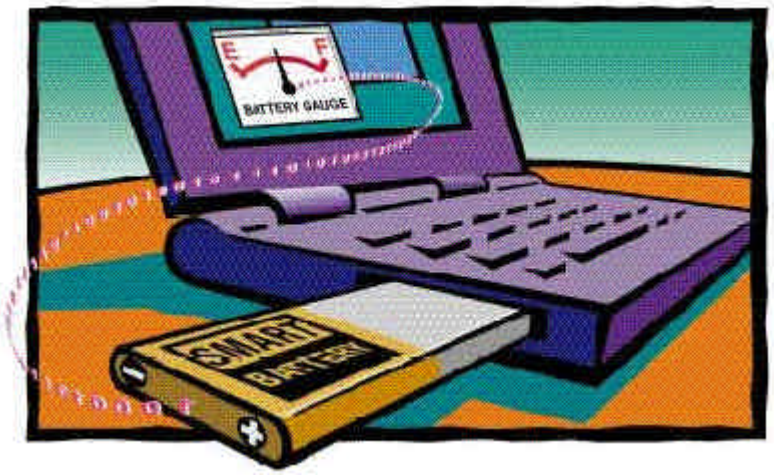

Smart Battery System (SBS) Implementers' Forum Announces New Industry Specifications

Specs Increase Capability for Longer Battery Life in Mobile Computers

Santa Clara, Calif., October 5, 1998 -- The Smart Battery System (SBS) Implementers' Forum announced today two new industry-standard specifications and updates to several others. These specifications address real-world issues associated with building portable computers such as the accuracy of battery data, parallel charging and discharging, and increased battery safety. They are provided in response to industry requests from developers of SBS-compliant systems. To review and comment on these specifications, visit the SBS WWW site at http://www.sbs-forum.org. Finalized versions are expected by the end of the year.

Smart Battery Systems enable new technologies for longer battery life in portable computer systems. These technologies include new and improved battery chemistries and better power management software. For the end user, that means longer operating time and more sophisticated reporting on the battery itself. Smart Battery Systems also serve the increasing need for better device control in PC platforms and other managed systems by using the System Management Bus (SMBus) with low pin count, low power, and flexible distributed control.

Industry endorsement of Smart Battery Systems has grown significantly over the past several years, with greater than 40% of notebook computer batteries now based on the technology. This trend is expected to increase with finalization of the new specifications.

New specification proposals include:

- Smart Battery Data Accuracy Measurements, version 0.8D. This document discusses a suite of tests to measure Smart Battery data accuracy.

- Smart Battery System Manager Specification, version 0.8. This specification describes an interface to a multi-battery system that is capable of charging or discharging multiple batteries simultaneously or sequentially. Compared to sequential procedures, simultaneous discharge of batteries results in longer run time. Simultaneous discharge results in faster total charging time for multiple Li-Ion battery packs.

Draft -updates to existing specifications include:

- Smart Battery Charger Specification, version 1.08.

- Smart Battery Selector Specification, version 1.08.

- Smart Battery Data Specification, version 1.08.

- System Management Bus (SMBus) Specification, version 1.08.

The SBS Implementers' Forum is an ongoing program facilitating product development based on the SBS Specifications. With more than 49 member companies including battery vendors, IC companies, and OEMs, the Forum encourages design activity and development of Smart Battery Systems based on a common set of open interfaces. The SBS Implementers' Forum has held 7 compatibility events to date, with another scheduled for February '99 in Japan. For more information on joining the SBS Implementers' Forum, contact webmaster@sbs-forum.org.