributing TV programmes via the Internet.

Various public broadcasting corporations, commercial TV stations and cable and telecommunications companies are all showing keen interest in the distribution of television programmes via the Internet. While the current method makes use of centrally located computer systems, research is now being conducted at Delft University of Technology (among other institutes) into TV distribution through peer-to-peer systems.

This type of distribution is carried out through large groups of (normal) PCs operated by normal users. This method enables TV programmes to be broadcast at almost no cost and opens the way to new TV stations operating through the Internet. Moreover, this method guarantees a much more direct linking of the programme makers with the viewers. "If the public broadcasting corporations were to make use of peer-to-peer technology, then the high costs of data distribution, such as was recently the case during the Olympic Games, would be a thing of the past", says Johan Pouwelse, a researcher involved in the development of the Tribler software.

When using this method of transmission it is crucial that the rights to the visual material be carefully handled and protected. The use of Creative

Commons licences presents one possible solution to a number of legal sticking points. In the workshop the current state of this promising technology will be discussed by researchers, domestic and foreign TV producers and experts in the field of licensing.

Source: Delft University of Technology

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