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802.11n: A Survival Guide



Synopsis

Wireless has finally come of age. With a significant jump in throughput over previous standards, 802.11n is the first wireless technology that doesn't trade speed for mobility, and users have stormed onto wireless networks with a passion. In this concise guide, Matthew Gast, chair of the IEEE group that produced revision 802.11-2012, shows you why wireless has become the default method of connecting to a network, and provides technical details you need to plan, design, and deploy 802.11n today. Building a network for the multitude of new devices is now a strategic decision for network engineers everywhere. This book gives you an in-depth look at key parts of 802.11n, and shows you how to achieve an Ethernet-free wireless office. Learn how MIMO's multiple data streams greatly increase wireless speed. Discover how 802.11n modifications improve MAC efficiency. Examine advanced PHY features such as beamforming and space-time code block. Use advanced MAC features to maintain interoperability with older devices. Plan an 802.11n network by determining traffic demand, key applications, power requirements, and security. Choose the architecture, select hardware, and plan coverage to design and build your network.

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Customer Reviews

The 802.11n release marked a huge increase in throughput over previous versions, due almost entirely to PHY improvements such as LDPC codes and MIMO. The author goes into very little detail on these topics, which would be fine if he pointed interested readers to more in-depth references on technical background and how they are implemented in 802.11n. Instead, the only

references in the PHY chapters are shameless plugs to the author's main 802.11 book (which admittedly is an excellent reference, but is not a reference for 802.11n advanced PHY features). The MAC chapters are much better. The chapters are still very brief, but the author does an excellent job explaining the improvements due to advanced MAC features introduced with 802.11n. The three star rating is an average: 4 stars for the MAC chapter and 2 for the PHY chapter.

This book has nothing really useful for a sys admin at a school. It is incredibly technical and is geared for an engineer who wants to know every minute detail of how wireless-N works (the actual technology behind the scenes). I was expecting a "how to" book that would explain all the "gotchas" involved with deploying a wireless solution, but it is really just page after page of highly technical jargon.

Most of the information you can find out there is heavily laced with marketing hype. This book has the straight dope. It's on the money. To be complete, you really should have Gast's earlier book as he makes several references to it. If you work with "n" at either the MAC or PHY layers, you should have this book.

This book gives the lie to all the turgid, poorly written technical documentation I've ever had to slog through. It's clear, straightforward, detailed, and interesting. I'm familiar with low level wired network protocols so what I appreciate most are the discussions of the design tradeoffs involved in going wireless. That was particularly helpful to me.

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