In the HotSeat: Device Testing of New Technology

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Customers today expect the highest level of quality from their mobile devices – despite the fact that they are becoming increasingly more complex having to support video, voice, and data applications. Simultaneously in addition to other value-added features and applications.

At this year's LTE Innovation Summit [1] in Del Mar, CA, Louis LaMedica helped to unravel the mystery behind what it takes to get a mobile device certified and network ready.

In this special edition of *WDD's* HotSeat, LaMedica shares his experience and perspective on test strategies:

WDD: What are the current obstacles that mobile device manufacturers face during the device and network testing processes for new mobile device technologies?

Louis LaMedica: Getting all of the software to do what it was supposed to do, and doing it well in a reasonable amount of time. In many instances of bringing devices to market, software has been one of the main challenges.

As far as today's technology, there are a lot of different choices to make in terms of what the carriers are looking for with LTE.

WDD: What should device manufacturers take in consideration when implementing test strategies for their devices?

Louis LaMedica: They should consider conformance testing versus performance

testing. Conformance testing is based on standard and is of limited value when launching new technology, because there are too many unknowns and limited ability to reproduce all customer affecting issues on test equipment early on. This type of testing also doesn't normally cover device performance – devices can pass conformance testing and still have major customer affecting issues.

It's the performance piece that many standards bodies don't do a good job at documenting. Performance testing is the key to launching new technology, because it is tied to customer experience and usability. Test cases are adjusted to customer feedback and can be quickly modified by the Network Operator as issues are identified. Performance testing makes sure that the customer experiences an acceptable outcome when using the device.

WDD: What sort of solutions do you see that are being delivered for high-quality devices that support complex features and applications?

Louis LaMedica: I believe that customer satisfaction is important. When you look at Verizon and how it relates to its peers, it's very big on driving the customer satisfaction piece. Part of that is how well the device works. It's not just the network, but the integration of the device and network to have a successful output. From my experience, if one worked and the other didn't, customers didn't really care because they see the phone as the only way into the network, and if the phone has a problem they think the network has a problem.

Attention to detail is important as well. Capture lessons learned from initial launches so that subsequent launches do not repeat the same issues.

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