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Broadband Forum offers standardized path for an application service architecture for ISPs

Two new documents arm service providers with greater control and support of connected devices and their software cycles

Internet service providers can now manage individual smart home applications separately and without the need for complicated firmware updates, thanks to Broadband Forum launching significant upgrades to two key standards today.

New features added to USP 1.3 and TR-181 Device 2.16 establish a standardized, interoperable method for deploying and supporting value-added applications in a containerized framework for the first time. The features can be used on all broadband subscriber connected devices, including Wi-Fi routers, set-top boxes, and smart home hubs.

"With these upgrades, we are reimagining the potential of broadband services, paving the way for service providers to introduce next-generation applications and services with unparalleled ease, without the need for monolithic firmware upgrades," said John Blackford, Broadband Forum Chairman and Broadband User Services (BUS) Work Area Co-Director. "Our commitment is to provide an ecosystem that delivers the enhanced and diversified services that end-users now expect."

Previously, a device software upgrade would have been needed for services to be installed. But in a container framework, applications can be separated from the device's operating system and managed dynamically within secure and trusted software containers. In turn, this means that the lifecycle of the application can be managed by the service provider using the remote device management protocol USP 1.3.

The upgraded standards create opportunities for operators to increase average revenue per user (ARPU) and to transform the broadband experience for the subscriber as they can move beyond simply delivering fast speeds and easily and securely deploy new services on subscribers' equipment with application intelligence built in. The publications also allow for the comprehensive management of the software lifecycle of these applications, further streamlining the process for service providers to offer new and differentiated value-added services, including Wi-Fi management, cybersecurity, gaming, remote working, smart home, energy management, and more.

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“These latest publications from Broadband Forum will open up an array of possibilities for service providers, enabling them to unlock the full potential of their infrastructure and deliver groundbreaking value-added services,” said prpl Foundation President Len Dauphinee. “Service providers will now have improved capacity to control and manage connected devices in the customer premises, allowing increased customer engagement and service personalization.”

Developed by the Broadband Forum, USP has transformed device management and customer support in the broadband industry, offering real-time device data and control for service providers.

The Broadband Forum's inaugural USP Summit will be taking place on September 11-15, 2023, at the University of New Hampshire InterOperability Laboratory in Durham, New Hampshire, United States. The Summit will include a Plugfest, with members testing the interoperability of devices and services in a controlled, peer-reviewed environment, and a unique roundtable discussion with service providers about the state of USP deployments, successes, and lessons learned. Register for the USP Summit here.

For more information about the USP version 1.3 and TR-181 Device Data Model version 2.16, visit www.broadband-forum.org.

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About the Broadband Forum

Broadband Forum is the communications industry’s leading open standards development organization focused on accelerating broadband innovation, standards, and ecosystem development. Our members’ passion – delivering on the promise of broadband by enabling smarter and faster broadband networks and a thriving broadband ecosystem.

Broadband Forum is an open, non-profit industry organization composed of the industry’s leading broadband operators, vendors, thought leaders who are shaping the future of broadband, and observers who closely track our progress. Its work to date has been the foundation for broadband’s global proliferation and innovation. For example, the Forum’s flagship TR-069 CPE WAN Management Protocol has nearly 1 billion installations worldwide.

Broadband Forum’s projects span across 5G, Connected Home, Cloud, and Access. Its working groups collaborate to define best practices for global networks, enable new revenue-generating service and content delivery, establish technology migration strategies, and engineer critical device, service & development management tools in the home and business IP networking infrastructure. We develop multi-service broadband packet networking specifications addressing architecture, device and service management, software data models, interoperability and certification in the broadband market.

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