



## **Toward A Global Standard**

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Current forecast for home entertainment networking suggests continuation of multiple parallel technologies, standards and mediums, with choices based on ease of use and applications. “Let the marketplace decide,” is the rallying war cry on this competitive path toward hypothetical industry standardization. We recommend a different, more agreeable course founded upon shared interests and mutual benefit for providers, manufacturers and consumers alike.

Too many technologies are purporting to be standards, especially for home entertainment networking. Consumers want home entertainment networking solutions, not another standard. They want whole-home connectivity that includes gaming, HD video, telephone service, internet and data access. They want to purchase, with confidence, a system that is easy to install and inexpensive. They could care less about technologies or standards.

### **Consider the current state of the home networking standards ‘industry’**

- There are currently standards for every wired medium found in the home; powerline, phone line and coax. Each of these standards has formed corresponding alliances promoting their medium and technology. Some standards even specify more than one medium.
- Likewise, there are numerous standards in the wireless realm. There are standards for the LAN, the PAN and display link. Some standards are whole house while others are intended for the first (or last) 30 feet. Some are primarily cable replacements.
- Some standards only work in certain broadband industry segments and are barred from others due to technology and interference issues.
- There are standards for whole home entertainment networking and there are standards for short range, high definition video transfer. Some standards appear more suited for implementation in service provider channels and some can only be found on a retail shelf.
- There are several standard bodies attempting to unite the various standard bodies.

Is it any wonder the end consumer is confused? We, as an industry, offer too many standards and not enough solutions. It is solutions that are of interest to consumers and it is at that level that we should be competing. Competition does not need to create confusion to thrive, but confusion is evidence of competing ideas. Too many standards foster misunderstanding and redundancy. They can serve to bind customers to their point of entry generating discontent. If we are not careful, consumers will wash their hands of the whole affair.

A standard is more than a specification. Technical merits are cornerstone of the evaluation process, as are organizational effectiveness and economic benefits. Market size, immediate and downstream economic value and management by industry leaders should also be considered when evaluating and adopting standards.

### **The solution must include real-time HD video distribution within homes**

To say that the home entertainment network is and will be a blend of technologies, standards and mediums has become cliché. This thinking does not take into account the problem of moving high definition video from room to room or screen to screen in real time. In addition to considerations such as overall performance, quality of service, operating frequency and availability, economic benefits, ability to function in multiple industry segments and environments, we must not lose sight of the fact that the solution must ensure real-time HD video distribution within homes.

### **Coax – the key to the home entertainment networking standard**

We believe that no one standard will dominate the home entertainment networking marketplace. However, the ones that stick around will not interfere with other mediums, technologies or devices in use. They must appeal to multiple geographies and industry segments. These standards will also provide value throughout the entire chain. The dominant home entertainment networking standards will also utilize the ideal medium designed for video in the first place--coax.

There are too many standard and not enough solutions. While service providers try them all, endless trials further delay deployments and the consumer grows ever more confused.

A standard provides a framework within which innovation thrives. When an industry accepts a standard it is an indication of maturity and confidence. It is beneficial to the industry and their customers to begin the finalizing those home entertainment networking standards.