

Light Peak? No, Thunderbolt

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Formerly known as Light Peak, Intel's connection technology-- now known as Thunderbolt-- is currently available in LaCie and Promise HDDs, as well as Apple's latest MacBook Pro laptops.



Using x5 copper wire pairs (2 handling uploads, 2 handling downloads, 1 for side channel traffic) over PCI-E (on motherboard) and DisplayPort, Thunderbolt carries up to 10Gbit/s of bidirectional data transfer-- 2x faster than USB 3.0 (or 12x faster than FireWire 800).

It also handles data synchronisation across daisy-chained devices and carries up to 10W of power.

Of course Intel is looking for Thunderbolt usage by other vendors other than its Cupertino launch partner, primarily in the market's premium and workstation sections.

Intel says non-Apple systems carrying Thunderbolt should be start shipping by early 2012, while an optical Thunderbolt connection will be out later this year.

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