The Media Grid is a public utility for digital media. Based on new and emerging technologies, the Media Grid builds upon existing Internet and Web standards to create an open network optimized for digital media delivery, storage, and processing. Applications enabled by the Media Grid include: on-demand digital cinema and interactive movies; film and movie rendering; truly immersive multiplayer games and virtual reality; real-time visualization of complex data (weather, medical, engineering, and so forth); telepresence and telemedicine (remote surgery, medical imaging, drug design, etc.); vehicle and aircraft design and simulation; and similar high-performance applications that produce or consume digital media.

Media Grid Service Providers

The Media Grid does not replace or circumvent existing grids, clusters, or rendering farms—it provides uniform and simplified access over the public Internet to a wide range of such systems which, in turn, provide services to the Media Grid for a fee. Like the World Wide Web before it, which shields users and developers from the complexity of the Internet, the Media Grid provides a unified view to otherwise complex systems. In the same way that the Web simplifies Internet development and provides a standard browser interface for text-oriented information and basic digital media content, the Media Grid makes it easy for developers to access computational resources provided by utility computing vendors such as Sun Microsystems, Oracle, IBM, and Hewlett-Packard (HP) over the public Internet. By making digital media content and processing power available through standardized and unified Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), Uniform Resource Locators (URLs), Grid services, and Web services the Media Grid provides an open public utility that benefits developers and service providers alike.
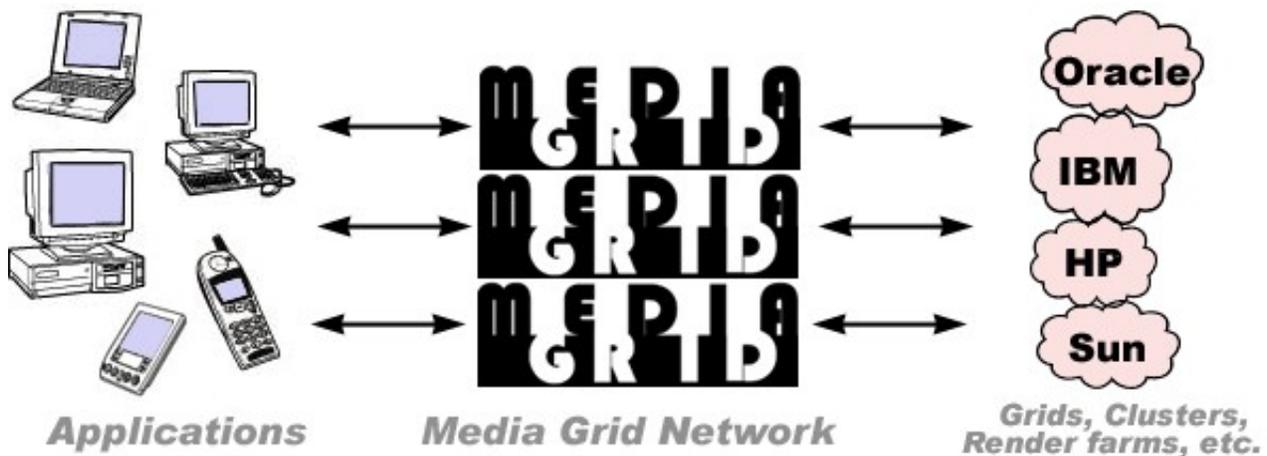
Benefit to Users

- **Standardized Pricing:** Transparent, unified pricing model ensures that users pay a low and standardized price for storage, delivery and processing services regardless of which vendors actually provide such services.

- **No Vendor Lock-in:** Open and unified APIs based on a flexible Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) provide access to a variety of service providers without involving proprietary code. Media Grid applications are vendor neutral: storage, delivery, and processing services are provided by a diverse suite of service providers that users don't need to know, or even care, about.

- **Simplified Access:** Simplified APIs and service call mechanisms provide user applications with access to otherwise complex or proprietary storage, delivery, and utility computing infrastructures.