



Operations Alert Bulletin

Proper Use of HDMI Cables During Staging

Overview

Background

A High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI™) cable provides a type of digital connection that transmits high-definition video and high-resolution audio over a single cable. Headend operators and technicians regularly use HDMI cables when they stage Cisco set-top boxes (STBs).

HDMI cables feature a 19-pin connection. Due to the large number of pin connections in an HDMI cable, the cable connectors and plating material can degrade after multiple insertions. This degradation can cause damage to the device being staged. Therefore, operators need to use a suitable degree of care when connecting or removing the HDMI cable from the back of an STB. The recommendations in this bulletin provide guidance to staging personnel during their use of HDMI cables.

Definition of Terms

Note the use of the following terms as they relate to STBs and HDMI cables:

- **Plug:** Refers to the end of the HDMI cable that inserts into the HDMI port on the STB
- **Receptacle:** Refers to the HDMI port on the STB into which the plug is inserted

Guidelines for Using HDMI Cables

Follow these general guidelines when using HDMI cables to stage STBs:

- Visually examine the shell and the pin contacts of an HDMI cable before you use it. Inspect the plug for damage to the pins or for any dust or dirt that may have accumulated inside the plug. Examine the shell of the plug for any degradation of plating material.
Note: If you observe any damage, immediately discontinue use of the cable and replace it with a new HDMI cable. Further use of a damaged HDMI plug may cause damage to the HDMI receptacle on the STB.
- Be certain that the plug of the HDMI cable fits snugly into the receptacle of the STB. Loose fitting cables can slip and cause intermittent contact with the receptacle, disrupting the HDMI video signal.
- Be aware that the HDMI connection, either on the cable plug itself, or on the STB receptacle, can be damaged by a careless insertion or removal of the cable. Line the cable up carefully with the HDMI receptacle on the back of the STB. Avoid inserting or removing the cable at an angle.
- Use only moderate pressure when inserting the HDMI plug into the HDMI receptacle on the STB. Avoid forcing the plug into the receptacle.
- Should you observe a video anomaly during staging, remove the plug from the receptacle, blow it out, and then reinsert it. Dust or debris may have interfered with the pin contacts.
- Maintain several HDMI cables in the staging area. Should you observe any anomalies or failures while staging, verify the failure with another HDMI cable.
- Buy the best quality HDMI-certified cables that you can afford. HDMI cables wear out over time. Replace the cables regularly.
Note: Consider establishing a regular preventive maintenance schedule whereby you replace HDMI cables after a specific number of uses.
- Use HDMI cables that are long enough for you to stage. Shorter cables may be less expensive, but if they are pulled too tightly, the plug may disengage from the receptacle.

About This Bulletin

Audience

This document is written for headend operators and technicians who use HDMI cables to stage Cisco STBs. Engineers who support staging operations will also find this document to be useful.

Document Version

This is the third formal release of this document.

For More Information

If you have technical questions, call Cisco Services for assistance. Follow the menu options to speak with a service engineer.



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