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HEADLINE: Cabletron enters cable modem fray

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Cabletron's new cable modem products are designed to let users access the Internet over cable TV networks.The company's offerings, announced at a recent cable network conference here, include a line of cable routers for the home and enterprise, a Cable Modem Termination System (CMTS) module for the SmartSwitch Router (SSR) 8000/8600, as well as a net management application based on Cabletron's Spectrum management platform. The products are intended to utilize the existing cable TV infrastructure for Internet services such as voice over IP and video on demand.

For access from the home or enterprise, Cabletron's SSR 245 connects small-office LANs and workgroup nets to an Ethernet backbone and the Internet via a cable modem. Cabletron also rolled out the SSR 265, a Data Over Cable Service Interface Specification (DOCSIS)-compliant router with an integral cable modem. The DOCSIS specification defines interface requirements for cable modem interoperability.

Both products offer virtual private network tunneling and encryption, firewalling, and quality of service and constant bit rate service through DOCSIS 1.1 support.

In keeping with its plan to sell Layer 4 intelligent network services to service providers (NW, Nov. 30, page 23), Cabletron's cable modem effort is focusing in large part on the SSR. The SSR is a wire-speed gigabit switching router that can prioritize applications based on transport layer - or Layer 4 - TCP and User Datagram Protocol port information.

For management of cable modem networks, Cabletron says it is developing a DOCSIS management module for Spectrum. Through the DOCSIS management module, users can deploy Spectrum as an integrated platform on which to centralize control of CMTS, SSR 265 and multivendor cable modem and radio frequency equipment, Cabletron says.The SSR CMTS module is priced at $14,995 and will be available in the second quarter of 1999. The SSR 245 costs $649 and is available now. The SSR 265 will be available in the second quarter of 1999. Pricing was not disclosed.=

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