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FCIA Announces Results of the 8Gbs Disk Vote

April 29, 2004. San Francisco, CA. -- The Fibre Channel Industry Association (FCIA) and its sister association, the Fibre Channel Industry Association–Japan (FCIA-J), today announced that its members have ratified the extension of the Fibre Channel roadmap to include 8Gbs Fibre Channel (8GFC) for copper backplanes and copper cable storage device interconnects. Fibre Channel is the major technology used in disk drives, drive controllers, intra-cabinet and short distance inter-cabinet storage area networking applications. The vote supports the ANSI INCITS T11 Technical Committee development of the 8Gbs Fibre Channel electrical (copper) interface in its FC-PI-4 standard and ensures that Fibre Channel continues to provide the highest performance available for storage interconnects.

Cost Effective Fibre Channel Migration Preserves Current Investments

While noting that its member companies are at the present time introducing new families of 4GFC and 10GFC products to the market, the FCIA explained that there is value in sharing the roadmap with customers. They can use the information that it contains on future product directions to plan a smooth migration to higher speed products when they become available with assurances that continued Fibre Channel investments will be completely cost effective, and backward compatible with legacy Fibre Channel products. When 8GFC products become available, expected to be in the 2007-2008 time frame, customers will be able to preserve their 2GFC and 4GFC device investments and avoid a costly 'fork lift' replacement. The "auto-negotiation" feature of Fibre Channel enables 8GFC products to automatically sense and adapt to the data rate capability of connected lower speed Fibre Channel products without user intervention. For example, when

attaching to a 4GFC product, an 8GFC product will automatically run at 4GFC. 4GFC products will be introduced this year. It is anticipated that they will enjoy broad market acceptance over the next several years as Fibre Channel continues to be the storage and SAN interconnect of choice throughout all small and large businesses.

"We are pleased that FCIA has once again helped prevent industry fragmentation by providing a clear and concise roadmap for future Fibre Channel migration as well as providing invaluable market feedback into the Fibre Channel standards community. With 8GFC on the roadmap, Fibre Channel's future as a storage device serial interconnect is ensured by meeting future performance demands while preserving the current and ongoing investments that users make in the technology. Our roadmap enables suppliers and users to plan future products and architectures that complement the proven track record of Fibre Channel disk and tape applications. Providing all the benefits of full backward compatibility to the large, rapidly growing Fibre Channel installed base, 8GFC will deliver the highest device-level performance for applications that leverage SCSI software technology", said Skip Jones, Chairman of the Fibre Channel Industry Association Speed Forum Committee.

"Fibre Channel has been the high-throughput environment of choice for enterprise storage professionals," said Mike Karp, Senior Analyst with **Enterprise Management Associates**. "This graceful move to 8Gbs over copper continues the development of Fibre Channel, and makes it clear that Fibre Channel vendors are prepared to continue driving the technology to meet increasing IT demands."

"As a leading provider of Fibre Channel components, we are committed to delivering solutions our customers require," said Dave Allen, vice president and general manager of **Agilent's** Networking Solutions Business Unit. "We expect to deliver Tachyon controllers and physical layer components to our customers when the 8 Gb/s Fibre Channel market materializes."

"Emulex is fully behind the move to 8 Gb/s Fibre Channel since it will result in a logical and cost-effective speed migration for end users," said Mike Smith, executive vice president of Worldwide Marketing for **Emulex Corporation**. "The voting results seen today reflect that the FCIA and its members are closely attuned to end users' best interests. Today's vote on backplane and copper interconnects will aid all Fibre Channel users in their ability to make strategic planning decisions, and will keep Fibre Channel ahead of the curve in delivering increased performance levels."

"As the established leader in Fibre Channel Testing products, **Finisar** supports the FCIA's move to 8Gb/s Fibre Channel," said, Kevin Cornell, Finisar's Sr. Vice President, General Manager,

Network Tools Division. "Finisar will continue to demonstrate its market leadership and deliver 8Gb/s test and analysis products in advance of our customer's expectations."

