

365, 100, 36, 7, 6, 3, 2, 1

BY BOB RENNARD, PRESIDENT, LXI CONSORTIUM

So what is the significance of this string of numbers? Nothing if you weren't participating or haven't been paying attention since Sept. 14, 2004. Since that day, there has been a whirlwind of activity for most companies in the test and measurement business.

An entire year, 365 days to be exact, has gone by, and since then, we have engaged more than 100 engineers from 36 test and measurement companies working across seven countries on three continents. We had six full membership meetings, two plug fests, and countless subcommittee and working-group meetings to produce one document that defines a unified specification for LAN-based instrumentation.

When we launched the LXI Consortium, we hoped to bring together a diverse group of companies and users to establish a standard that benefits the test and measurement customer. We believed that by working together we could create a uniform Ethernet implementation that ensures interoperability across vendors, simplifying the system developer's task. We wanted to launch a communications environment that leverages the power, ubiquity, and cost profile of Ethernet yet preserves the integrity and longevity required by the test and measurement industry.

LXI meets that challenge.

We have written a specification document that addresses many of the issues that typically have been associated with LAN, such as triggering, latency, and speed, with innovations including a unified trigger model and the application of IEEE 1588. The LXI specification captures the power of Ethernet yet ensures interoperability among vendors. The LXI working groups built definitions that enable a wide variety of solutions and applications by giving customers the standards-based requirements they need today and in the future.

The consortium has achieved a lot in the past year—we have been challenged, fatigued, and honored to be part of this effort. When I think back to some of the earliest discussions where an independent industry consortium was proposed, I am amazed by the level of teamwork, professionalism, cooperation, and progress the consortium has made in the past year. I am honored to work with such a group, and I have made many great friendships along the way.

With the release of Spec 1.0, we will begin to see our ideas flourish as products and systems. I'm incredibly excited to see what will take place in the next 365.

