

EE Times: Conference: CES

IEEE conference follows CES into future

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MANHASSET, N.Y. — While the 2008 International CES delivered an explosion of cutting [edge](#) technologies, the [IEEE](#) Conference on Consumer Electronics also held this week in Las Vegas probed university and industry research.

Fran O'Sullivan, senior vice president of Lenovo's, Product Group, told the conference on Friday (Jan. 11) that "with the rise of consumer economies, as well as increasingly educated and skilled workforces in emerging markets such as Brazil, Russia, China and India...the Internet and digital technologies are fueling this journey toward globalization."

According to O'Sullivan, the narrow view of emerging markets as locations that offer only low-cost manufacturing and raw materials is a myth. "This view is being replaced by the powerful realization that consumers, talent and knowledge are everywhere, and that businesses must place resources wherever they are best available to create the most benefit for customers," said O'Sullivan.

She said Lenovo refers to this approach as "worldsourcing" and organizes its operations by distributing them across multiple research centers in the U.S., Japan and China, global manufacturing operations on four continents and a global marketing [hub](#) in India.

Another myth is the notion of "thesis-driven" innovation--that researchers can predict the future, work toward that vision and create a solution themselves. "As many examples demonstrate, predicting the future with high accuracy is difficult, if not impossible, particularly in the technology sector," said O'Sullivan.

Lenovo's worldsourcing approach enables it to capitalize on global business opportunities, such as consumer PCs and country-specific market niches--such as providing Internet [communications](#) devices to Chinese farmers.

Global enterprises cannot assume that people share a common understanding of problems, objectives and technical terms. "Organizations need to create an environment where everyone is comfortable sharing ideas and feedback and they must fully embrace the latest information technologies, such as videoconferencing," said O'Sullivan.

Four technical papers to be presented at the IEEE conference this weekend could ostensibly implement some form of the worldsourcing strategy.

- Researchers at Brigham Young University will report on an interdisciplinary research project at BYU to create a digital [storage](#) medium that will last approximately 1,000 years.
- Researcher Dietmar Hepper from Thomson claims that future mobile and [multimedia](#) applications demand higher storage density. While holographic recording is far in the future in the consumer domain, a European initiative called MobileDRIVE and 4GOOD (4th-Generation Omni-purpose Optical Disc-system) are being developed for high-density optical data storage totaling at least 200 GBytes on a 12-cm disk.
- Researchers at Mitsubishi Electric Corp. contend that maintaining reliable metadata in media servers is very complex. They have analyzed existing metadata frameworks, including Universal [Plug and Play](#) (UPnP) and the Digital Living Network Alliance. They concluded that content directories are populated with unreliable metadata. They propose alternative methods based on implicit [metadata](#) and user-generated tagging that could improve the availability of reliable metadata.
- Researchers at the Federal University of Campina Grande in Brazil are working on the BRisa UPnP A/V framework that allows users to discover multimedia devices, share and render multimedia content over

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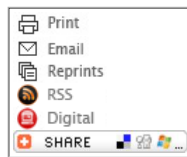
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local networks or over the Internet. Brisa used UPnP specifications and includes a media server, a media renderer and a control point. The approach can be applied to resource-limited devices like the N800 Nokia Internet Tablet.

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