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09. December 2013

The Bluetooth standard receives a couple of improvements promising more useful devices-- the Bluetooth Special Interest Group (SIG) updates it to version 4.1, and Broadcom combines it with wireless charging on a single SoC.

Bluetooth 4.1 allows for devices able to "remember" lost connections for longer, with automatic reconnection as soon as devices are in range. It improves on the coexistance of Bluetooth and LTE radios on the device, and adds bulk data transfer capability.

Devices running the updated standard will also be able to run as both peripheral and hub-- the Bluetooth SIG gives the example of a smartwatch acting as a hub by gathering information from a heart rate monitor while simultaneously acting as a peripheral as it pushes notifications to a smartphone.

For the future the Bluetooth SIG plans to add IP connectivity-- allowing devices to communicate over IPv6 via Bluetooth radios to create a "fundamental wireless link" in the so-called Internet of Things.

The 4.1 update will be available as an over-the-air update for existing Bluetooth chips in the coming months.

In related news Broadcom unveils the BCM20736 WICED Smart chip-- an integrated SoC combining Bluetooth, ARM Cortex M3 processor and A4WP-based wireless charging on a single die.

The chip is aimed at wearable devices, and promises to reduce power consumptions while being able to run advanced applications.

"We are committed to pushing the boundaries on what wearables are capable of with our new WICED Smart chip," Broadcom says. "By offering support for wireless charging and reduced power consumption, we are empowering OEMs to design more effective products for more market segments, fueling the next generation of wearables and sensors."

Go Updated Bluetooth 4.1 Extends Foundation of Bluetooth Technology

Go Broadcom Announces Bluetooth Smart SoC With Wireless Charging Support