



Digital for Dummies, Blondes and Other Non-geeks

By Michele Ahlman

When we talk about “digital” products or “digital power” what does it mean?

It seems like just yesterday we got along fine with words like “photography”, “cable television” or “telephone service” without the word “digital” in front of them. These were analog technologies, but they certainly did not need to be marketed as analog because there was no buzz-term associated with them. It was what is was and it worked.

Now, the word digital is used in product marketing everywhere and for everything. And with a very positive connotation. We live in a digital world. It seems if you are selling something “digital” it is superior, more advanced and probably lies on the cutting edge of its field. The truth is- digital is an old buzzword. But what does digital mean?: Good question! Digital is a word; I imagine few can give a very succinct, straight definition for. The more important question for you is ...why does it matter? Why does it matter to you? What should you be aware of when evaluating products or services that define themselves as “digital”?

So, when you think digital, many think faster, better, more powerful, etc, etc. Example- the conversion to all digital TV or the migration from dial-up internet connection to high-speed cable. These are examples of digital conversions that improved performance over the original option. Performance is one of the key benefits in a “digital” world. There are in fact, 3 key benefits to the digital platform.

3 Key Benefits to Digital

- 1) Performance
A fully digital phone like the CSC1000, will deliver intelligible sound in the volume & frequency ranges the consumer needs with more flexibility at higher levels without feedback, static or line bleed noise. It also significantly reduces background noises because the “brain” can differentiate between the sound of a voice and an air conditioner in the background.
- 2) Reliability
A fully digital phone reduces component counts substantially thereby reducing points of failure by up 50-75% in both the manufacturing process as well as in the field.
- 3) Adaptability
A fully digital product has a powerful brain. It understands its directive as does an analog phone, however a fully digital phone understands its environment, reads the environment and adjusts accordingly to deliver the best sound. It recognizes the difference between “noise” on the line and the human voice and will eliminate feedback and garbage noise in the conversation. It can condition and stabilize the connection whether it be a standard analog phone line or a digital high speed bundle with voice service (i.e. AT&T Uverse, Time Warner, Brightstar, etc.) that utilize Analog Telephone Adapters (ATA) or line filters.

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So great! Then anything that is digital is better- right? Well, yes and no. Yes, when digital processing is involved, speeds increase, there can be an increase in the reliability of the product and the product can be more adaptable. However, like anything, there are variables.

So back to the original question, why does digital matter? The realities of the world today make moving to a digital platform a necessity. Why, because....

1. The networks are going digital. This has significant impact on the functionality, performance and reliability of the products connected to the network. A fully digital phone such as the CSC1000 processes sound to significantly reduce background noise and suppress the bleed of static on the line that occurs as a result of the new digital/data bundles offered by the carriers.
2. A digital platform extends the longevity of the product as it reduces components, reducing points of failure.
3. Digital products are greener- they use less power, less components, less heavy metals- again, improving reliability. Digital provides the flexibility the consumer needs and can be more easily adjusted to address changing consumer demand.

When you evaluate digital products and services consider the following:

- Is the product fully digital or partially digital?
Yes, a product can be partially digital or “less” digital than another product. A phone will be designed as a digital phone or as an analog phone with a digital chip. This matters because an analog phone with a digital chip can not address the unstable environment the digital voice service connections create.
- What are the capabilities of the product?
Does the product offer all of the features I need? Is it simple to use?

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