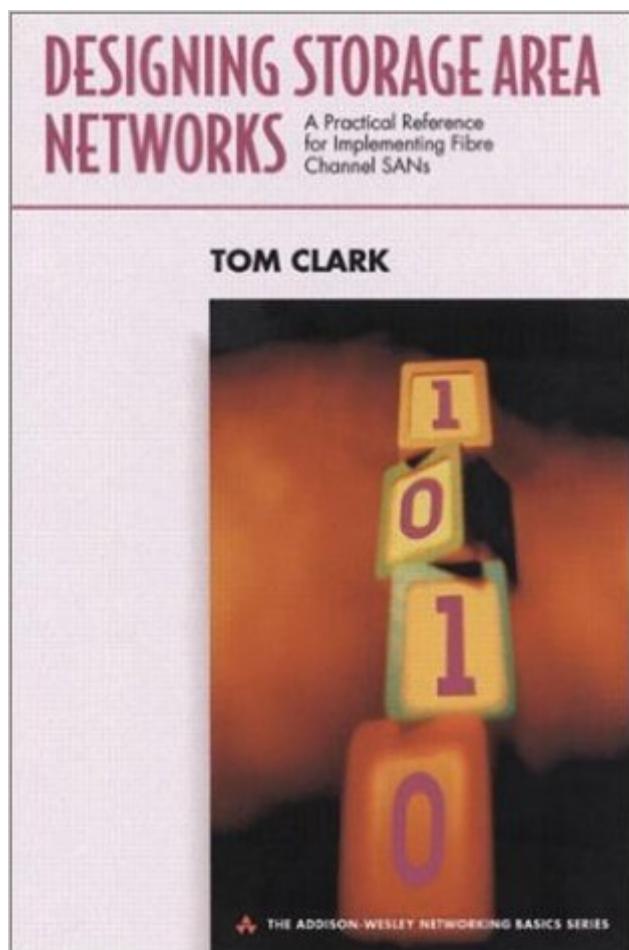


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# Designing Storage Area Networks



## Synopsis

Storage Area Networks (SANs) powered by Fibre Channel technology far exceed the capabilities of traditional storage and throughput methods and are quickly becoming the solution of choice for organizations that require high-volume data handling capacity. Written for network developers, technical staff, IT consultants, administrators, and managers, *Designing Storage Area Networks* goes far beyond a straight description of Fibre Channel specifications and standards; it offers practical guidelines for implementing and utilizing SANs to solve the real-world needs of business networks. This concise design and implementation guide introduces Fibre Channel SAN technology and demonstrates exactly how it can be used to address specific application challenges—from server clustering to ISP hosting, server-free tape backup to full-motion video. With this book, you will learn how Fibre Channel works and how to organize Fibre Channel components into an effective, scalable design; and you will discover today's best methods for managing storage area networks and volumes, including new troubleshooting techniques. You will find coverage of such vital topics as:

- \* Fibre Channel layers
- \* Gigabit transport and gigabit interface converters (GBICs)
- \* Flow control
- \* Point-to-point topology
- \* Arbitrated Loops and Arbitrated Loop hubs
- \* Switching hubs
- \* Fabrics and fabric switches
- \* Host bus adapters
- \* Fibre Channel RAID and Fibre Channel JBODs
- \* Fibre Channel-to-SCSI bridges
- \* SAN management and problem isolation techniques
- \* Building extended SANs

Most important, the book features detailed case studies that demonstrate how SANs can solve a number of commonly encountered business challenges, including LAN-free and server-free tape backup, server clustering, and disaster recovery. As an information systems professional, you must keep pace with this powerful new technology. This book will serve as your guide to understanding the implications of Fibre Channel SANs and successfully applying them to the needs of your organization.

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## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is perhaps one of the best introductory books on a technical subject that I have read. The information is well sequenced, and leads you from simple to complex without having to constantly flip back to earlier sections. I recommend this book to anyone needing to learn about fibre channel & SANs, especially before you go on to more detailed material.

As a career information technology manager and consultant, currently working in storage area network deployments, I found the book to meet some of my expectations, but miss the boat on others. A very user-friendly and surprisingly detailed (at times) overview of storage area networking. The basics of the fiber channel protocol and network elements were covered, providing the reader with a firm, yet easy-to-digest foundation in SAN. Other applications, such as disaster recovery, fault tolerance, requirements gathering and analysis, clustering, and backups were also discussed. The book definitely packed a lot of information in a very small space (~170 pages of text). The greatest weakness of the version that I read (4th printing in 1999), presumably the latest available, was that it focused heavily on arbitrated loop design, and not so much on next generation switch fabrics. The complex arbitrated loop applications that it used as examples have been made obsolete by much simpler, feature-rich fabric switched solutions. And ultra-scalable (cascaded switched fabric) networks were almost entirely ignored. An update on this book is desperately needed, or else it runs the risk of being a history text more than the introductory and quick-reference manual it was intended to be. Definitely worth the money if you are a beginner needing an overview or if you can get a used copy.

This book is deceptively small. Its not even a half inch thick but it is non-stop packed with information... Most books with this much information would be at least 3 times as thick. It is an absolute bargain for the amount of information contained within it. In particular, it goes into great amount of detail on Fibre Channel and the protocols that build SANs. The review of SAN

manufacturers in the back of the book was especially helpful. I've purchased books on only a subset of what this book covers for 3 times the price.

"Designing Storage Area Networks" is a concise and practical introduction to two new and important technologies: Fibre Channel and Storage Area Networks (SANs). The book starts out by describing fibre channel technology and products, then moves on to describe how to build storage area networks using fibre channel components to solve various storage access problems. The book even includes some information to help the reader diagnose problems that might occur with a SAN. If you need to come up to speed on these new technologies, then this is the book for you. Even though I would have liked to see more information on SAN applications, I still recommend this book. The topic is timely, and this book is so useful that the company I work for ordered copies for all sales, marketing, and engineering staff.

This book will not make a SAN architect of you. However, if you desire to be or have been pushed into a SAN architect role, this is a sweet, concise text to give you a firm technical foundation on FC-AL and some of the available products at the time of writing. More importantly though, it gives you the knowledge to ask the right questions of SAN product vendors to implement a SAN solution. The first several chapters on FC-AL seem a bit tedious, but the author has nicely shown in later chapters that a the low-level understanding is crucial to proper design of a SAN. Recommend to those who are or will be designing or implementing SAN solutions. Suggest that readers also exhaustively review vendor literature, the few other texts on the subject, and published papers and standards documents for FC-AL and SAN. Almost gave it 5 stars...the price is definitely less than the value of the book...but IMHO the text could have provided a bit more "real-world" design examples. OK, 4.5 stars.

This is a very well written book from someone who knows the subject well and who has had a lot of first hand experience with customer needs and real life applications. This is the real world. The subject is vast and complex, but the author brings across the important information that you need to know. I have tried to delve through fibre channel drafts and standards. They are for the most part not readable to outsiders such as myself. The only problem with any literature on fibre channel is that the industry is evolving so quickly. I am starved for information on the latest developments. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in fibre channel and at the same time would recommend staying away from books that are pre-1999. There is just too much that has happened

lately.

This is an excellent piece of work covering the basics of SAN design, technology, and architecture. It is a quick read for systems and network architects that need to get up to speed fast on this technology. It is not for the computing novice. You must understand mid-level networking and storage concepts and have experience in them in order to get the benefits of this book.

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