

From AI clusters to DCI: accelerating network deployment at scale



EXFO launches HyperBlazer, a high-speed test solution optimized for data center environments, at Capacity Europe

Built on EXFO's modular, dual-slot FTB Duo platform, HyperBlazer supports 100GE to 800GE Ethernet testing, including 400ZR/ ZR+ and 800ZR coherent optics across QSFP-DD, OSFP and OSFP-RHS form factors. It features two applications: iOptics+ for rapid transceiver and cable validation, and Ethernet Services for Ethernet link activation, validation and fault isolation.

"We're seeing unprecedented growth across the data centre ecosystem, driving new requirements for speed, scalability and operational efficiency," said Danny Sleiman, group manager, network test solutions at EXFO. "HyperBlazer was developed in close alignment with these evolving customer needs, delivering streamlined workflows and faster validation of today's high-speed optical networks."

Designed to accelerate transceiver validation in AI-driven data centre buildouts, HyperBlazer addresses a growing challenge for operators, who are often left with large volumes of optics sidelined pending validation and limited visibility into which are genuinely faulty and which can be returned to service.

At the data hall build stage, the speed and scale of modern deployments are changing traditional testing practices, with many transceivers being installed before they can be fully validated. When a unit fails during installation, it is typically pulled and swapped rather than diagnosed, leaving large volumes of potentially reusable optics sitting unused in warehouses. With high-speed optics representing a significant investment, and demand continuing to outpace supply, Sleiman said the stranded stock combined with supply chain constraints is adding real delays to hyperscaler build-outs.

Cutting validation from minutes to seconds makes testing every transceiver the obvious choice rather than rejecting it outright, Sleiman said. HyperBlazer's iOptics+ application autodetects a connected optic and runs measurements in parallel, returning a pass or fail result that determines whether a unit is returned to inventory or logged for RMA. Paired with EXFO's FIP-500 fibre inspection scope, the workflow adds an inspect, clean, inspect, test sequence intended to fit within the sub-minute-per-step pace hyperscalers are demanding of their build processes.

Every result captures the transceiver's serial number and exact configuration, data that is uploaded automatically to EXFO's cloud platform, EXFO Exchange. That visibility helps operators identify patterns across deployed optics, Sleiman said, making it possible to determine whether issues are associated with a particular transceiver model, configuration, deployment environment or handling process, rather than treating every failure as a defective optic.

The solution is designed to scale alongside the pace of network deployment, not just hyperscalers, according to EXFO. As AI drives faster transitions between speed generations, from 400G to 800G and eventually 1.6T, EXFO says the aim is to ensure validation keeps pace with the rapid evolution of high-speed network infrastructure.

For campus and longer-reach data centre connections, HyperBlazer's Ethernet Services application includes a 10-second Transceiver Quick Check ahead of the 12- to 24-hour bit error rate tests (BERT) used to certify longhaul and metro links, catching a faulty transceiver before committing to a test window that

can otherwise be lost entirely if a fault surfaces several hours in. The application also provides guided workflows for Ethernet testing, including coherent link validation, which EXFO positions as a response to rising transceiver complexity.

DCI is expected to play a growing role as AI-driven workloads increase the volume of traffic moving between data centres, according to EXFO. Sleiman said much of today's inter-data-centre connectivity is deployed at up to 400G, with high demand for 800G links expected to grow as operators scale infrastructure to support increasingly data-intensive AI workloads.

All reports are uploaded automatically to EXFO Exchange once a test completes, without any manual intervention, using the alwaysconnected FTB Duo platform, providing what Sleiman described as a "birth certificate" that operators can share with the hyperscalers and cloud providers requiring proof that a link meets its service level agreement.

As AI infrastructure expands across data centre clusters, fabrics and interconnect networks, EXFO is positioning HyperBlazer to help operators validate optics and activate high-speed links at the pace modern deployments demand.

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