

Meet the RVU Alliance

Written by Bob Snyder
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The **RVU Alliance** will develop technical specs for the distribution of digital audio/video home networked entertainment content augmented with pixel accurate remote user interface graphics.

The RVU Alliance is backed by leading content service provider, semiconductor, and consumer electronic companies. The founding members include *Broadcom, Cisco, DIRECTV Samsung* and *Verizon*.

RVU allows the television viewer to watch live or recorded programming on various manufacturer-branded TVs or clients while experiencing a consistent user interface-no matter which client device is employed. Once connected, the TV viewer can watch the service provider content from any room of the home.

What is the RVU technology? The RVU protocol is based on a client-server architecture. The server is a source device supplied by the content service provider that allows the distribution and management of video and a consistent user experience to one or many thin CE devices (clients).

The concept of a remote user interface for clients is not new. However, the idea that clients should be able to provide a full-featured user interface by implementing minimal functionality, leaving most of the "hard work" to the server, is unique to RVU.

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RVU's RUI implements the majority of user interface functionality on the server. Remote key presses are passed directly from each client to the server. The server interprets them, responds appropriately (e.g., changes channels), and renders all UI screens in a device-independent manner. It then delivers UI data plus any streaming data (e.g., video and audio) back to the client for display. Rather than implementing an entire UI via client-side software, RVU RUI protocol clients are process-light or "thin" while providing a robust, consistent UI experience throughout the home.

The RVU technology runs on IP networks, whether wired or wireless. Popular examples of IP network technologies that support the RVU technology include Ethernet, MoCA, HomePlug and WiFi (802.11n).

A key benefit of the RVU solution is the ease with which it allows users to access digital content throughout the home. A single server can be connected to service provider commercial content (e.g., via cable, telco or satellite) that can be recorded or watched live. Content can be accessed seamlessly from anywhere inside the home, allowing users in multiple rooms to view the same or different content from the server simultaneously.

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