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Spirent VR5 HD Spatial Channel Emulator Reduces Complexity of MIMO Testing

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Spirent Communications has introduced VRS HD Spatial Channel Emulator software, it is a solution for testing MIMO-based wireless base stations and mobile devices. This solution will increase complexity of MIMO technologies such as LTE and LTE-Advanced, which rely on large numbers of antennas, higher bandwidth, and band aggregation to deliver high-speed data.
“Testing cutting-edge MIMO receivers requires a large number of synchronized RF channels,” said Stéphane Téral, principal analyst, service provider mobile and FMC infrastructure at Infonetics Research. “The 8×4 TD-LTE research currently being performed in China is a great example. MIMO Over-the-Air (MIMO-OTA) testing is another. The ability to create these intricate RF test cases in a single bench-top unit can have a direct effect on the efficiency and cost of testing.”

The VR5 HD Spatial Channel Emulator’s software implements an innovative touchscreen interface, developed specifically for intuitive control of complex MIMO systems. With a few finger-strokes, test engineers can set up scenarios involving literally dozens of radio channels. The interface also provides step-by-step graphical feedback during setup and execution, so that any missteps are quickly caught and corrected.

“This unprecedented level of test integration demands a new way to control it, so the VR5’s touchscreen GUI was built on a completely user-oriented design philosophy,” said Rob VanBrunt, vice president of Spirent’s Wireless group. “Now, even the least-experienced user can run complicated handover and bi-directional testing quickly and accurately while reproducing the realistic performance of a deployed system.”

To address test requirements for the next several years, the solution also offers integrated RF components which eliminate the need for external splitters, duplexers and amplifiers in most cases while delivering order-of-magnitude improvements in available channel bandwidth. The VR5 HD Spatial Channel Emulator can host proprietary applications including virtual drive testing, dynamic environment emulation and direct data playback which bring the “real world” into the lab.
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