

SNIA launches SSD initiative

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By Kevin Komiega

September 24, 2008 -- The Storage Networking Industry Association (SNIA) is stepping into the solid-state disk (SSD) fray by announcing the formation of the Solid State Storage Initiative (SSSI), with the goal of fostering technology standards and industry cooperation in the development and integration of SSD technology for enterprise storage systems.

Vincent Franceschini, chair of the SNIA, says the SSSI will coordinate and conduct education efforts for the vendor and user communities, perform market outreach evangelizing solid-state storage, and further the development of standards specific to the technology.

"The new initiative will work to advance knowledge and acceptance of solid-state storage by evaluating and contributing to the standards necessary for industry-wide adoption, as well as through education, training, and best practices," he says.

Franceschini predicts that the SSSI will also benefit from concurrent work being done by some of the SNIA's other working groups. "We'll take advantage of opportunities to connect the SSSI with other activities within the SNIA," he says. "There are links between solid-state storage and our work in the areas of green storage and storage management."

Phil Mills, SNIA secretary and a member of IBM's senior technical staff, will chair the SSSI and says the first order of business is the examination of standards.

"The first thing we'll do is look at what standards and technical activity we need to undertake in order to enable solid-state storage to thrive. Specifically, we need to look at what standards are necessary to make it easy to add solid-state storage to storage systems," says Mills.

Some of the technical issues facing the SSSI are developing storage management, and addressing issues such as wear leveling and endurance, metrics, and the optimization of drive interfaces, host bus adapters (HBAs), and I/O drivers for solid-state technologies.

The SSSI has already begun discussions with other standards groups and industry associations already at work in solid-state technologies, such as the International Disk Drive Equipment and Materials Association (IDEMA), the Joint Electron Devices Engineering Council (JEDEC), and the Solid State Drive (SSD) Alliance.

"We want to make sure we coordinate with other groups so there is not a food fight in the industry in terms of who is doing what," says Mills.

The roster of founding members of the SSSI includes both existing SNIA members and a handful of newcomers. The list of vendors and industry organizations joining the SSSI includes Adtron, a subsidiary of SMART Modular Technologies, BiTMICRO Networks, Calypso Systems, Coughlin Associates, Dell, EMC, Emulex, the Enterprise Strategy Group, Fusion-io, Fujitsu Computer Systems, Hitachi Data Systems, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Intel, LSI, Marvell Semiconductor, Microsoft, Mtron Storage Technology, NetApp, Patni Computer Systems, Pliant Technology, PMC-Sierra, QLogic, SanDisk, Seagate, Silicon Systems, STEC, Sun, Texas Memory Systems, the University of Virginia, Violin Memory, and Xitech.