

Google sees Android enhancing home appliances

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Google's Android software is best known for powering smartphones, but executive chairman Eric Schmidt sees a future where it could also help devices communicate at home.

Schmidt outlined his vision for [Android](#), which Google provides to hardware manufacturers for free, on a panel hosted by online technology news site CNET at the International [Consumer Electronics Show](#) (CES), which opened on Tuesday.

Besides smartphones, Android is also used in [tablet computers](#) and [television sets](#), but Schmidt said it could potentially do much more -- and already is.

"Indeed, there are companies that are putting Android in refrigerators," Schmidt said. "Refrigerators do need some automation."

"What you really want to be able to do is, as you walk into your house with your Android device, all the things that have computers in it sort of adjust as necessary," he said.

"When you go into the family room the television knows it's you because your device authenticates you as opposed to other family members," he said. "A text message comes to you."

"It all syncs together," Schmidt said.

That television in the family room could very well be running Google TV, which Schmidt said is doing "very well."

Sony, LG and Samsung are among the companies integrating Google TV, which allows a television viewer to access the Internet, and Schmidt said there are a "whole bunch of additional partners coming."

"It's the only offering I know of that fully integrates

the television experience and the browsing experience," he said.

Schmidt also said there are currently 700,000 activations a day of Android devices, and that 200 million Android phones were sold last year.

"These numbers are growing very quickly," he said. "Android, in my view, is on a billion unit plan."

Schmidt was also asked about [Google](#) rivals Microsoft and Apple.

Apple, where Schmidt has served on the board of directors, has "done very well," he said.

Microsoft, however, is "trapped in an architectural transition problem that they may not get through," he said, without elaborating.

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