

Have you LANded?

*Dick Parent – Network Consultant
Electro Standards Laboratories*

What is a LAN?

A (**LAN**) **L**ocal **A**rea **N**etwork is a group of computers that are located in a limited geographical area. Connected devices may be on one floor or several floors of a single building. **LANs** may differ in physical configurations called topologies, protocols being used, and installation media type (i.e. coax, twisted pair and etc.). **LANs** have the single purpose of providing communication for computers and other devices.

Why should you install a LAN?

LANs provide the means of connecting computers from various manufacturers together, allowing them to communicate and share resources. Installing a **LAN** will allow sharing of data files, peripherals such as printers and modems, and other valuable resources used in any working environment. **LANs** are not restricted to an office environment; they can and are installed everywhere devices need to interact or communicate. Installed **LANs** are meeting the needs of industry, construction, health care, education, the small business and large corporations alike. Improving efficiencies and the economics of business are primary reasons why **Local Area Networks** are being installed at an ever-increasing rate. Other factors that determine when a **LAN** is required are the need to backup critical data files and to share access to expensive software, color printers, high performance printers, plotters, copiers, scanners and other devices. **LANs** enable access to internal and external E-mail, company-wide calendars, and the Internet. With rapidly growing e-business requirements, the Internet provides a wealth of information exceeding all the expectations of every company department, a perfect application for **Local Area Networks**!

When do you need a LAN?

Many offices and other facilities are still not networked; “Sneakers net” runs wild. Companies are still asking, “When do I need a **LAN**?” Often, until the aggravation is great, decisions are not made. So, the right time to have a **LAN** installed is when your “need to” list becomes acutely evident.

- The need to easier and faster access to information to improve the performance and efficiency of a company, thereby decreasing production cost.
- To reduce downtime of expensive machinery.
- To keep assembly instructions current and updated.
- To reduce inventory and warehouse management costs.
- To improve the effectiveness of the shipping and receiving department.
- To improve manufacturing by using technologically advanced equipment, sending instructions via a network to manufacture and assemble a final product.
- To improve the communication between departments and provide critical information on a daily basis effecting operations.
- To communicate with customers, vendors and others in timely and efficient manner.
- To improve all aspects of your company’s performance.
- To increase your profit margins and add to the bottom-line.

How do I install a LAN?

There are several methods one can take to implement a **Local Area Network**. You can install something “down and dirty;” talk to a friend and other business acquaintance; you can read about **LANs**; you can even visit one of the computer retail stores and get advice; or you can get professional assistance from a network consultant.

Many questions need to be asked and answered prior to installing a **LAN** to insure that your investment is a fiscally sound one. What is the intended use of the network, the longevity of the installed products, and the cost all need to be considered. A networking professional can help you provide all the answers you need to make an educated decision for **WHY**, **WHEN** and **HOW** to install a **Local Area Network**.

Are you now ready to LANd?

Electro Standards Laboratories offers Network Engineering Services. For more information, call ESL at 401-943-1164 or contact us via our E-mail, eslab@ElectroStandards.com 