



Fiber Networking – What is in it for You?



While copper has been the mode of choice for company's network wiring, with the rate of forecasted growth, particularly in Business-to-Business Internet trade, a conversion to fiber for many is likely to occur in the near future.

The report issued by Forrester Research, Inc. entitled, "Where Fiber Fits", revealed that more than half of the network managers interviewed indicated that switched 10 Mbps Ethernet meets their user's needs today. However, when asked about bandwidth requirements in two years, 70% expect to need switched 100 Mbps service, - compared with 32% today. Admittedly CAT5 cable can fill that need, but it is clear that demand will eventually necessitate implementation of fiber.

While most of the data collected in the study pertains to data transmissions, more and more companies are utilizing fiber in connecting the telecom systems of multiple buildings and in connections between floors in those buildings as well.

So, what does this mean for you? What can fiber optics do for your business? A look at some of the advantages of fiber optic systems will answer that for you.

The largest advantage may be that fiber allows transmission of much more information at higher data rates and greater distances than either copper wire or coaxial cable. The clarity of the fiber optically transmitted data is unequalled by any copper or coaxial system.

Part of the reason for the clarity of data received by fiber systems is that fiber is not affected by interference from lightning or other power surges. It can be in direct contact with high voltage electrical equipment and power lines without any loss in the clarity of data. Because fiber is made of glass it is also immune to the effects of most chemicals and can be buried in most kinds of soil or exposed to most corrosive atmospheres, indoor or out, without concern. With fiber there will be no extraneous signal pickup. Fiber optic cables can be attached directly to telephone poles or electrical cables.

Fiber may also be a safer choice for transmission in environments where a stray spark can be highly dangerous. Fiber only carries light signals; therefore there is no fire hazard and no danger of electric shock to personnel repairing the system.

A fiber optic cable is almost always considerably smaller and lighter than a wire or coaxial cable of similar capacity. It is simpler to install and takes up less space, even being suitable for installation without ducts.

Is security a concern? If so, you will appreciate that fiber optic cable is very difficult to tap because there is no electromagnetic field, but it is still easy for you to monitor.

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Additionally, if you are an interconnect looking to provide superior service to your customers, while adding revenue to your business, consider offering fiber networking service. With the increasing demand for fiber cabling you will find a whole new potential client base – offer cabling and then when telecom needs arise you'll be in the perfect position to provide that service as well. The equipment and training investment necessary for cabling will be well rewarded. Entry-level cable pullers can later be trained to fill telecom technician positions; providing a ready source of proven labor.



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