Background

The Broadband Forum and the prpl Foundation are partnering to develop an open-source reference implementation of the specifications that underlie the Wi-Fi CERTIFIED EasyMesh™ program. The collaborative effort aims to make it easier and faster for service providers and retail OEMs to deliver intelligent whole-home coverage.

Key Messages

- The Broadband Forum and the prpl Foundation announced a new partnership to develop an open-source reference implementation of the Wi-Fi Alliance® Multi-AP Specification.
- The goal is to make it easier and faster for service providers and retail Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) to develop Wi-Fi CERTIFIED EasyMesh™ products.
- The new open source effort will make it easier and faster for service providers and retail OEMs to deliver intelligent whole-home coverage solutions.
- A number of service providers, OEMs, and technology vendors will contribute to the prplMesh project, including Altran, ARRIS Solutions, ASSIA, AT&T, BT, CableLabs, Dasan Zhone (DZS), Greenwave Systems, Huawei, Intel, Iopsys, Liberty Global, MaxLinear, MediaTek, Nokia, Plume, QA Cafe, Quantenna, SmartRG, SoftAtHome, and Vodafone.

Press Contacts

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Questions and Answers

Q: What are the Wi-Fi Alliance Multi-AP Specification and Wi-Fi CERTIFIED EasyMesh™ s?

A: The Wi-Fi Alliance is currently testing and certifying products under the Wi-Fi CERTIFIED EasyMesh™ certification program, which ensures multi-vendor interoperability of product implementations based upon the Wi-Fi Alliance Multi-AP specification. The Wi-Fi Multi-AP Specification defines multiple access point home and small office Wi-Fi networks that are easy to install and use, self-adapting, and add multi-vendor interoperability. The technology brings both consumers and service providers flexibility in choosing devices from multiple vendors for home deployment. Wi-Fi Multi-AP technology uses a controller to manage the network, which consists of the controller plus additional APs, called agents. Establishing controllers to manage and coordinate activity among the agents ensures that each AP does not interfere with the other, bringing both expanded, uniform coverage and more efficient service.

Q: What is the goal of the partnership between the Broadband Forum and the prpl Foundation?

A: The two groups share the same goal to speed wide-scale deployment of intelligent Wi-Fi mesh networks for efficient, self-configuring, whole-home Wi-Fi coverage. By utilizing open-source software service providers (SPs) and OEMs can easily and quickly develop multi-vendor interoperable Wi-Fi mesh products.

Q: What is prplMesh?

A: prplMesh is the open-source reference implementation of the specifications that underlie the Wi-Fi CERTIFIED EasyMesh™ specification s program. Software development will be hosted by the prpl Foundation and various service providers, OEMs, and technology vendors will contribute. Version 1.0 should be available in Q1'2019 (Beta versions available by December 2018).

Q: What is the Open Broadband Multi-AP project?

A: The Open Broadband Multi-AP (OB-MAP) project is hosted by the Broadband Forum and will develop service provider-friendly extensions for prplMesh, such as carrier-grade manageability, to help ensure that the open-source software is scalable to large service provider deployments.

Q: How will the prplMesh and Open Broadband Multi-AP projects work together?

A: The prpl Foundation and Broadband Forum have a cooperation agreement, and several of the participating companies are contributing to both projects. Service providers, OEMs, and developers will be able to pick and choose open-source software components developed by both projects as they develop products for service providers and retail implementations. Developers can easily customize open-source software components, such as the self-organizing decision-making algorithms, to differentiate their products in the marketplace.

Q: If a company is interested in participating in the prplMesh and/or Open Broadband Multi-AP projects, how can they get involved?

A: Interested companies should reach out to the prpl Foundation at https://prplFoundation.org and the Broadband Forum at https://www.broadband-forum.org/

Q: Will devices that implement software from these projects qualify for Wi-Fi Alliance certification?

A: Wi-Fi Alliance members who develop devices based on the Wi-Fi Alliance Multi-AP Specification may submit those devices to Wi-Fi Alliance for testing and certification of the Wi-Fi CERTIFIED EasyMesh program.