

Digi Introduces An Industry First Smart Energy Gateway

Thursday, Feb 11, 2010

Digi International today introduced the ConnectPort(R) X2 for Smart Energy gateway. It is a ZigBee Smart Energy certified gateway that easily connects certified ZigBee Smart Energy devices from a Home Area Network (HAN) to an energy service provider via broadband. It is the industry's first gateway that connects, controls, or gathers data from ZigBee Smart Energy devices equally well before or with Smart Meter deployments. When a Smart Meter is present the gateway can make meter information immediately available to any energy management application. As part of iDigi(TM) Energy, energy service providers can use the ConnectPort X2 for Smart Energy and iDigi platform to easily integrate thermostats, smart meters, in-home displays, load controllers and other ZigBee Smart Energy devices into complete energy management systems.

"The ConnectPort X2 for Smart Energy provides a sub-\$100 integration point for thermostats, smart meters, in-home displays, load controllers and other ZigBee Smart Energy devices in energy management systems," said Larry Kraft, senior vice president of global sales and marketing, Digi International. "It provides a standards-based method to connect ZigBee Smart Energy devices and iDigi provides a standards-based application interface. Utilities can deploy energy management systems based on the ConnectPort X2 for Smart Energy and iDigi knowing they have maximum future flexibility."

"Utilities will deploy millions of ZigBee Smart Energy metering devices over the next several years," said Charles Porter, Chief Strategy Officer, iSta North America. "Our iSta/net EMS platform uses Digi's ConnectPort X2 for Smart Energy gateway to engage consumers in real-time energy decisions, allowing them to save money and improve the environment."

The ConnectPort X2 for Smart Energy can be deployed as a stand-alone ZigBee Smart Energy HAN for areas without Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI)/Smart Meter deployments or participate in an AMI network providing broadband connectivity for enhanced energy management services. Gateways deployed in advance of AMI can join a Smart Meter based network once it is installed, using iDigi to remotely make all software changes required for an easy upgrade, and always preserving the simplicity of a single Energy Services Portal (ESP) Smart Energy architecture. The ConnectPort X2 also separates consumers' energy management data from the utility's "cash register" meter network, adding to the security and integrity of the AMI system.

Built on the XBee-PRO(R) ZB ZigBee module, the ConnectPort X2 for Smart Energy gateway features ZigBee Smart Energy certified firmware enabling compatibility with all devices defined in the ZigBee Smart Energy public application profile. These include energy service portals (ESPs), metering devices, in-premise display devices, programmable communicating thermostats (PCTs), load controllers, range extenders, smart appliances and prepayment terminals.

"ZigBee Smart Energy offers consumers secure, easy-to-use wireless home area networks for managing energy," said Benno Ritter, vice president of marketing and business development at the ZigBee Alliance. "Digi is a leader in the Smart Energy space by making it easier for utilities and their customers to communicate with thermostats and other Smart Energy devices."

The flexible ConnectPort X2 for Smart Energy offers Ethernet and ZigBee connectivity. It also features easy-to-use local customizable open scripting standards via Python. This allows customers to leverage the in-home processing capability of the gateway to optimize their energy service offerings. Professional services are also available through Spectrum Design Solutions, Digi's wireless consulting group, to speed development. All Digi gateways can be remotely configured and upgraded using iDigi Energy allowing new services to be offered after the system is installed.

The ConnectPort X2 for Smart Energy is available now starting at \$99. ConnectPort X2 for Smart Energy Starter Kits that include iDigi login and a ZigBee Smart Energy XStick(R) USB adapter for demo and development environments are available now for \$149. For information regarding the Smart Grid, download a free white paper at http://www.digi.com/pdf/wp_smartgrid.pdf . For more information about the ConnectPort X2 for Smart Energy, visit <http://www.digi.com/products/wirelessdropinnetworking/gateways/connectportx2.jsp#overview>