"Fibre Channel at the device level will continue to be extremely important and we are confident that 8Gb/s transfer rates will deliver substantial benefits to customers," said Doug Pickford, director of market planning and strategy, Enterprise Hard Drive Business Unit, **Hitachi Global Storage Technologies**. "Performance gains in the interface however, will be evolutionary. Hitachi recently demonstrated a 4Gb/s FCAL data transfer, which is a significant development milestone and will be the speed of choice for the next few years until 8Gb/s products are available later this decade."

"I-TECH endorses the FCIA's move to support 8Gbs Fibre Channel with backward compatibility to lower transfer rates. We respect our customers' investments by consistently promoting backward compatibility in our test solutions. By offering backward compatibility in 8GFC, the FCIA enables test vendors to shorten their time to market, which is essential in providing leading-edge technology to Fibre Channel device developers," said **I-TECH** CEO Steve Bucher.

"As the market leader in Fibre Channel ASICs shipping 80% of the silicon, **LSI Logic** is investing R&D dollars in developing next generation GigaBlaze 8G SERDES cores to support this next advance in storage interconnection technology. We will continue to leverage our position to be a leader in the 8G market as we have in previous generations," said Dave Jones, vice president and general manager of LSI Logic's Storage ASICs division.

"PMC-Sierra supports FCIA's roadmap to 8Gb/s for next-generation Fibre Channel storage systems as it provides our customers with significant performance improvement while maintaining backward compatibility," said Mark Stibitz, vice president and general manager of PMC-Sierra's Enterprise and Storage Division. "**PMC-Sierra** looks forward to enabling the 8Gb/s market by providing low cost silicon solutions that leverage its world class mixed-signal expertise."

"Fibre Channel solutions at 8Gb/s will help ensure that the required bandwidth to serve system clients will continue to be available as enterprise data content continues to grow in size and scale," said Gary Gentry, **Seagate Technology** vice president of Strategic Marketing and Planning. "As the number one supplier of Fibre Channel drives and pioneer of Fibre Channel technology, Seagate is committed to further developing its range of best-in-class Fibre Channel storage solutions at 8 Gb/s to meet the needs of tomorrow's enterprise."

According to Frank Berry, vice president of marketing for **QLogic Corporation**, "Our storage customers are looking to satisfy the insatiable appetite that applications like Rich Media have for I/O bandwidth. New 8Gb/s technology responds with double the available bandwidth while delivering 100% backwards compatibility with existing 4Gb/s products. The vote to extend the Fibre Channel road map also validates the importance of the FCIA in accelerating the transformation of industry standards into end user solutions."

"As one of the earliest adopters of 4GFC, we are pleased with the 8GFC direction as it offers a clear roadmap and path to the future for the Fibre Channel community." said John Howarth Sr. Director of Marketing, **Xyratex** International.

Fibre Channel's growth continues to accelerate as more and more end-users take advantage of an all Fibre Channel storage infrastructure. End-users are looking to do more with less. Storage Networking based on Fibre Channel technology fills that need by providing high performance, lower cost of implementation through better leverage, and increased interoperability through the use of standards-based technology. It has been proven that the adoption of standards-based technology allows end-users to deploy best of breed solutions. Companies of all sizes have recognized the value of supporting standards-based Fibre Channel technology as evidenced by the current growth of the Fibre Channel market.

About FCIA

The Fibre Channel Industry Association (FCIA) is a nonprofit international organization of manufacturers, systems integrators, developers, systems vendors, industry professionals and end users. With 80 member companies and FCIA affiliates in the United States and Japan, FCIA is committed to delivering a broad base of Fibre Channel infrastructure to support a wide array of industry applications within the mass storage and IT-based arenas. FCIA working groups focus on specific aspects of the technology, targeting both vertical and horizontal markets including storage, video, networking and SAN management. For more information on FCIA, please visit our web site: www.fibrechannel.org, contact us: info@fibrechannel.org or call 1-415-561-6270.