

## Author

### Mike Gilmore

Senior Partner of The Cabling Partnership ([www.it-cabling.com](http://www.it-cabling.com))  
Managing Director of e-Ready Building Limited  
P.O. Box MT65, Leeds, United Kingdom. LS17 8YD.  
e-mail: [mike.gilmore@e-readybuilding.com](mailto:mike.gilmore@e-readybuilding.com)  
Telephone: +44 (0) 113 232 3721

See last page for biographical details



The IT cabling infrastructure  
division of  
e-Ready Building Limited

The IT cabling consultants

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Next generation IT infrastructures

## **“SWEAT THE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET” – if you can remember how!** by **Mike Gilmore, FIA Technical Director for Networking+ (September 2009)**

In recession, most conscientious organisations look at ways of cutting costs – both capital and operational. Areas hit by spending curbs range across all divisions and functions. Information technology and telecommunications equipment expenditure was an obvious target and the gravy train of ever-increasing network data rates came off the rails. Most recently, the focus has turned to cabling infrastructures. The concept of “sweating the asset” has been applied with vigour - firstly, by reviewing the true needs of the organisation over the next few years and then by auditing the performance of the existing infrastructures against the transmission demands of the re-validated objectives.

This process has produced interesting results - if not definite trends. The results split generally along technology boundaries. Somewhat surprisingly, optical fibre cabling faces more radical overhaul than its copper counterparts - this is in part due to the fact that the transmission “leaps” have been steeper in optical technology. By comparison, copper cabling installed more than ten years ago has been reassessed against the needs of networks such as Gigabit Ethernet and found to be perfectly “fit for purpose”.

Unfortunately many IT and telecommunications specialists have been more influenced by suppliers performance promises of higher cable Categories and have actually forgotten how to validate performance against the original networking requirements. Trade associations such the FIA and TIA-B can provide the expertise necessary and are a useful source of impartial advice.

It is clear that optical fibre backbones are much cheaper to upgrade than horizontal copper infrastructures and provide much greater benefit. But it may be that capital expenditure can be restricted or removed without any appreciable risk to medium term networking plans.

For further advice, e-mail [jane@fiasec.demon.co.uk](mailto:jane@fiasec.demon.co.uk) or, alternatively, you can contact the FIA Secretariat on 01763 273039.

The Cabling Partnership  
P. O. Box MT 65, LEEDS, West Yorkshire, LS17 8YD, England  
Telephone: +44 (0) 113 232 3721

The Cabling Partnership is a division of e-Ready Building Limited  
Company Registration No. 4432595 Registered Office - Emery House, 192 Heaton Moor Road, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 4DU.

## Biography

As the Technical and Standards Director of the UK Fibreoptic Industry Association, Mike is heavily involved in the development of training and competence standards for the fibre installation industry and sets down policy in this area. In addition he chairs the audit and arbitration committees for the FIA. His book "Fibre optic cabling; theory design and installation practice" published in 1991 remains a reference for both experts and entrants into this field.

Mike also initiated the establishment of the Telecommunications Infrastructure Advisory Board (TIA-B) along with the relevant directors of its other host organisations CMA and ECA-ITEC.

In the UK, Mike is Chairman of TCT7, the BSI Technical Committee responsible for the three panels on telecommunication cabling. He also chairs two of these panels (TCT7/-/1 and TCT7/-/3) and is Secretary of TCT7/-/2. TCT7/-/1 and TCT7/-/2 act to assist development of European and international standards for the design and installation of telecommunications cabling respectively. TCT7/-/2 also manages the implementation of these standards in the UK, where necessary producing supporting national standards.

Mike is involved in CENELEC TC215 - as Convenor of Working Group 1 and Secretary of Working Group 2. These committees are responsible for the development of an integrated series of standards for the design and installation of telecommunications cabling in a range of premises. In 2008 he led the ETSI STF362 on energy efficiency in broadband deployment resulting in the ETSI TS 105174 series documents, allowing Mike to assist in a new TC215 activity covering data centre facilities and infrastructures (monitored in the UK by BSI TCT7/-/3).

At international level, Mike is Convenor of the Cabling Implementation Task Group (CITG) within ISO/IEC JTC1 SC25 WG3. This group is responsible for the strategic management of the international standards covering the specification, QA, installation, administration, operation, maintenance and repair of generic cabling. This work supports all the cabling design standards produced by ISO/IEC JTC1 SC25 WG3 including ISO/IEC 11801, ISO/IEC 15018, ISO/IEC 24764 and ISO/IEC 24702 for industrial premises produced by ISO/IEC JTC1 SC25 WG3 IPTG (also convened by Mike Gilmore).

Mike is a regular speaker at seminars and conferences in all five continents. He has provided the keynote address and opening presentation in many conferences in the UK, Germany and the Netherlands. His seminars, providing regular updates on the progression of cabling standards are particularly well attended and are operating in the UK and continental Europe.



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