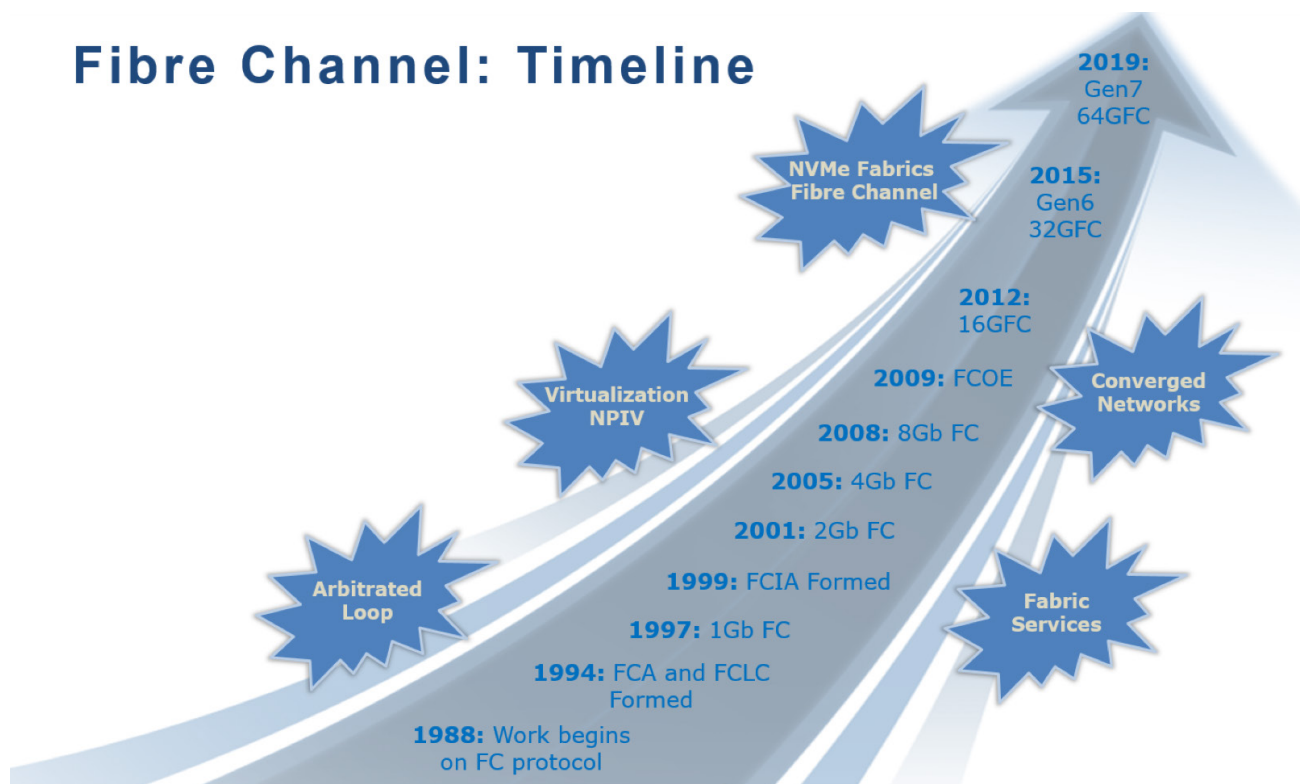# FCIA PRESIDENT INTRODUCTION

By Mark Jones, FCIA President; Director of Technical Marketing, Broadcom Inc., ECD

2019 marks the 25th anniversary of the Fibre Channel Industry Association (FCIA). In July of 1999, it was announced the non-profit organizations FCA (Fibre Channel Association) and FCLC (Fibre Channel Loop Community) would merge, forming what is now known as the FCIA. Both organizations date back five years before 1994, even before the SNIA (Storage Networking Industry Association) was formed, which was in 1998. In addition to the FCIA milestone, INCITS T11, the standards body that creates the Fibre Channel industry standards, recently celebrated its continuous 100th bi-monthly face-to-face meeting, signaling that the coalition for the Fibre Channel industry is still going strong!

