

A "smart battery" is a rechargeable battery equipped with specialized hardware that provides present state, calculated and predicted information to the host system under software control. This capability provides users with accurate state-of-charge information along with an accurate prediction of the remaining operating time. Because the "smart battery" maintains its own information, a given host device will be able to accommodate multiple battery chemistries and charge them appropriately. Typical host systems where a "smart battery" can be used include notebook computers, video camcorders and cellular telephones.

"These 'smart battery' specifications are a significant step in Duracell's efforts to advance the standardization of rechargeable batteries," Norm Allen, senior vice president for Duracell's New Products and Technology Division. "Defined specifications that are standards will allow the battery industry to deliver batteries that offer computer OEMs an opportunity to enhance the functionality and performance of their products while providing value-added features and longer battery life to the consumer between charges."

"The specifications are another step in the continuing effort by the Intel Architecture Labs to advance the PC platform by developing computing standards," said Ron Whittier, Intel senior vice president and IAL general manager. "To help the industry deliver specification-compliant solutions, we are making these specifications widely available as a proposed industry standard."

Industry Support

Because these are open specifications, significant industry feedback has already been incorporated. Leading computer manufacturer Compaq Computer Corporation, has reviewed the specifications and the benefits they provide the computer industry. "Compaq supports the efforts of Intel and Duracell to further advance battery standardization," says Jim Hartzog, senior vice president of Portable Engineering at Compaq. "This truly helps reinforce the battery standardization efforts started by Compaq and Duracell, and will surely benefit mobile PC users." BIOS vendors such as Phoenix Technologies and SystemSoft are already developing products that support these specifications.

"SystemSoft is very excited about the new possibilities for intelligent power management that the 'smart batteries' specifications bring to the industry," said Bob Angelo, president of SystemSoft. "Systems built around these specifications will revolutionize the power management of portable computers. SystemSoft fully intends to support these specifications and is actively developing product around these specifications." Howard Cohen, director of Portable Systems Group at Phoenix Technologies Ltd. said "The 'smart battery' specification is a true advancement in power management of portable computers. Phoenix actively supports this effort." Component suppliers such as ACC Micro, Maxim, Opti, PicoPower and VLSI Technologies have also stated their intent to develop chips that embody these specifications.

Specifications Availability

For copies of Smart Battery Data (SBD) and the System Management Bus (SMBus) Specifications or additional information, call a local Intel sales office at 800-626-7256, or the literature center at 800-253-3696 (in the U.S. and Canada), or write for Intel Literature packet SBS5220, P.O. Box 7641, Mt. Prospect, IL 60056-7641. International inquiries can be made to 916-797-4216. Specifications can also be obtained by contacting Duracell at 800-422-9001, ext. 423.

Duracell International Inc., headquartered in Bethel, Conn., is the world's leading manufacturer and marketer of high-performance alkaline batteries. Duracell's batteries are sold throughout the world, primarily under the DURACELL(R) trademark.

Duracell's New Products and Technology Division, also based in Bethel, provides technology and battery design-in expertise to OEMs during the design-in phase for their portable electronic devices. Duracell's Worldwide Technology Center, based in Needham, Mass., employs more than 150 researchers and scientists who develop, design and test new and existing battery products and technologies.

Intel, the world's leading chip maker, is also a leading manufacturer of personal computer, networking and communications products.

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