

# TRANSITION NETWORKS ANNOUNCES NEW RS232 MEDIA CONVERTER

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## RS232 Media Converter Extends Network Distances and Reduces Industrial Noise

Transition Networks, the conversion technology experts, today announced a new media converter for RS232-equipped networks. This converter enables network administrators in campus and industrial environments to extend distances up to 2,000 metres. By converting the RS232 copper interface to fibre technology, administrators can extend network distances and eliminate noise interruption. Since this converter supports both hardware and software handshaking, it is compatible with all asynchronous RS232 and compatible devices and is therefore virtually invisible to any network installation.

Additionally, network administrators can now connect multiple devices, such as security scanners, POS devices and remote terminals to a host computer with the RS232 configuration. The RS232 converter is ideal for campus environments where remote devices can be networked into a point-to-point configuration, significantly extending distances beyond the traditional 50 foot maximum.

With this converter, networking between the office-engineering department and the machine shop floor can be extended to 2,000 metres without concern for the heavy electrical interference from the shop equipment. The RS-232 to fibre converter is particularly valuable in this industrial environment where RS-232 has been traditionally used to network from the office to machine tools that have older hardware controlled interfaces and are over 50 feet away.

"Environments such as industrial networks were previously limited by RS232," said Iain Bell, Transition Networks' Managing Director of EMEA. "The distance challenge and potential noise disruptions are virtually eliminated with this converter."

The RS232 media converter provides end users with best-of-breed features and functionality not available in most products of its kind, including redundant power and full network management through Transition Networks' Conversion Centre.

The Conversion Centre is Transition's 16-slot chassis-like design that can convert many networking protocols, including unshielded twisted pair to fibre conversions for Ethernet, Fast Ethernet, ATM, FDDI and Token Ring, in addition to single to multi-mode fibre conversions for these environments as well as Gigabit Ethernet and OC4-12.

Transition's Conversion Centre is the industry's only media conversion platform that can be managed under HP Openview for HP Unix, Windows NT and Sun Solaris as well as NetView for IBM AIX and Windows NT.

### Pricing and Availability

The chassis-based RS232 media converter is available immediately with a list price of \$199. The stand-alone RS232 is available immediately with a list price of \$219.

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#### About Transition Networks' Products

Transition Networks' conversion products are known for their ruggedness and reliability. They have a 99.83 percent customer acceptance rating, meaning that approximately one in 1,000 experience failure in the field. As with all Transition converters, the RS232 Media Converter carries a lifetime warranty.

#### About Transition Networks

Transition Networks designs and markets award-winning conversion technologies across a broad spectrum of networking protocols including Ethernet, Fast Ethernet, FDDI, ATM, Gigabit and Token Ring. Based in Minneapolis, Transition Networks distributes these hardware-based connectivity solutions through a network of resellers in 50 countries. Transition Networks is a wholly owned subsidiary of Communications Systems, Inc., a publicly traded company (Nasdaq: CSII).

Statements regarding the Company's anticipated performance in 1999 are forward-looking and involve risks and uncertainties, including but not limited to: competitive products and other factors discussed from time to time in the Company's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

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