

Hong Kong Telecom said recently it could spend up to \$10 billion over 10 years on its interactive television service. A soft launch is scheduled for July, while the full scale launch is scheduled for October. Hong Kong Telecom said it has already invested \$200 million in the venture. The service would offer video-on-demand, home shopping and home banking and allow customers to use normal phone lines to send and receive information to the TV screens. The Strategis Group study says, "Internet subscriptions revenue in Asia/Pacific region is forecast to grow from \$2.9 billion in 1996 to nearly \$14 billion by 2001". **Source: Interactive Video News, Vol.5 Issue 6**

Archive material 1997 - historical interest.

Bank of Yokohama will start tests of an online banking service over a cable TV network linked to a bank in a virtual shopping mall in July. The tests, the first of their kind to use cable TV, will include settlement of transactions in the mall, payment of public utility bills and money transfers. Each volunteer will open an account at the virtual bank and receive an IC chip card that functions as a cash card and credit card. **Source: Nihon Keizai Shimbun Inc**

NTT and IBM have agreed to co-operate in network computing in Japan. Source: Financial Times Singapore: A trial starts on cable infrastructure, including banking. **Source: Reuters News Service**

WebTV hots up. It is to offer online banking in Japan '97. **Source: Japan US Business Report**

Hong Kong Telecom beefs up its order for set-top boxes to 250,000. **Source: South China Morning Post**

Hong Kong Telecom orders \$270m Digital Multimedia Cable Service including banking. **Source: Computergram 4.6**

Other distribution channels

New Zealand: New Zealanders use Eftpos and ATMs more than any other country. **Source: The Christchurch Press**

California Microwave has won a \$500,000 contract from Mitsubishi to provide and commission an Earth station outside Tokyo that will be used for Internet access. **Source: Internet Week**

PointCast Inc., the push technology broadcaster, is joining China Internet Corp of Hong Kong to form PointCast Asia. **Source: Internet Week**

America Online Inc is joining Mitsui and Nikkei to launch an Internet online service in Japan. **Source: Internet Week**

Prodigy Services Company upped its investment in its Africa Online subsidiary by \$12.5 million, and will expand to Tanzania and Uganda next month. It plans to begin operations in Egypt and South Africa by the end of the year. **Source: Internet Week**

AOL plans aggressive move into Japan. **Source: Reuters News Service**

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