

In Brief

■ Always on(line) means that, in the future, we will constantly be connected to the Internet and always reachable by phone, e-mail, text messaging or video messaging. However, this calls for higher bandwidths, particularly in mobile communications. Data for *always on* is now increasingly being sent in packets — as on the Internet — even in the case of voice (VoIP). Over the next few years, VoIP will also become available for home users. (p.11)

■ Various broadband transmission methods are being created for fixed-line and mobile networks. HSDPA, for example, will expand UMTS to even higher data transfer rates, while the WiMAX standard builds on the wireless system WLAN. Siemens is working on ways to create a seamless transition between these techniques. (p.11)

■ According to experts, mobile communications systems and fixed-line networks will one day converge. The trend toward uniform platforms also affects computers, TV sets and other devices, for which home networks are being set up with Internet gateways as links to the outside world. (p.11, 23)

■ Accessibility must be ensured irrespective of the technical solution used. At the same, it must be possible to customize the settings, as this is one of the main preconditions for creating a functioning always-on society. With its LifeWorks concept, Siemens is developing solutions for office environments and for mobile use. (p.14, 23)

■ Industry is boosting its productivity by comprehensively networking its communications systems (which range from manufacturing process control technologies to office software) and making them usable in real-time. The Ethernet standard familiar from offices is now also being introduced into production environments in the form of Industrial Ethernet. In addition, Siemens has enhanced WLAN applications to make them suitable for the greater demands posed by industry. (p.20)

■ Sociologists do not think that people who are always online will risk sensory overload. Instead, we will adapt to new technology and establish new communications standards. Face-to-face contact is growing in importance. (p.31)

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Siemens Mobile:

www.siemens-mobile.com

LifeWorks concept:

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Standards and standardization:

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www.ieee.org

LITERATURE:

Smythe, Peter, Mobile and Wireless Communications: Key Technologies and Future Applications, 2004