

Giving New Meaning to Global Network

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The pervasiveness of Ethernet and the reach of the Web have enabled the creation of global online communities. Attracted by the power of those same technologies, the burgeoning community of LXI manufacturers, integrators, and end users is becoming increasingly international.

Within its first year, the LXI Consortium built a roster of more than 40 member organizations. Perhaps more significant is the global reach of the LXI network: Anritsu and Yokogawa Electric in Japan, BAE Systems and Pickering Interfaces in the U.K., Brüel & Kjaer in Denmark, GOEPEL electronic and Rohde & Schwarz in Germany, Shaanxi Hitech in China, and SofTec Microsystems in Italy.

Interest in LXI certainly is on the rise across the Atlantic. The PlugFest held April 25-27 in Munich, Germany, was our first in Europe. The people at Rohde & Schwarz were terrific hosts, and it was exciting to see the enthusiasm of European integrators, end users, and members of the IEEE 1588 community. Based on comments heard during the meetings and in casual conversations, LXI clearly is gaining momentum as the successor to GPIB in many applications.

Elsewhere, some end users are so intrigued by the benefits of LXI that they are organizing themselves at the grassroots level. Most notable is recent activity in China where a new LXI association is preparing for its inaugural event in September in the scenic South China city of Zhang Jia-Jie. Organizers expect more than 150 attendees from local universities, R&D institutes, and manufacturers. To help accelerate understanding of LXI, the association is planning to translate the standard into Chinese and make it available in time for the meeting.

Also in China, several university professors are working to create LXI-related courses to teach engineering students about emerging trends in test systems. Many of these same professors are proposing R&D projects to develop LXI-based systems that demonstrate the concepts and capabilities of the standard.

For member companies, it's one thing to tout the capability of LXI to enable remote troubleshooting of a system halfway around the world. It's another to say it when you're confident that another enthusiastic fan of LXI is sitting in front of the remote system. That confidence will grow as global interest in LXI continues to give new meaning to the term global network.

