

Part II

Ticktock: Bill, what is the purpose of the Internet Protocol Subscriber Line Special Interest Group (IPSL SIG)?

The idea behind Rim Semi founding the SIG is to create an environment where all the other players could come together to discuss the IPSL technology. In this forum the *market* chooses the enhancements, which are submitted in a very orderly fashion for inclusion in the IPSL spec. The SIG's additional purpose is to create a marketplace where vendors can together understand deployment requirements. We are looking to involve all levels of telecom industry participation. That includes content providers, service providers, other ASSP firms and equipment manufacturers. With the IPSL algorithm as the focal point, we aim to mobilize support and adoption around the technology. As we are successful in doing that, we create a much larger opportunity for Rim Semiconductor with a much smaller investment than if the company tried only goal was to sell its chips directly to the market.

Ticktock: As Founding Executive Director of the IPSL SIG, what are your responsibilities?

My responsibilities include founding the organization and getting the initial infrastructure in place. In addition, my responsibilities include organizing the meeting and necessary interaction between companies who participate in the SIG. The third part of my duties includes evangelism and communicating the benefits of IPSL to a very broad audience ranging from technical people in the industry to industry analyst, to consumers and content providers.

Ticktock: Bill, if I understand you correctly, the purpose of the IPSL SIG is not just to create a platform for presenting the tech to the standards bodies, but the SIG is also an arena for industry collaboration regarding future enhancements?

That's right! This is a fundamental reason for forming the Special Interest Group. By making the IPSL specifications available in the context of the Special Interest Group, Rim Semi is creating an opportunity to harvest all the "IQ" points of the different firms that participate in the SIG.

At a previous successful company, Chorus, we licensed a platformed operating system that could be extended by the licensees. During that process we learned that the licensor gets a very, very broad view of market requirements as compared to the more narrow view that comes from developing enhancements from within your own firm.

This is true whether you are a Rim Semiconductor, Embarq or Intel. By having industry's collective perspective, one is much more effective at creating the solutions the marketplace demands.

Ticktock: How then does the IPSL SIG transition into a platform for presenting the IPSL technology to the standards bodies? And why is standards body acceptance necessary?

Having a standard is extremely important in the telecom industry. The telecom industry is characterized by the need for interoperability. This is particularly true when deploying into large networks. Companies who deploy new technologies, like large service providers and equipment makers, are in a position very similar to venture capitalists. Venture capitalists invest in companies at a very early stage, when the profile of a successful company and a failed company look very similar. The venture capitalist learns of his investment's outcome at some point in the future. The same is true for service providers deploying new technology. The question of profitability is not answered until after the technology is deployed. There are a lot of risks associated with new product deployment. Technology specifications (standards) refined within Special Interest Groups helps minimize that risk.

Within our SIG, we want to create an environment where we can demonstrate interoperability and consensus-derived IPSL specifications. Our goal is to make the risk of adoption as low as possible. A well-defined standard that is increasingly broadly agreed upon and adopted by the industry participants achieves that goal. It really makes it easier for potential customers to bet on the technology and to deploy it in their environments.

Ticktock: So Bill, if I understand you correctly, a Service Provider isn't assured of a techs performance until it is actually deployed within its network?

Yes. Normally the testing and deployment cycle is a very long process that takes a number of years. However, within the current environment, there is tremendous competitive pressure from the cable companies. Therefore, four and five year cycle times will not be tolerated by carriers, the equipment manufacturers, or the chip makers.

Part of the purpose for establishing the ISPL SIG is to provide a forum where industry consensus can be obtained through cooperative sharing of knowledge and agreeing on better specifications. By achieving this goal, we make it easier for the carriers and equipment manufacturers to place their bets on IPSL.

Ticktock: Bill, what do you mean when you say the IPSL SIG will make the specifications better?

By making the technology better we mean adding more functionality. For example, an industry partner may have a specific piece of intellectual property (IP) that does a better job of managing noise in certain environments. There are others who have patents that enhance performance only for special situations within the DSL industry. By incorporating other intellectual property components into the specification, we together improve the rate, reach and Quality of Service (QOS) of IPSL. This gives IPSL broader deployment applications.

Our goal is take what is a very specific solution today that does certain things extremely well and incorporate other advantages into that same platform. This will give IPSL broader deployment in an increasingly greater number of application areas.

Ticktock: So by incorporating the idiosyncrasies of each Service Provider's environment into the IPSL platform, it is given more applicability?

Yes. One of challenges in the telco industry is that there are so many variables within networks that it is rather difficult to come up with a solution that will perform under all circumstances. By presenting IPSL as an open architecture platform, allowing individual carriers to supply the IP solutions that have worked in their environment, we make the technology more bullet proof across a wide set of deployments.

Ticktock: Bill, regarding the IPSL SIG, what do you hope to accomplish within this organization and when?

Now that we have had a successful kick-off meeting, my goal is to get some good momentum in this coming quarter. And by that I mean, we have technical committees established, we have people starting to discuss the issues and make contributions. By somewhere around the end of this year, our plan is to achieve a critical mass. We want to have a robust, consistent online meeting place for all members so that business can be conducted with participants all around the world. Our participants will work efficiently together online and in person, enabled by a web presence so when we come together, our quarterly meetings will be very productive and move the enhanced IPSL products toward commercialization.

I would underscore that regarding the plans for the organization, I don't see us (IPSL SIG) being focused on the *mechanics* of being a special interest group or forum. I see a tremendous need for us to be outward facing to be evangelical, to help people understand the IPSL alternative is here and what it can mean to the economics of carriers, of content providers and equipment manufacturers.

At the end of the day I see this as much a business undertaking, increasing awareness of the tech around the world, as it is a technical undertaking.