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The Net Gets Faster Feb. 21, 2005

Netli's high-speed protocols boost traffic flow and promise one-second response times worldwide

By Charles Babcock
[InformationWeek](#)

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The software developers at Netli Inc. believe Internet users will want to supplement the sometimes slow and general-purpose TCP/IP and HTTP protocols that govern the Internet with high-speed ones that can deliver one-second response times anywhere in the world for a typical Web page download.

"TCP is an inefficient protocol. There's a lot of chatter back and forth," Netli president Gary Messiana says. That partly reflects the resilient design of the Internet, where routes between points are determined on a spur-of-the-moment basis, circumventing obstacles such as downed network segments. Because of the three-way handshake required to initiate messages and the checks in place to assure packet arrivals, the TCP/IP scheme makes for messages that almost always get through. But any packet loss adds up to lengthy delays and resends because an entire message must be re-sent even if only one packet drops.

Netli's NetLightning, a set of speed-up protocols and services, intervenes early in the process to set up a high-speed point-to-point connection that overlays the Internet but dispenses with a lot of TCP's handshaking and messaging delays. Netli customers must agree to have requests aimed at its Web site resolved by the public Domain Name Server system sent to one of Netli's 23 worldwide data centers in locations from Dallas to Europe to Shanghai. Once that happens, a series of high-speed protocols written by Netli take over, and users can get to a site more quickly.

The idea of improving on Internet protocols is just now gaining wider acceptance. Netli's service first appeared on the market in April 2003, but it was only last year that it started gaining a following among major buyers, including LexisNexis, Motorola, and Philips Electronics. Hewlett-Packard's Developer and Solutions Partner Program, which helps partners work with HP products, also uses Netli's service.

Software companies that work with HP can now hit its developer site from anywhere in the world in less than a second versus more than six seconds to Tokyo or London before. If a message packet is dropped, Netli's protocol recognizes it immediately, dispenses with waiting three seconds, and asks that just the missing packet be re-sent to complete the message.

Netli was founded in 1999 by Michael Kharitonov, who had co-founded Internet company NetLive Communications and worked at CERN, the particle physics lab in Geneva that was an early user of the Internet.

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