

FOREWORD

By Rupin Mohan, Marketing Chairman, FCIA

It's 2018, and Fibre Channel continues to remain the dominant SAN fabric protocol in today's data centers. Fibre Channel is deployed in 90 percent of the Fortune 1000 data centers in the world and 80 - 90 percent of all All-Flash storage arrays are connected to servers via Fibre Channel. The fact that Fibre Channel was built from the ground up, and with an intense focus on enterprise storage array connectivity, gives the technology a unique edge over other networking technologies in terms of rock-solid reliability, unmatched performance and massive scalability.

The protocol was designed by an extremely talented team of engineers in T11 from the stalwarts of storage companies in the industry. Today, I would estimate that 80 percent of the protocol processing is done in the ASIC due to the deterministic nature of the protocol. Every bit in every byte is spelled with a purpose in the protocol. This gives the protocol its unique characteristics. For the past few decades, several challengers have emerged, and folks have questioned if FC's days are over. Well, we can comfortably say that the truth is far from that.

As you will see from our roadmap, we have the next two generations of the technology mapped out and technologists are diligently working on delivering the roadmap. We have an excellent track record. NVMe over Fibre Channel (FC-NVMe) standard is published, and we see products being announced and released in the market. The standards body is working on the second version of FC-NVMe, which will greatly increase the reliability and stability of NVMe over Fabrics with FC-NVMe. We discuss the design considerations for FC-NVMe in the Solution Guide. Also, in this year's Guide, you will learn about peer zoning and target-driven peer zoning that greatly simplifies and automates zoning in your FC SAN. You will also learn about FICON, and in the end, we close it with an article on how to choose your SAN. I hope you enjoy the Guide.