

PATCH CORD DATA SHEET UPDATE

DID YOU KNOW?

The quality of your patch cords plays a key role in determining the quality of your network.

WAIT, DESCRIBE A PATCH CORD.

- a short length of cable (1–5 m long) with connectors on each end
- connects PCs, modems, phones, fax machines, etc., to wall outlets and cross-connects to hubs
- also known as a “cable assembly,” “patch cable” or “jumper”
- the weakest element in a communications cabling system
- cheapest and easiest component to replace

WHY ARE PATCH CORDS SO ESSENTIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF A NETWORK?

Patch cords vary vastly in performance; they are inherently difficult to manufacture consistently and difficult to test. Many users don't introduce their cords and PCs into the system until after the outlet and horizontal cabling have been tested. Any time your patch cords don't match the characteristics of the in-wall cabling and connectors, your network performance will suffer.

CAN YOU PROVE THEIR IMPORTANCE?

Our recent innovations in testing have shown what we long suspected:

- Not all patch cords are created equal.
- Patch cords are crucial to computer network speed and performance.

Until we invented one, no one had a practical method of quantifying a patch cord's individual performance. The only means of measuring patch cord performance required cutting the cable in half, which left two useless halves of what might have been a high-performance patch cord. In the past we qualified a patch cord in a channel (the sequence of PC to patch cord to wall outlet to horizontal cabling to cross-connect to patch cord to hub). If the channel passed, the cord was good—but it could never be unplugged.

Now, however, we have an actual patch cord performance specification. In other words we're the only provider of patch cords that have been tested both as individual components and as part of a channel.

WHY IS THERE SUCH VARIANCE IN PATCH CORD PERFORMANCE?

- Some companies manufacture their patch cords with scrap cable or cable that doesn't meet Levels standards.
- Some companies use inferior connectors.
- Materials, consistency, manufacturing quality and techniques vary from excellent to atrocious in one or all areas.
- And, until now, we couldn't test the performance for a patch cord.

You can avoid many of these poor-performance pitfalls by giving as much thought to the patch cord you install as to the other components of your network.

If you want assurance that your patch cords will help rather than hinder your network, see if they are ALC-certified.

WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT ALC PATCH CORDS?

- made with Levels-rated cable and enhanced connectors
- exceed all the standards (including TIA/EIA-568-A Addendum 4 and the proposed Addendum 5, as well as ISO and ICEA)
- rated for a specific ALC channel (5, 6 or 7)—for example, Berk-Tek/Ortronics ALC patch cords are part of a warranted Berk-Tek/Ortronics channel

WHAT IF I'M NOT OPTING FOR AN ANIXTER LEVELS CHANNEL?

Our generic ALC patch cords are enhanced cords individually tested to our performance specs. They offer great performance and can “tune up” the network that you already have.

HOW DO I KNOW THAT I'M GETTING THE RIGHT PATCH CORD?

Whether it's designed to be part of a new or existing installation, this is the protocol to follow when it comes to choosing a patch cord.

1. Match the existing channel.

- Put in the patch cords that were designed to work with the entire system.
- Patch cords are designed to work best with components from the same manufacturer or from manufacturers who design their products to work with that patch cord.

If all your cable and connectors are from Lucent Technologies, you should buy Lucent Technologies' patch cords.

2. If you can't match the existing channel, match the cable in your patch cords to the cable in your walls.

- Electrical values are generally consistent across a company's cabling inventory.
- Consistency in cabling translates into higher network performance.

If your in-wall cabling is Belden, use patch cords that use Belden cabling.

3. If you can't match the cable, match the plugs and jacks.

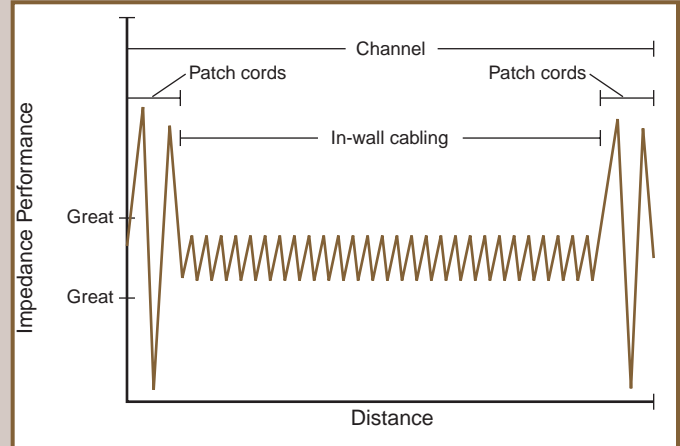
- Connectivity manufacturers tune their systems to perform best with "matched" or "tuned" materials.
- Components in mismatched systems obviously won't work as well.
- Pairing a plug from one company and a jack from another can't match the optimum performance you get with plugs and jacks from the same company.
- Match the plugs/connectors of patch cords to those in the wall outlets.

If your wall connectors are KRONE, use patch cords with KRONE plugs.

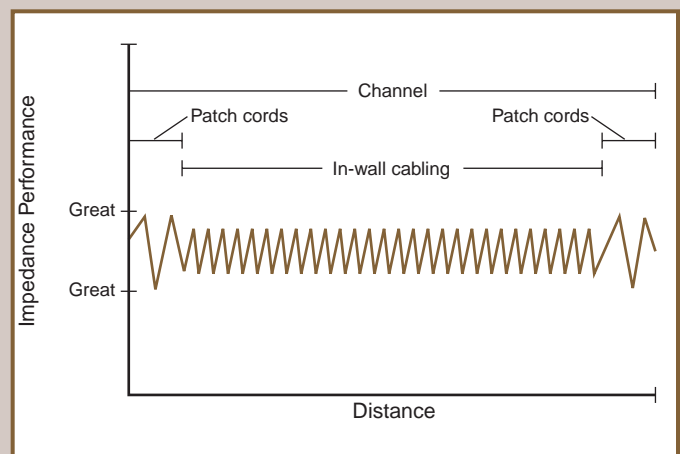
4. If you can't match the plugs and jacks, look to ALC 6 generic cords for a "tune-up."

- Our generic cords are priced in line with Cat 5 and "Cat 5E" cords but offer the confidence of higher performing cable that has been tested to meet demanding networks.
- While our ALC 5 cords are tested beyond Cat 5E, we recommend only ALC 6 cords for tune-ups.

NETWORK WITH NON-ANIXTER PATCH CORDS



NETWORK WITH ANIXTER PATCH CORDS



Patch cords can dramatically affect network performance. ALC patch cords ensure you get the performance you need.

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