

# HDBaseT Does Not Replace HDMI

HDBaseT Alliance's new certification program is designed to ensure interoperability.

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July 01, 2011 | by [Jason Knott](#)

When the HDBaseT Alliance [announced the launch of its 1.0 Certification Program](#) two weeks ago, there was a collective groan of apprehension from some who might equate the transmission technology with [HDMI](#), which had some frustrating revisions out of the gate. Seeing that “1.0” designation in the [HDBaseT](#) certification forebodes 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc., might be coming.

But from a technology standpoint, [HDBaseT technology is not the same as HDMI](#), even though some integrators have misinterpreted it as a replacement for HDMI. Indeed, the technology actually incorporates HDMI to enable long-run transmission of 1080p video, Internet, IR and RS-232 communications over a single two-pair wire.

“We understand the frustration with HDMI. We are all aware of the revisions,” says Micha Risling, marketing chair for the alliance. “We don’t want to replace HDMI. HDMI is an interface. Many integrators are already using HDBaseT in the field and they probably don’t even know it.” He cited [Crestron](#)’s Digital Media line and several [Extron](#) products that use the spec.

The goal of the new certification program is to put integrators' minds at ease when installing long-run video and ensure interoperability among all products using HDBaseT.

"We designed the certification program to guarantee all the features will work," says Risling. The first product earning the certification—Gefen's Extender for HDMI 1.3 over CAT5 with Ethernet—was announced at [InfoComm](#). The product extends HDMI with 3DTV pass-through up to 330 feet with a single CAT-5 cable. An IR back channel is included for long-distance remote control over the same CAT-5 cable.

The [Gefen](#) product was tested by Valens, which to date is the only authorized testing center for the new certification. The testing is done to ensure the products meet the minimum requirements for interoperability established by the spec, but products are only tested for their actual functions. In other words, if the product does not transmit Internet data, then it is not tested for that part of the spec. "Hopefully there will be other labs that will be coming on board soon," says Risling.

The test itself is fast, taking only a few days from the time of submission. Once the testing is complete, the manufacturer receives the final report in less than two weeks, so the certification itself should not cause any delays in getting products to the market.

Risling says the cost for the certification is "in the range" of \$10,000. There are more than 30 companies in the Alliance and there is a demand for HDBaseT products, according to Risling, who anticipates many products to submit for and earn the certification in the coming months.

Products that earn the 1.0 certification can feature a certification logo. Risling says there is a 2.0 certification program in the works that addresses networking interoperability that "will have no impact on the 1.0 certification."

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