

Connected TV Means New Players

Written by Bob Snyder
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In our sister publication for consumer electronics, [On CE](#), I predicted last year that 3D TV would be less significant than Connected TV. This year's CES certainly had enough of both. Yet, in 2011, it seems clearer than Connected TV will be the bigger play. And apps will be the driving force...



That reminded me of a conversation I had at Berlin IFA. The earliest adopter in Europe of Android TV is an interesting company in Sweden called [People of Lava](#). I spoke to Christian Svantesson, owner and Johan Lantz, Business Developer about the challenges of launching Connected TV.

People of Lava make Scandinavian-designed HD LED TV with an Android engine. Like the big TV makers, Samsung or Sony, this Swedish company discovered it had to be in the app business to be in the Connected TV business. They were so early on the Connected TV curve, **People of Lava** felt compelled to create a few apps just to be to explain and sell their TVs.

"Our intention is not to be app developers, rather aggregators, supporters and advocates of TV apps," says Johan Lantz. "... the amount of apps we will develop ourselves will be limited. We are first and foremost TV manufacturers. Consequently, we will focus our in-house development on apps with a high degree of uniqueness, which of course can be charged for. We might also to a certain extent focus app development on 'holes' in the market place, thus acting pathfinders for other developers."

I believe as Connected TV rolls out (of course, not without the traditional problem of lack of cooperation with Hollywood, cable TV companies etc) that Android will inspire more new brands to enter the TV market. Yes, Google TV got off to a bad start as many companies seek to discourage Google as a disruptor in their industry.

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I can hear your scepticism bouncing off the screen you are reading this on: *"How can anyone expect to crack the entry into the TV business?"*
you ask. Fair enough question...

If you had asked that in mobile phones, you might have bet against HTC. If you had asked that, you may have been against a new portable PC form factor like iPad.

In TV, we can actually point to a few examples. In USA, the brand [Vizio](#) has now ranked No. 1 in more than several quarters of TV sales— and ranks consistently among the top brands like Sony, Samsung and Sharp.

In Belgium, the young brand [Q-Media](#) has last year cracked the GfK list of best-selling TVs.

All across Europe, new companies are gearing up with Android TV. Last year Netherland's [MediaLine](#) won the Best Product Award at *RetailVision Europe*.

[Logitech](#) will be back with [Google TV](#). And rumours still think Apple will make its move in TV.

App developers who look to Connected TV to bring growth similar to mobile apps, should be aware of this wave of new niche and challenger brands of TV. These TV makers will be better partners than big brands and your apps may be featured instead of buried in a pack. Like People of Lava, like Samsung and other big brands, every Connected TV maker will find a need to either aggregate or cooperate with an app aggregator to properly enter the market in Europe.

It's not your father's TV set any more. And it probably won't be the brands your father appreciated. The disruption is just beginning...