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Ethernet and Carrier Networks

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Ethernet became popular in local area networks years ago. You had structured cabling, before structured cabling it was unstructured cabling. Do any of you guys remember that thick black coax cable above the ceiling rafters? There you are, good, good thanks I just remember the one coming down.

Do any of you remember when Token Ring was bigger than Ethernet? Yes, so we had some proprietary structured Ethernet. This first chart shows shared Ethernet and Token Ring we had FDDI, ATM. Does anybody remember Daisy Systems? Alright, and Proteon? Great, Cabletron? Yes, yes.

Anyhow, shared Ethernet in enterprises was quite popular in the 90's and then sometime around this early 90's timeframe we came to switched 10Mbps Ethernet which only lasted a couple of quarters. Then BAM! The market shifted over to 100Mbps switched Ethernet. It was Howard's company and a couple of others that just turned the whole market on its ear. Look at the scale on the y axis of the chart. Switched Ethernet rapidly grew to a \$10B market. This chart reflects just Ethernet switches—there are also Ethernet adapters, Ethernet connections in optical transport equipment, etc. But Ethernet switches are the mother of Ethernet here in the LAN and sales off manufacturers docks in 2012 were about \$20B.

Ethernet started out in Carrier networks back in the early 2000 timeframe using the LAN type of equipment. But then we got these Carrier style Ethernet switches and routers, and as you can see they started replacing those Frame Relay ATM switches. You can see Ethernet in Carrier networks this is a relatively new market and it's growing quite rapidly. New applications like LTE will probably drive it even further.

By Tam Dell'Oro, Founder & President, Dell'Oro Group

(Courtesy: NetEvents)