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Appendix A Summary

Internet is something I use in my daily life, potentially more than most people. Being that I work for a telephone internet and cable company, it is imperative that I know how to use and troubleshoot the Internet and wireless connections. However, Appendix A also gave me the ability to understand what is occurring on the back end. For example, I did previously have knowledge of what a server does and how it works, but I did not know that the connected devices are called clients. Being that I work in the business department for my employer, we see a lot of ELAN connections and until reading this chapter I did not understand what that fully meant. While I did have basic knowledge that this was a “point to point” connection, I now also understand that LAN stands for Local Area Network, and the E is just signifying that it is an emulated local area network.

While I have used terminology such as Cat Cable, Coaxial Cable, and Fiberoptic Cable daily; Appendix A taught me that all coaxial cables derived from the original twisted pair cable. While twisted pair cables are surrounded mostly by plastic, I now know that coaxial cables are also surrounded with both plastic and metal (copper wire) and fiberoptic cables are made of fiber strands directed by light. Being able to follow the evolution of data cables helped me to understand how they are all related to each other, but each new cable is an improvement of the previous.

As for the history of the internet, I must admit that I was lacking knowledge in this area. I had personally assumed that the internet was created just because mailing letters was taking too long. Now I know it was really created to protect our national security. This information had intrigued me to the point that I started to test all my family members to see if they knew why the internet research project was first started; only half did! Circuit switching is the first type of connectivity that Appendix A mentions, and I found it amazing that this was thought of back in the 1960’s (and although it isn’t the popular connection type), it is still used today.

The World Wide Web is used every single day. I was shocked to learn that there are approximately 3 billion users each day. I am aware that internet has become extremely easy to access since being integrated into mobile devices. As the internet becomes more popular, Appendix A teaches us that the bandwidth needs to increase. While I have been aware of internet speeds through my job, I learned that each internet hub has its own maximum bandwidth and that each hub’s bandwidth is distributed to each connected customer or “node”, which is why internet companies can never guarantee a certain speed. Overall, this chapter was very insightful and I am excited to use this information in my career.