



The most common Bluetooth® qualification mistakes to avoid

UL can help you set the stage for success

Empowering Trust®

The Bluetooth Special Interest Group (SIG) is the not-for-profit trade association that oversees Bluetooth® technology. Formed in 1998, it facilitates the collaboration of a global community made of over 36,000 companies. UL has been a Bluetooth SIG member since the group's inception and has supported consumer technology companies get their Bluetooth enabled devices qualified.

Qualification is one of the three programs managed by Bluetooth SIG. The other two are:

Specification: facilitating collaboration among the member companies to create new and enhanced Bluetooth specifications

Promotion: growing the Bluetooth brand by increasing awareness, understanding and adoption of Bluetooth technology



Let's have a look now at the common mistakes when approaching Bluetooth qualification:

1

CONFUSING REGULATORY AND BLUETOOTH SIG QUALIFICATIONS

The Bluetooth qualification process promotes global product interoperability and reinforces the strength of the Bluetooth brand and ecosystem to the benefit of all Bluetooth SIG members. Qualification helps member companies ensure their Bluetooth products comply with the Bluetooth Trademark License Agreement and Bluetooth specifications and provides a listing for qualified products on the Bluetooth Product Listing Database.

The regulatory process helps ensure compliance with international regulations. While international regulatory

requirements are a part of the Bluetooth qualification process, they are not related to Bluetooth qualification.

Going through Bluetooth qualification allows companies to use the Bluetooth brand on products, packaging and advertising according to the Bluetooth Patent and Copyright License Agreement, the Bluetooth Trademark License Agreement (collectively, the Bluetooth License Agreements) and Bluetooth specifications. Bluetooth qualified products will be globally recognized and listed on the Bluetooth SIG website.

2

USING THE BLUETOOTH BRAND AND LOGO WITHOUT BEING A MEMBER OF BLUETOOTH SIG

In order to brand (or rebrand) a Bluetooth product for sale, each company must join the Bluetooth SIG and complete the Bluetooth qualification process. A member choosing not to use the Bluetooth trademarks must still be compliant with the Bluetooth Patent & Copyright License Agreement. Members shall review the conditions of the license agreements and consult their legal counsel with any questions regarding the applicable requirements.

If a company does not qualify its product but still uses the Bluetooth trademarks to promote it, it becomes subject to enforcement action. If no corrective actions are taken, Bluetooth SIG membership could be suspended or revoked. Other potential actions taken against non-qualified products can include seizure of products by customs officials and removal from online marketplaces.

Retailers or suppliers selling or distributing another organization's qualified Bluetooth products do not need to complete the qualification process for the product if they are not adding any logos or branding to them. However, the qualified product must be clearly labeled and represented as listed on the Bluetooth Product Listing Database.

3

MISTAKES DURING THE PROCESS OF REFERENCING QUALIFIED DESIGN IDENTIFICATIONS (QDIDS)

These mistakes are only applicable when the qualification process requires testing. Three scenarios exist that require a qualification process with testing:

- Creating a new design or combination that does not involve previously qualified Bluetooth end products or subsystems
- Modifying a previously qualified Bluetooth design by changing the core configuration and functionalities
- Qualifying a design that uses a previously qualified Bluetooth component product type

Bluetooth SIG members can use the Launch Studio tool for their product qualification. The most important items to check are inconsistencies in the Implementation Conformance Statements (ICs) once the QDID's are added/selected in the specific product design, as many may think simply adding QDID's is enough to complete this step.

The Consistency Check tool of Launch Studio helps resolve any invalid combinations of ICS selections and avoid costly mistakes when in the process of listing a new product with Bluetooth SIG.

When you qualify a Bluetooth design that another company may later incorporate into their products, it is important to choose the Bluetooth Product Type.

Component Product Type

The *Component* product type is recommended for any design that allows customers to make changes to the core architecture and/or features of the Bluetooth design. This product type requires customers to qualify their design through the *Qualification with Required Testing* path in Launch Studio.

End Product or Subsystem Product Type

If the design does not allow for customers to make changes to the core architecture and/or features, then selecting the *End Product or Subsystem* product type is more advantageous to customers. This allows your customers to quickly and easily complete the qualification process via the *Qualification with No Required Testing* path in Launch Studio.





4

CONFUSING PROFILES AND BLUETOOTH SPECIFICATION VERSIONS

Adding the latest version of profiles does not automatically assume that the final product is implementing the latest specification. Quality or Compliance Managers should take into consideration that the the lowest specification version of either the host or controller configuration included in the Bluetooth enabled design determines the specification names of a Bluetooth technology qualification.

5

UNNECESSARILY LISTING EVERY SINGLE PRODUCT

Please pay attention to this simple concept, as its misunderstanding may lead to costly mistakes. Companies with a range of products to launch often ask if they need to purchase a declaration ID and pay the declaration fee in order to list every single product of their range. The correct answer is no, provided that the implementation of a qualified design has not changed and still meets the definition of the product type of the original declaration.

Here is an example. Company A has a Bluetooth speaker with Declaration ID #123456. The company decides to change the plastic case of the speaker to sell it as a different model or color without changing or affecting the implementation of a qualified design for Bluetooth technology, inclusive of both hardware and software. As their product still meets the definition of the product type in the original declaration, Company A does not need to purchase a declaration ID and pay a declaration fee for the new version of the product. It can be listed under the same ID. This includes any other product the company produces which implements the same Bluetooth design. If the module for a company's Bluetooth speaker is also used in a headset with no changes to the Bluetooth implementation, it can be listed on the same declaration. What's more, there is no limitation in time or quantity to add new products under the same listing, with the exception of withdrawn specifications. Once withdrawn, any listings compliant to that specification version are not eligible to have new products added.

6

THE WHITE LABEL DILEMMA

One of the most common misconceptions is around white label concerns. If Company A manufactures or supplies Bluetooth products and is marketing and selling these products to different companies, e.g., Companies B and C, then Companies B and C do not have to be members of the Bluetooth SIG and do not have to list the product for their own company or brand name.

In the above scenario, Companies A, B and C all need to be members of the Bluetooth SIG and need to list the product once for their own company or brand name. There is only one exception to this rule: if the company is a retailer or supplier selling or distributing another organization's qualified Bluetooth products without adding any logos, branding or representation of the product as their own, there is no need to complete the qualification process for the product.

7

USING WITHDRAWN OR DEPRECATED SPECIFICATIONS

Another common mistake leading to costly errors regards the implementation of old specifications into products. When a specification is at the end of its useful life, the Bluetooth SIG may choose to end maintenance of the specification and restrict its use — known as “deprecation” — or it may choose to withdraw the specification altogether. So, during product development, it's important to check which old specifications are getting deprecated and ultimately withdrawn by the Bluetooth SIG.

Updates can be found on the Archived Specification page of the Bluetooth SIG website (<https://www.bluetooth.com/specifications/archived-specifications>). You can also contact a Bluetooth Qualification consultant or a Bluetooth Qualification Test Facility laboratory.



To learn more, please visit [UL.com/services/bluetooth-qualification-testing-services](https://www.ul.com/services/bluetooth-qualification-testing-services) or contact us for more details or a quote [UL.com/contact-us](https://www.ul.com/contact-us)



As a fully accredited Bluetooth qualification and regulatory wireless test facility with more than 20 years of experience in Bluetooth testing and qualification, UL covers all layers and standards for global market access. What's more, we have Bluetooth qualification consultants in each regional location (North America, Europe and Asia) and state-of-the-art test facilities around the world to support your specific qualification requirements.



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