

# USB 100W spec will pump up power for juicing tablets, notebooks

August 12 2011, by Nancy Owano

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(PhysOrg.com) -- The USB 3.0 Promoter Group has announced a revised power delivery spec that means significant changes in how consumers will be able to power up tablets, notebooks, and a range of other e-devices. The new spec, designed for backwards compatibility with USB 2.0 and support for USB 3.0, promises to deliver up to 100W of power. It's that capability--of delivering as high as 100 watts of power—that carries the excitement. The jump from 5W 900mA to 100W 20A is expected to extend the use of USB as an instant connection once the spec is implemented. The USB 3.0 Promoter Group is populated by HP, Intel, Microsoft, Renesas Electronics, ST-Ericsson and Texas Instruments.

The Group developed the [USB 3.0](#) specification, released in November 2008, supporting speeds up to 4.8 Gbps. That represented a ramp-up approximately 10 times faster than the [USB 2.0](#). The newest effort is far more ambitious.

“Building on the rapidly increasing industry momentum for using USB bus power to charge a broad range of mobile devices, the new USB Power Delivery specification extends USB’s cable [power delivery](#) capabilities beyond simple battery charging,” said Brad Saunders, the USB 3.0 Promoter Group Chairman. “Charging the battery of a notebook PC, or simply powering that notebook PC while actively using the USB data connection, would be possible,” he stated. “Conceivably, a notebook PC could rely solely on a USB connection for its source of power.”

Fundamentally, the USB 3.0 has been facing a tougher reality of a gadget-heavy universe where the 5 W limit has become burdensome for users of devices like the iPad, which uses closer to 10W.

The timeline for the spec has several phases. There is an industry review scheduled for later this year. In mid-September, the Intel Developer Forum in San Francisco will offer more information and plans for a pre-release industry review. A final spec will be sent to the USB Implementers Forum early next year.

But one observer, [Tutorial Online](#), tempered the excitement with a note from recent history. "Still, consumers may not see the benefits of the new technology so soon thereafter. Though the USB 3.0 standard was formalized in November 2008, the first consumer products based on USB 3.0 didn't arrive until early 2010."

**More information:** Press release: [www.usb.org/press/USB Power Delivery Specification.pdf](http://www.usb.org/press/USB_Power_Delivery_Specification.pdf)

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