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10 Gigabit Ethernet Standard Process Remains On-Track for 2002 Ratification

IEEE P802.3ae Task Force Overwhelmingly Approves Four PMDs

First Draft of 10 Gigabit Ethernet Standard Complete

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. – September 18, 2000 – The 10 Gigabit Ethernet Alliance today announced that the IEEE P802.3ae (10 Gigabit Ethernet) Task Force has completed the first draft of the 10 Gigabit Ethernet specification and has reached agreement on four optical transceivers for multimode and single mode fiber, otherwise known as physical medium dependent (PMD) interfaces. These two milestones were accomplished during last week's meeting of the IEEE 802.3ae Task Force, held in New Orleans. Based on last week's accomplishments, the standard process for 10 Gigabit Ethernet remains on track for ratification in early 2002.

"Final resolution of the optical media objectives was an important milestone," commented Jonathan Thatcher, Chair of the IEEE 802.3ae Task Force and Principal Engineer at World Wide Packets. "Two multimode fiber optical transceivers address installed FDDI-grade -- or better -- multimode fiber in enterprise backbone networks, and low-cost connections for data centers and other very short-reach applications. Two single mode fiber optical transceivers address medium and long reach, single mode fiber, metro applications and connections to optical networks."

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With overwhelming approval of over 80% of the attendees, the four PMDs were selected to support a variety of short and long distance applications thereby maximizing broad market acceptance of 10 Gigabit Ethernet. "This reflects many months of investigation and debate regarding how to best support multimode fiber and potential applications of 10 Gigabit Ethernet. Specifically the Task Force agreed to expand its objectives for multimode fiber to support low-cost, short-reach connections for such applications as data centers and the installed FDDI grade multimode fiber, the dominant fiber media installed in enterprise sites," observed Bruce Tolley, Vice President of the 10 GEA and Product Manager at Cisco Systems.

"As an end user, I am very happy to see a low-cost short-reach solution included in the objectives; IT managers like myself want a low -cost option for the short reach and we want to use our existing fiber infrastructure as much as possible. The four optical transceivers adopted by the Task Force meet the needs of the user community," commented Mike Bennett, Energy Sciences Network at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (Berkeley Labs).

"The editors of the draft worked hard to create a document that reflects 16 months of technical evaluation and the consensus by the IEEE 802.3ae Task Force members. The quantity and quality of work provides a solid foundation upon which the standard will be achieved, which will provide interoperable 10 Gigabit Ethernet solutions to the networking industry, " explained Brad Booth, Chief Editor of the IEEE 802.3ae Task Force and Strategic Marketing Manager at Intel.

The next draft of the standard is scheduled for review at the IEEE Plenary Meeting, scheduled for November 6-9 in Tampa, Florida.

Last week's IEEE P802.3ae meeting boasted record attendance. Over 200 representatives from approximately 80 companies participated in the meeting held September 12-14. Attendees represented both start-ups and established companies in

a wide range of network-related and –dependent industries including: systems, optical fiber and components, and chipset vendors as well as universities, national laboratories, end-users, and consultants. For specific information about the IEEE P802.3ae visit their web site at <http://grouper.ieee.org/groups/802/3/ae/index.html>.

About 10 Gigabit Ethernet

Positioned as a high-speed, unifying technology for networking applications in LANs, MANs, and WANs, 10 Gigabit Ethernet will provide simple, high bandwidth at relatively low cost – “Ethernet Everywhere.” In LAN applications, 10 Gigabit Ethernet will enable organizations to scale their packet-based networks from 10 Mbps to 10,000 Mbps, thereby leveraging their investments in Ethernet. In MAN and WAN applications, 10 Gigabit Ethernet will enable service providers and others to create extremely high-speed links at very low cost. 10 Gigabit Ethernet will also support an option to use SONET/SDH for Layer 1 transport over optical infrastructure.

About the 10 Gigabit Ethernet Alliance

The 10 Gigabit Ethernet Alliance was organized to facilitate and accelerate the introduction of 10 Gigabit Ethernet into the networking market. It was founded by networking industry leaders: 3Com (NASDAQ: COMS), Cisco Systems (NASDAQ: CSCO), Extreme Networks (NASDAQ: EXTR), Intel (NASDAQ: INTC), Nortel Networks (NYSE: NT), Sun Microsystems (NASDAQ: SUNW), and World Wide Packets. Additionally, the Alliance will support the activities of IEEE 802.3 Ethernet committee, foster the development of the 802.3ae (10 Gigabit Ethernet) standard, and promote interoperability among 10 Gigabit Ethernet products. For more information, visit their Web site at <http://www.10gea.org>.

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