

UStec Showing tecStream At CEDIA Expo

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INDIANAPOLIS— UStec, the structured-wiring company goes unstructured with the launch of the tecStream network, which uses proprietary non-IP technology to network audio and video products, telephones, PCs and PC peripherals through CAT-5 cable.

Before launching tecStream, UStec offered structured-wiring solutions that used a cable bundle consisting of two CAT-5 cables and two coaxial cables. With tecStream, only one CAT-5 cable is needed, simplifying installation.

It is capable of delivering 16 independent streams of audio and video with 5.1-channel surround, and it connects legacy analog video devices to the network by digitizing their content. Users can watch premium and on-demand cable-TV programming without leasing additional set-top boxes for each room, and they can watch DVDs and DVR-recorded shows from any TV on the network. Users can also program a DVR remotely from another room, the firm said.

Music can be streamed to any room from connected HDD music servers or CD megachangers.

HD distribution works only with sources and displays equipped with IEEE 1394 and the HAVi (Home Audio / Video interoperability) standard, which was developed to ride over 1394 to provide seamless plug-and-play connectivity and interoperability among multiple brands of components. Few HAVi-equipped products are available, but UStec promises to incorporate HD distribution in future generations of its system.

The tecStream network works like this:

Each consumer electronics device, phone or PC that a consumer wants to network plugs into one of two tabletop modules, the 2000 or 2500. Each module in turn connects to a TV to display a user interface and, via single CAT-5 cable, to a central switch in a star topography. All CAT-5 cables collect at the switch, which can be installed anywhere in the house and doesn't have to be installed in a central structured-wiring cabinet. The central switch provides all the bandwidth needed for streaming multiple HDTV signals.

From any networked room, users can select and control any other-room networked device via an IR remote control and an onscreen user interface appearing on the local room's networked TV.

The tecStream modules are equipped with a variety of analog and digital connectors to link up with a variety of products, including A/V HDDs, HDTVs and D-VHS decks via 1394 connections. Other connections include composite, S- and component video, RJ-11 phone, IEEE 1394 and Ethernet R-45.

Expected consumer costs range from \$4,500 for a two-room system to \$8,500 for five rooms.