

LonWorks® Control Network Technology

LonWorks® is a complete, open, off-the-shelf networking technology platform for designing and implementing interoperable control networks. As one facilities manager put it, an interoperable control network "allows a building to talk to itself." Lighting, ventilation, air conditioning, heating, security, and energy management are systems built into every modern office structure. Unlike computers, however, these systems could not interact with each other, work in tandem, or be controlled from one central control panel until now.

LonWorks® does much more than integrate a myriad of devices and control systems. In contrast with traditional networks, it offers manufacturers and builders a single, cohesive, interoperable control system which does not depend on one proprietary vendor or require costly customization. Central to LonWorks® technology is the Neuron® chip, which processes all messages, senses inputs, manipulates outputs, implements application-specific functions, and stores installation-specific parameters. In a LonWorks® network, no central control or master-slave architecture is required. Intelligent control devices, called nodes, communicate with each other using a common LonTalk® protocol. Each node in the network contains embedded intelligence that implements the protocol and performs control functions. In addition, each node includes a physical interface that couples the microcontroller with the communications medium (e.g. twisted cable, power lines, radio, etc.).

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