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IEEE Introduces Link Aggregation Standard Revision for More Resilient and Controllable Interconnectivity

IEEE 802.1AX™-2014 enables physical and/or virtual bridge components or end stations to provide a redundant connection between two separately administered networks.

PISCATAWAY, NJ, XX November 2015 – IEEE, the world's largest professional organization dedicated to advancing technology for humanity, today announced the availability of IEEE 802.1AX™-2014 standard for Local and Metropolitan Area Networks – Link Aggregation. The new standard revision is freely available via the IEEE Get Program and introduces two new key features: Conversation Sensitive Traffic Distribution and Distributed Resilient Network Interconnect (DRNI).

Conversation sensitive traffic distribution allows for the association of individual conversations to physical links in a priority order. This enables control of the physical link a conversation utilizes, and ensures that the same link is also used in both the forward and the reverse directions.

Distributed Resilient Network Interconnect (DRNI) enables up to three nodes on each side of a Link Aggregation (LAG), further enhancing interconnectivity by adding node redundancy and protection. In effect, IEEE 802.1AX-2014 provides a standardized version of multi-chassis LAG, the common nomenclature for current proprietary solutions. DRNI provides isolation, independence, and rapid recovery even below 50ms. With DRNI, interconnected network domains can be independently administered and managed and can use different technologies. Failure events are isolated so that a failure in one network domain is not propagated to the other, and failure in the DRNI is not propagated to either network domain.

DRNI supports technology agnostic resilient network interconnectivity that spans across a number of interfaces and that can be distributed over a group of separate physical components. This enables the establishment of a logical link that is not confined to the boundaries of a specific nodal enclosure and one that can be used to support network functions across a number of physical components.

“The new standard revision IEEE 802.1AX-2014 marks yet another milestone in ongoing efforts to improve the performance and reliability of the link aggregation standard,” said Glenn Parsons, chair, IEEE 802.1 Working Group. “In a growing world economy where connectivity is key, the 802.1 working group is committed to supporting broader deployment of the standard to ensure the latest technology is being applied to enhance link aggregation solutions.”

The IEEE 802.1AX-2014 standard can be downloaded at no cost via the IEEE Get Program.

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