Microsoft To Add Smooth Streaming in IIS7

By Herb Torrens (https://virtualizationreview.com/Forms/EmailToAuthor.aspx?AuthorItem={6A3F31DD-58D8-4323-B964-9B8A57B7DBCF}&ArticleItem={79C7C49B-6A78-4A69-BD99-7FA8FC7443DC})
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Web sites will be able to get improved bandwidth management for streaming media using a new extension to the Microsoft Internet Information Services 7.0 (IIS7) Web server. The extension, announced last week, is called "IIS Smooth Streaming."

The technology for Smooth Streaming is derived from Microsoft's Silverlight multimedia platform, according to Scott Guthrie, Microsoft's corporate vice president of the .NET Developer Division.

Smooth Streaming will be available in beta release early next year, the **Swiss MSDN Team Blog (http://blogs.msdn.com/swiss_dpe_team/archive/2008/11/03/internet-information-services-iis-7-0-smooth-streaming.aspx)** explained on Monday. IIS Smooth Streaming will be a free extension to IIS7.

Microsoft Expression Encoder 2 SP1 also will support IIS Smooth Streaming with encoding and publishing functionalities, Microsoft announced last week.

The new "intelligent streaming media feature" will dynamically adjust the video quality of a media file playing on Microsoft Silverlight in real time, based on bandwidth and CPU throughput.

Users with high-bandwidth connectivity will be able to receive high-definition playback when Smooth Streaming is enabled. Those with lower bandwidth connections will benefit from a delegated streaming speed. Both will "enjoy a consistent, high-quality streaming experience," according to the blog post.

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Services using the IIS Smooth Streaming extension will be offered in a beta trial early next year by Akamai Technologies Inc. The Cambridge, Mass.-based company provides multimedia support for social networking portals, professional sports organizations and other companies. Akamai's servers support "20 percent" of all Web media, according to company literature.

In a joint press release issued last week, Microsoft and Akamai said that the new adaptive streaming technology was "developed, tested and proven" while delivering streaming Web videos from the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The broadcasts used Microsoft's free Silverlight client.

Smooth Streaming uses standard HTTP requests and responses to optimize rich media delivery to Silverlight, according to **a blog (http://blogs.iis.net/jboch/archive/2008/10/28/i-ve-seen-the-future-and-the-future-is-smooth.aspx)** post by Microsoft's John Bocharov.

"Unlike competing streaming solutions, delivering Smooth Streaming to clients does not require investing in deploying, configuring, and managing a swarm of proprietary distribution servers," Bocharov stated in the blog. "IIS Smooth Streaming was created with scalability and HTTP cacheability as first-class design goals, to help our customers minimize the cost per megabyte delivered."

About the Author

Herb Torrens is an award-winning freelance writer based in Southern California. He managed the MCSP program for a leading computer telephony integrator for more than five years and has worked with numerous solution providers including HP/Compaq, Nortel, and Microsoft in all forms of media.

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