28. Physical Layer link signaling for Auto-Negotiation on twisted pair

28.1 Overview

28.1.1 Scope

Clause 28 describes the Auto-Negotiation function that allows a device to advertise enhanced modes of operation it possesses to a device at the remote end of a link segment and to detect corresponding enhanced operational modes that the other device may be advertising. The normative definitions for all extensions to Auto-Negotiation and all related register assignments for this standard are documented in Annex 28D.

The objective of the Auto-Negotiation function is to provide the means to exchange information between two devices that share a link segment and to automatically configure both devices to take maximum advantage of their abilities. Auto-Negotiation is performed using a modified 10BASE-T link integrity test pulse sequence, such that no packet or upper layer protocol overhead is added to the network devices (see Figure 28–1). Auto-Negotiation does not test the link segment characteristics (see 28.1.4).

The function allows the devices at both ends of a link segment to advertise abilities, acknowledge receipt and understanding of the common mode(s) of operation that both devices share, and to reject the use of operational modes that are not shared by both devices. Where more than one common mode exists between the two devices, a mechanism is provided to allow the devices to resolve to a single mode of operation using a predetermined priority resolution function. The Auto-Negotiation function allows the devices to switch between the various operational modes in an ordered fashion, permits management to disable or enable the Auto-Negotiation function, and allows management to select a specific operational mode. The Auto-Negotiation function also provides a Parallel Detection function to allow 10BASE-T, 100BASE-TX, and 100BASE-T4 compatible devices to be recognized, even though they may not provide Auto-Negotiation.

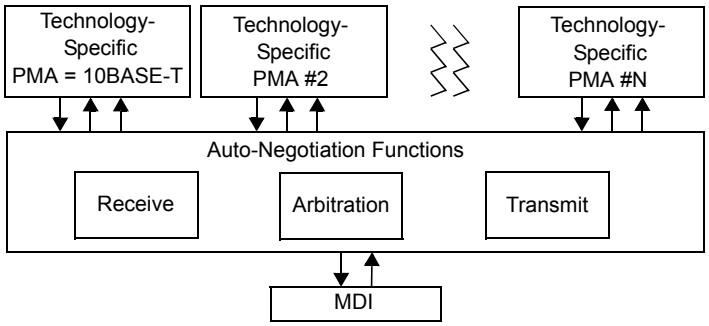

Figure 28–1—High-level model

The basic mechanism to achieve Auto-Negotiation is to pass information encapsulated within a burst of closely spaced link integrity test pulses that individually meet the 10BASE-T Transmitter Waveform for Link Test Pulse (Figure 14–13). This burst of pulses is referred to as a Fast Link Pulse (FLP) Burst. Each device capable of Auto-Negotiation issues FLP Bursts at power up, on command from management, or due to user interaction. The FLP Burst consists of a series of link integrity test pulses that form an alternating clock/data sequence. Extraction of the data bits from the FLP Burst yields a link codeword that identifies the operational modes supported by the remote device, as well as some information used for the Auto-Negotiation function's handshake mechanism.

To maintain interoperability with existing 10BASE-T devices, the function also supports the reception of 10BASE-T compliant link integrity test pulses. 10BASE-T link pulse activity is referred to as the Normal Link Pulse (NLP) sequence and is defined in 14.2.1.1. A device that fails to respond to the FLP Burst sequence by returning only the NLP sequence is treated as a 10BASE-T compatible device.

28.1.2 Application perspective/objectives

The Auto-Negotiation function is designed to be expandable and allow IEEE 802.3 compatible devices using an eight-pin modular connector to self-configure a jointly compatible operating mode. Implementation of the Auto-Negotiation function is optional. However, it is highly recommended that this method alone be utilized to perform the negotiation of the link operation.

The following are the objectives of Auto-Negotiation:

a) Must interoperate with the IEEE 802.3 10BASE-T installed base.
b) Must allow automatic upgrade from the 10BASE-T mode to the desired "High-Performance Mode."
c) Requires that the 10BASE-T data service is the Lowest Common Denominator (LCD) that can be resolved. A 10BASE-T PMA is not required to be implemented, however. Only the NLP Receive Link Integrity Test function is required.
d) Reasonable and cost-effective to implement.
e) Must provide a sufficiently extensible code space to
    1) Meet existing and future requirements.
    2) Allow simple extension without impacting the installed base.
    3) Accommodate remote fault signals.
    4) Accommodate Link Partner ability detection.
f) Must allow manual or Network Management configuration to override the Auto-Negotiation.
g) Must be capable of operation in the absence of Network Management.
h) Must not preclude the ability to negotiate "back" to the 10BASE-T operational mode.
i) Must operate when
    1) The link is initially electrically connected.
    2) A device at either end of the link is powered up, reset, or a renegotiation request is made.
j) The Auto-Negotiation function may be enabled by automatic, manual, or Network Management intervention.
k) Completes the Base Page Auto-Negotiation function in a bounded time period.
l) Will provide the basis for the link establishment process in future CSMA/CD compatible LAN standards that use an eight-pin modular connector.
m) Must not cause corruption of IEEE 802.3 Layer Management statistics.
n) Operates using a peer-to-peer exchange of information with no requirement for a master device (not master-slave).
o) Must be robust in the UTP cable noise environment.
p) Must not significantly impact EMI/RFI emissions.

28.1.3 Relationship to architectural layering

The Auto-Negotiation function is provided at the Physical Layer of the OSI reference model as shown in Figure 28–2. Devices that support multiple modes of operation may advertise this fact using this function. The actual transfer of information of ability is observable only at the MDI or on the medium. Auto-Negotiation signaling does not occur across either the AUI or MII. Control of the Auto-Negotiation function may be supported through the Management Interface of the MII or equivalent. If an explicit embodiment of the MII is supported, the control and status registers to support the Auto-Negotiation function shall be implemented in accordance with the definitions in Clause 22 and 28.2.4. If a physical embodiment of the MII management is not present, then it is strongly recommended that the implementation provide control and status mechanisms equivalent to those described in Clause 22 and 28.2.4 for manual and/or management interaction.