



## Joint venture seeks to exploit Internet-based video advance

BY MIKE W. THOMAS

Local tech firms BroadRamp Inc. and Frontline Systems Inc. have formed a joint venture to provide online learning programs to public-sector clients. The venture seeks to capitalize on BroadRamp's new multimedia content-delivery technology.

Once the government gets a taste of this new technology, both BroadRamp and Frontline officials expect to see it take off.

BroadRamp's Content Delivery Server, or CDS, platform is a new technology that enables the immediate delivery of high-quality audio and video by converting existing content into online interactive multimedia. The content can be delivered to anyone with a standard Web browser and a broadband Internet connection and eliminates the need for downloading and installing software such as RealAudio or WindowsMedia at the receiving end of the broadcast.

Sean Darwish, founder and chief technical officer of BroadRamp, says the new CDS platform has particular appeal to security-sensitive government agencies that are concerned with the security flaws inherent in media player architectures, as well as the intrusion or redistribution of potentially infected media files.

"BroadRamp CDS has already demonstrated its tremendous delivery capabilities, and Frontline Systems brings us a significant step closer to our vision of realizing video delivery online," Darwish says.

### A parallel course

Frontline Systems provides advanced technologies, information systems, program management, and support and logistics services to government and commercial customers. Some of Frontline's clients include the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence and the Air Force Institute for Occupational Health — both at Brooks City-Base.



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**Tony Cannon, CEO, Bob Sanchez, chief operating officer, and Sean Darwish, chief technology officer of NoWaitMedia.com, a new joint venture between local tech firms BroadRamp Inc. and Frontline Systems Inc.**

Bob Sanchez, chairman and chief operating officer of Frontline, says the two companies have been pursuing a parallel course recently with each having a separate piece of the puzzle.

"Their technology fit with what we are trying to do, and we are both going in the same direction," he says. "We decided it would be a real good fit if we were to join forces."

The companies' new venture will be called NoWaitMedia.com. It is a 50-50 joint venture with each company agreeing to provide services of equal value and revenues to be shared equally as well.

Sanchez will not say how much each company is investing in the joint venture, other than to say that it is a significant figure.

"The range could zoom much higher depending on the response (to the product)," he says. "But it will be significant based on the prospects and the people we

are talking to now. No one else has this, so it is a matter of what it is worth to them. It is better than anything out there."

Frontline has been producing e-learning modules for the Air Force, which could be delivered quickly and securely using BroadRamp's delivery system, Sanchez says. Also, the clarity of the video content, which was a major problem in the past, is not a problem with the new system.

"In the medical area, for example, you could transmit X-ray images that are clear and distinct," he adds.

Tony Cannon, president and CEO of Frontline, says there are many things his company will be able to do now that couldn't be done before because of the constraints of the old technology.

"Our goal is to grow through innovative partners like BroadRamp," Cannon says. "We work hard to always stay on the cutting edge. Everything that BroadRamp

# JOINT VENTURE: BroadRamp, Frontline teaming up to capitalize on new technology

does is revolutionary, and we love that.”

Cannon notes that the BroadRamp technology can deliver any content over the Web, not just video, while maintaining a level of security that other technologies cannot match.

“This really opens up a whole new world for us,” he says.

## Internet DVD

Darwish compares the delivery system to an Internet DVD that gives the end user the power to see and hear multimedia content with all of the same immediacy and controls one would have using a DVD player.

The content is available instantly, with no download time required. It can be fast-forwarded, rewind and even searched for specific items. It can be displayed on whatever system the user has, from a small laptop to a widescreen monitor with surround sound.

At the same time, the content will be specially encrypted so that it cannot be copied without the permission of the company providing the service.

“There is big pressure from all media for e-learning systems today,” Darwish says. “It is a huge driving factor in our industry and we have found this joint venture to be very timely and robust.”

The two companies are sharing the burden and the benefits from the joint-venture equally, Darwish says. Also, while they are not currently looking for other partners, that door is not closed.

“This is going to be a long-term project,” he says. “These government contracts (we are pursuing) will be multi-year contracts with need for updates and support. It is a huge market right now with more business than we can handle in 10 years.”

## New avenues

During a recent trade show for military contractors, Sanchez says he talked with

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### Bob Sanchez,

Chairman and chief operating officer  
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Navy officials who were interested in the technology because of its low use of bandwidth.

To deliver the content using BroadRamp’s technology requires only 100 kilobytes of bandwidth. This is significant when trying to transmit large content files to ships out at sea.

Right now the Navy is limited in the number of video feeds it can receive on a ship due to bandwidth constrictions, he says. But with BroadRamp’s technology that would be much less of a concern.

Another idea that was raised by some Army officials was the possibility of developing online manuals for complex equipment that could then be accessed by a field technician using a wireless laptop.

“Using our system, they could call up the specific chapter they need at any time and watch a video with narration to show how to do something,” Sanchez says.

Darwish says BroadRamp has been working closely with the San Antonio Technology Accelerator Initiative, or SATAI, to develop plan and manage the launch of its product into the market. SATAI is a technology advocacy and support organization that is partially funded by grants from the City of San Antonio.

Anne Thompson, director of enterprise

services for SATAI, says she has been working with BroadRamp and believes they have the potential to go a long way.

“We have been helping BroadRamp with hiring a management team and filling out their marketing models,” she says. “They will also start to look at funding in the near term, approaching angel investors first and then looking at venture capital.”

The company has been entirely self-financed to this point.

Darwish says regardless of what happens in the near future, the two companies intend to grow their business alliance here in San Antonio.

“Frontline and BroadRamp both want to grow our companies in San Antonio because San Antonio understands technology,” adds Sanchez. “Our city is rapidly becoming a technology hub through the efforts of the SATAI Network.”

To accommodate their growth, Frontline, which employs 85 people, has relocated its main offices to the Mercantile Building at 40 N.E. Loop 410, Suite 400, where they now have 20,000 square feet of office space. BroadRamp, which employs 15 people, is currently finalizing its search for a much larger facility. Sanchez says that by the end of the year he expects the two companies will double in size to more than 200 employees.

### ■ NoWaitMedia.com

**What:** A joint venture formed to market a new online multimedia delivery technology to the government and military

**Who:** BroadRamp Inc. and Frontline Systems Inc. are partners in the joint venture

**Principals:** Tony Cannon, president and CEO of Frontline Systems; Gregory Nakagawa, president and CEO of BroadRamp; Sean Darwish, chief technology officer of BroadRamp; Bob Sanchez, chairman and chief operating officer of Frontline Systems

**Technology:** Delivers all forms of online content instantly to anyone with a broadband connection without the need for a third-party media player

**Web site:** [www.nowait-media.com](http://www.nowait-media.com)