

## ***Appendix A - Ethernet Technology***

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This chapter will describe the features of the D-Link Web Smart Switch and provide some background information about Ethernet/Fast Ethernet/Gigabit Ethernet switching technology.

### ***Gigabit Ethernet Technology***

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Gigabit Ethernet is an extension of IEEE 802.3 Ethernet utilizing the same packet structure, format, and support for CSMA/CD protocol, full duplex, and management objects, but with a tenfold increase in theoretical throughput of over 100-Mbps Fast Ethernet and a hundredfold increase over 10-Mbps Ethernet. Since it is compatible with all 10-Mbps and 100-Mbps Ethernet environments, Gigabit Ethernet provides a straightforward upgrade without wasting existing investments in hardware, software, or trained personnel.

The increased speed and extra bandwidth offered by Gigabit Ethernet is essential in solving network bottlenecks, which frequently develops as more advanced computer users and newer applications continue to demand greater network resources. Upgrading key components, such as backbone connections and servers to Gigabit Ethernet technology, can greatly improve network response times as well as significantly speed up the traffic between subnets.

Gigabit Ethernet enables fast optical fiber connections to support video conferencing, complex imaging, and similar data-intensive applications. Likewise, since data transfers occur 10 times faster than Fast Ethernet, servers outfitted with Gigabit Ethernet NIC's are able to perform 10 times the number of operations in the same amount of time.

In addition, the phenomenal bandwidth delivered by Gigabit Ethernet is the most cost-effective method to take advantage of today and tomorrow's rapidly improving switching and routing internetworking technologies. With expected advances in the coming years in silicon technology and digital signal processing, which will enable Gigabit Ethernet to eventually operate over unshielded twisted-pair (UTP) cabling, a flexible foundation for the next generation of network technology products will be created. This will outfit your network with a powerful 1000-Mbps-capable backbone/server connection.

### ***Fast Ethernet Technology***

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The growing importance of LANs, and the increasing complexity of desktop computing applications, are fueling the need for high performance networks. A number of high-speed LAN technologies have been proposed to provide greater bandwidth and improve client/server response times. Among them, 100BASE-T (Fast Ethernet) provides a non-disruptive, smooth evolution from the current 10BASE-T technology. The non-disruptive and smooth evolution nature, and the dominating potential market base, virtually guarantees cost-effective and high performance Fast Ethernet solutions.

100Mbps Fast Ethernet is a standard specified by the IEEE 802.3 LAN committee. It is an extension of the 10Mbps Ethernet standard with the ability to transmit and receive data at 100Mbps, while maintaining the CSMA/CD Ethernet protocol. Since the 100Mbps Fast Ethernet is compatible with all other 10Mbps Ethernet environments, it provides a straightforward upgrade and utilizes existing investments in hardware, software, and personnel training.

### ***Switching Technology***

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Another approach to push beyond the limits of Ethernet technology is the development of switching technology. A switch bridges Ethernet packets at the MAC address level of the Ethernet protocol transmitting among connected Ethernet or Fast Ethernet LAN segments.

Switching is a cost-effective way of increasing the total network capacity available to users on a local area network. A switch increases capacity and decreases network loading by dividing a local area network into different segments, which won't compete with each other for network transmission capacity.

The switch acts as a high-speed selective bridge between the individual segments. The switch, without interfering with any other segments, automatically forwards traffic that needs to go from one segment to another. By doing this the total network capacity is multiplied, while still maintaining the same network cabling and adapter cards.