

Link Fault Pass Through To Identify Network Failure

Link Fault Pass Through (LFPT) is a diagnostic feature that allows network personnel to visually identify a fault on a network segment. Media converters provide the necessary copper to fiber solution, but often do not offer SNMP management. More importantly, installations may not require SNMP, as the core switches in the network are responsible for fault notification.

When a media converter has a physical attribute of enabling/disabling a diagnostic feature such as LFPT via a DIP Switch, it provides a fault notification through the segments from the point of failure to the local network equipment location. The network admin can take the immediate action of troubleshooting and repairing the damaged segment.

The MiniMc with LFPT is a compact media converter with an LFPT DIP Switch. A versatile product, it is often installed in kiosks at airports. While a fiber infrastructure is pulled throughout the airport, each kiosk often has a copper interface, to connect to transactional machines. Without LFPT, if a fault occurs on the fiber segment, it is not reported all the way back to the multiport switch in the local equipment room, and the network personnel are not aware of a fault until an unhappy kiosk owner tells them he cannot process a sale.

Another application example is a campus environment, where a main location is connected, via leased fiber, to satellite locations. The MiniMc with LFPT performs the task of not only converting fiber to copper (inside the building), but extinguishing LEDs on itself and the link partner (a switch), to indicate a fault on the line.

In summary, LFPT is a viable way to physically identify a network failure, and to begin troubleshooting and resolving it before the customer realizes it. This feature can contribute to reduced network downtime, an important part of accountability in networks today.