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TIA Approves Category 6 Telecommunications Cabling Standard

The US Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) has announced that the Category 6 standard for telecommunications cabling has been approved for publication as TIA/EIA-568-B.2-1. This addendum is part of the TIA/EIA-568-B series of commercial building cabling standards, which are the most successful standards published by TIA.

The new Category 6 standard, published on the 20th June 2002, specifies requirements for 100-ohm balanced twisted-pair cables, connecting hardware, patch cords, channels and permanent links, and provides test procedures for laboratory and field performance verification over the frequency range of 1 to 250 MHz. Because Category 6 supports positive power sum attenuation to crosstalk (PSACR) margins up to 200 MHz, this new cabling system offers double the bandwidth of Category 5e cabling and vastly improved signal-to-noise margins. The Category 6 standard also includes cable and connecting hardware balance recommendations for improved electromagnetic compatibility performance.

Category 6 cabling recognises advances in cabling technology and is designed to be backward compatible with categories 3, 5 and 5e. This ensures all applications operating on lower category cabling will be fully supported. Additionally, when different category components are mixed with Category 6 components, the resultant cabling will satisfy the category transmission requirements of the lower performing component. To ensure generic cabling system performance, Category 6 component requirements are specified to be interoperable when products from different manufacturers are mated.

According to Bob Jensen Chair of the US TIA TR-42 Standards Committee that developed the standard, the publication of the Category 6 standard represents a milestone in the history of commercial building cabling specification. "Category 6 facilitates data throughput previously unachievable over balanced twisted-pair cabling. TIA and the ATM Forum have already published gigabit applications standards to operate over Category 6 cabling. We anticipate applications groups to begin development of protocols supporting even higher throughput over Category 6 cabling".

Copies of the **TIE-EIA-568-B.2-1** Addendum and the complete TIA/EIA-568-B Series can be obtained from TIA UK, the official distributor of EIA/TIA, BS, EN, ETSI and other Standards - contact diane.read@tia.org.uk.

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About TIA

The Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) is the leading trade association serving the communications and information technology industry in the UK, with proven strengths in market development, international and domestic trade shows and trade missions, supporting standards development, enabling e-business, arbitration and dispute resolution. Through its worldwide activities, the Association facilitates business development opportunities and a competitive market environment. The Association provides a market-focused forum for its 300 member companies that manufacturer, supply and support the products and services used in global communications. Visit us at www.tia.org.uk.

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