



Time Shift television service is here via IPTV

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icontrol, the IPTV (internet protocol television) service owned by Aksh Optifibre, has made the time shift feature available to its subscribers. icontrol is the exclusive partner for the IPTV services of MTNL and BSNL.

Through Time Shift, subscribers can access recorded programmes and live events without having to go through the hassle of having to time the recording themselves.

Namrata Sengupta, deputy general manager, Aksh Optifibre, explains how Time Shift differs from PVR (personal video recorder) and DVR (digital video recorder) services available today. “A PVR requires you to record and download a programme, where the effort has to be done by the subscriber. On the Time Shift service, the subscriber can see recent programmes through a menu.”



The key difference in Time Shift is that the subscriber does not have to clear space in his set top box as the content is recorded and stored on the IPTV server. Thus, this allows a viewer to 'rewind' or watch a recording of live TV. Apart from this, adds Sengupta, subscribers can access programmes on some channels for the last three days.

The Time Shift feature is available on the existing icontrol set top boxes (STBs) connected to the television on all free-to-air (FTA) channels and a few pay channels such as Sony, Discovery and SAB TV.

There is no additional cost for this feature, says Sengupta, but a premium may be considered for certain pay channels. The subscription cost of more than 120 channels on icontrol is Rs 199 per month.

Through MTNL and BSNL, icontrol is available in 20 cities and it is being promoted by the company through road shows and demos in residential societies.

When asked about the advantage IPTV has over DTH and digital cable, Sengupta says, “Unlike the other platforms, IPTV allows for two way interactivity. For instance, on DTH, you have to send an SMS to place an order on VOD, but on IPTV, you can do it through the STB itself.” She adds that IPTV does not get affected by bad weather and has a better quality of MPEG 4-10.

icontrol also has a messaging service through which two subscribers can communicate with each other. It is also running trials of a video calling service. icontrol has about 20,000 subscribers now.

Apart from icontrol, Airtel IPTV also provides the Time Shift feature in India.