

People are talking

If you're like most people living in the "digital home," you have a plethora of those bulky, brick-like power adapters — wall warts as they're commonly known — connected to a wall and one of perhaps a dozen or more electronic devices, each with its own unique DC power requirement. Whether to power a laptop, cell phone, computer and peripherals, games or power tools, one size does not fit all and chances are each time you replace an electronic device, you throw away the old adapter.

One company that received some early attention at this year's Consumer Electronics Show (CES) hopes to break the cycle, so to speak, of each consumer accumulating and then discarding so many power adapters. Green Plug of San Ramon, California has developed a secure, digital protocol for real-time collaboration between devices that need power and their power sources, called GreenTalk. The company is implementing a power adapter hub that simultaneously powers multiple devices, each with its own energy demand. And thanks to its Universal Power Protocol chip and uniform cables and connectors, the company is daring to envision life without the clutter of a drawerful of brick adapters or the tangle of cords associated with them.

Whether the protocol proves successful or if the industry is willing to take the leap to a single universal power supply remains to be seen. But GreenPlug's web site asserts "when devices collaborate with power supplies, an unprecedented amount of monitoring, control and optimization becomes possible."

Speaking of collaboration, ECN is unveiling a new editorial section called "Design Talk." As integration continues to become a major consideration for more and more designs, communication among the players in each step of the process is increasingly important. The goal of the Design Talk pages is to examine design issues and get everyone involved in producing desirable results. These topics will be addressed from different perspectives: from a design aspect, with an article contributed by a peer offering design tips and techniques; software articles that look at the topic from a developer's point of view; or the human element with real-world, applications-based articles. Through collaboration among authors and readers from many engineering backgrounds, integration and optimization are emphasized and encouraged. Altogether, Design Talk will be a results-based engineering community that embraces the entire design process. Design Talk begins in this issue, page 35 with feature articles on device miniaturization.

And since Design Talk is truly about collaboration, we encourage you to become actively involved. Feel free to send us your opinion and input on anything you see in Design Talk, or wish to see in this interactive print and online section. Disagree with something? Send us your counterpoint, too! We'll even send an ECN t-shirt your way if we use your comments in the magazine. Or, simply respond to our monthly survey question at www.ecnmag.com [1]. In addition, look for a special, dedicated

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Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

Design Talk web site coming soon where you'll find real-time ways to join the discussions.

Talk to ya!

Source URL (retrieved on 11/20/2014 - 4:00pm):

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Links:

[1] <http://www.ecnmag.com/>