

FOREWORD

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It's 2019, and Fibre Channel continues to remain the premier storage fabric connectivity protocol in today's data centers. Fibre Channel is deployed by thousands of customers in their data centers around the world and 80–90% of all All-Flash storage arrays are connected to servers via Fibre Channel. Customers have recently made a considerable investment in Gen 6 (32GFC), and given the 4-5-year depreciation cycle, this equipment will continue to run critical business applications requiring reliable, fast and scalable storage infrastructure.

The NVMe over Fibre Channel (FC-NVMe) standard is published, and we see products being announced and released in the market across the board. Customers who have made investments in Fibre Channel will leverage the same hardware to run FC-NVMe. That just makes common sense. The INCITS T11 standards body is continuing to work diligently on the second version of FC-NVMe, which will greatly increase the reliability and stability of NVMe over Fabrics with FC-NVMe. We have an article on this specific topic in this year's Solutions Guide.

The fact that Fibre Channel was built from the ground up, and with an intense focus on enterprise storage array connectivity, gives FC-NVMe a unique edge over other network protocol standards in terms of rock-solid reliability, unmatched performance and massive scalability. The same solid foundation will get leveraged by NVMe over Fabrics for traditional applications that require the gold standard for performance - the "five nines of availability," meaning 99.999% of network uptime.

For the past few decades, several challengers have emerged, and folks have questioned if Fibre Channel's days are over, yet 2018 was a year of growth for Fibre Channel in terms of both ports and revenue. We have several good reads in the Guide this year on why this growth is happening and the details behind it. Also, the Fibre Channel roadmap continues to be robust. We have the next two generations of the technology mapped out and technologists are diligently working on delivering. To top it off, we have articles on the Media and Entertainment vertical market and a special focus on Security which continues to remain top of mind for CIO's.

Enjoy the Guide and learn more about the value that Fibre Channel can bring to your environment!