ZigBee and Homeplug Alliances to Explore Smart Energy Market

Editor's Note: We definitely need to create industry-wide standards to enable and encourage market development.

San Ramon, Calif. & Portland, Ore. – The ZigBee and HomePlug Powerline Alliances today announced public availability of the next generation market requirements for Smart Energy, and supporting use cases. Smart Energy enables both wired and wireless communication between utility companies and everyday household devices such as smart thermostats and appliances. Captured in the market requirements document are details for the next generation of functionality envisioned for the Smart Grid with accompanying consumer control. It includes insight to a variety of use cases including plug-in electric vehicle (PEV) charging, installation, configuration, firmware download for home area network (HAN) devices, prepay services, user information and messaging, load control, demand response, and common information and application profile interfaces for wired and wireless HANs.

The Smart Energy market requirements document is available for review at http://www.zigbee.org/smartenergy [1]. It was jointly developed by ZigBee Alliance members, HomePlug Powerline Alliance members, utilities, regulators, suppliers

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and technology providers as a foundation for an enhanced ZigBee Smart Energy profile and as the basis for global standards development by other organizations. On May 18, the ZigBee/HomePlug Smart Energy profile was selected by the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) as an initial interoperable standard for HAN devices and communications and information model.

The development of the Smart Energy profile drew upon the collective experience of members involved in the current development and deployment of the existing wireless ZigBee Smart Energy standard. Certified products and services based on this standard are available for use today from a variety of ZigBee members. The standard is supported by a comprehensive certification process that delivers secure, robust, reliable, plug and play interoperability with advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and Smart Grid applications.

Chartwell's recent "Smart Metering Technology" report found that "…40 percent of electric utilities prefer ZigBee compared to other in-premise standards." No other technology standard garnered such a large share of preference. To date, ZigBee Smart Energy has been selected by leading utilities to reach approximately 40 million homes and businesses across North America in the next few years as part of ongoing Smart Grid and Advanced Metering Infrastructure deployments. ZigBee Smart Energy has also been selected as the HAN technology standard by utilities and regulatory agencies in the European Union, Australia and Asia.

The HomePlug Powerline Alliance is the leading industry group in the development of multi-vendor, global

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standards and certification for powerline communications. With more than 70 percent of the cumulative worldwide market share (per recent reporting from In-Stat), HomePlug technology is rapidly becoming a key element of the Smart Energy HAN and is already being integrated into AMI applications by utilities and meter manufacturers in the U.S. and Europe.

"We are sharing these new requirements as part of ZigBee's outreach to assist the many Smart Grid standardization efforts underway around the world," said Bob Heile, chairman of the ZigBee Alliance. "As a global and open standards group, the ZigBee Alliance fully understands the benefits of cooperating and lending our expertise to multitude of governmental and standards groups involved in the development of Smart Grids. We hope this early visibility will help those efforts."

"The Smart Energy market requirements document reflects the consensus of many utility companies to maximize both the consumer benefits and ROI of the HAN and Smart Grid," said Rob Ranck, HomePlug Alliance president. "This is another benchmark in our key objective to collaborate with other organizations to make the Smart Grid a reality."

ZigBee Smart Energy – The Standard for Energy Management and Efficiency

ZigBee Smart Energy enables wireless communication between utility companies and common household devices such as smart thermostats and appliances. It improves energy efficiency by allowing consumers to choose interoperable products from different manufacturers giving them the means to manage their energy consumption more precisely using automation and near real-time information. It also helps utility

companies implement new advanced metering and demand response programs to drive greater energy management and efficiency, while responding to changing government requirements.

The ZigBee Alliance is a non-profit association of more than 300 member companies driving development of ZigBee wireless technology. The Alliance promotes world-wide adoption of ZigBee as the leading wirelessly networked, sensing and control standard for use in energy, home, commercial and industrial areas. For more information, visit: www.ZigBee.org [2].

About the HomePlug Powerline Alliance
Founded in 2000, the HomePlug Powerline Alliance, Inc. is an industry-led initiative with more than 70 member companies that creates specifications and certification logo programs for using the powerlines for reliable home networking and smart grid applications. The Alliance accelerates worldwide adoption for HomePlug technology by collaborating with international standards organizations such as IEEE and through market development and user education programs.

Sponsor members include Cisco (CSCO); Comcast (CMCSK); GE Energy, an affiliate of General Electric Co. (NYSE: GE); Gigle Semiconductor; Intellon Corporation (ITLN); Intel Corporation (INTC); Motorola (MOT); NEC Electronics Corporation (TSE: 6723); and SPiDCOM Technologies. Contributor members include Arkados (OTCBB: AKDS); Corporate Systems Engineering; Renesas Technology Corp., Texas Instruments Incorporated (NYSE:TXN and Yitran Communications Ltd. Additional information about the Alliance, including a complete listing of

certified products, is available at www.homeplug.org [3].

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