Fibre Channel: Timeline

2019: Gen7 64GFC

2015: Gen6 32GFC

NVMe Fabrics Fibre Channel

2012: 16GFC

2009: FCOE

Converged Networks

Virtualization NPIV

2008: 8Gb FC

2005: 4Gb FC

2001: 2Gb FC

1999: FCIA Formed

Arbitrated Loop

1997: 1Gb FC

Fabric Services

1994: FCA and FCLC Formed

1988: Work begins on FC protocol

The years have been good for the pioneering storage network technology, and in 2019 we've witnessed a resurgence in Fibre Channel adoption. Dell'Oro reports that Fibre Channel SAN revenue approached $2.5B in 2018, up 22% over 2017. Fibre Channel HBA and switch port shipments are also up 11% over 2017 to 7.7M representing an accumulation of over 127M ports shipped since 2001! In the last five years alone, 40M of those ports have been shipped, which illustrates just how large of a footprint Fibre Channel has in today's data centers. This is not what most of the industry press and analysts predicted, so why does Fibre Channel continue to be so popular?

FCIA

FIBRE CHANNEL INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Popular Fibre Channel Attributes	
Air Gap Redundancy	Best practice of physically separated SAN's, for example SAN A and B, gives customers the redundancy and no single point of failure
Backwards Compatibility	Each Generation of Fibre Channel is backward compatible two generations allowing for ease of migration to new technology generations
Cable Compatibility	Fibre Channel products have a history of cable and connector compatibility, which allows for seamless growth of structured cabling plants within the datacenter
High Performance	For 25 years, the FCIA roadmap has predictably managed a doubling of bandwidth every 3-5 years, keeping pace with data center technology refresh cycles
Datacenter Scale Manageability	Fabric services like zoning and name services offer industry unique levels of control and manageability
Link Efficiency	By design, Fibre Channel uses a buffer credit congestion management algorithm that allows for the highest fabric utilization without congestion slowdowns
Low Latency	Fibre Channel is inherently low latency

Another explanation for the recent resurgence in Fibre Channel growth is often attributed to the trend in the IT Industry of returning from deficient attempts to move towards the failed promises of overhyped new technology. A recent ESG article points to a study that revealed 41% of businesses surveyed last year brought at least one workload back from the cloud, citing security concerns as the number one reason.

The move towards all-flash arrays (AFA) continues to ramp up with double-digit growth expected through 2025. Nearly all of the major AFA vendors ship arrays with Fibre Channel ports included. This is necessitated by the extreme performance requirements of flash and NVMe storage, driving the growth of host HBAs and fabric switches. The completion of the T11 FC-NVMe specification in 2018 has resulted in nearly all Fibre Channel component suppliers providing NVMe over Fabrics solutions into the marketplace. In fact, of the major leading storage array vendors that have released NVMe over Fabrics connectivity, they have done so by leading with Fibre Channel FC-NVMe solutions.

In 2017, FCIA launched an Education Committee to amplify our outreach to Fibre Channel end users and developers by presenting live webcasts and blogging on important topics involving Fibre Channel technology. The topics range from entry-level education on current Fibre Channel usage to advanced topics and discussions on new advancements. We're very excited to already have over 3,700 subscribers to the channel as well as a strong number of visitors viewing the offline materials.

We encourage all those interested in learning more about Fibre Channel solutions to visit our BrightTALK channel.

The live FCIA presentations are hosted on the BrightTALK FCIA channel at www.brighttalk.com/channel/14967/the-fibre-channel-industry-association-fcia.

The FCIA webcasts are available for replay at your convenience, with presentation downloads and Q&A notes at fibrechannel.org/webcasts.

In addition to the FCIA BrightTALK channel, we encourage everyone to join in on the conversation by engaging with FCIA in our various social media channels:

Twitter: twitter.com/FCIAnews handle is @FCIANews

Facebook: www.facebook.com/FCIAnews

LinkedIn Company Page: www.linkedin.com/company/fibre-channel-industry-association

LinkedIn Group: www.linkedin.com/groups/138758

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[1]*Dell' Oro – Q418 Dell'Oro Worldwide SAN Report.*

[2]*ESG, 1/7/19, 2019 Data Storage Predictions: More Cloud Missteps, FC Is Back, and Finding Data Holds Back AI*