
Teracom Training Institute

Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist (CTNS) Online Courses and Certification Package

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Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist (CTNS) Certification Package Overview

The CTNS Certification Package is six courses that will give you a solid foundation of structured knowledge spanning telecom, datacom and networking from traditional telephony through cellular to IP and MPLS networking, understanding the fundamentals, technologies, jargon and buzzwords, and most importantly, the underlying ideas and how it all fits together... plus Telecommunications Certification Organization (TCO) CTNS Certification to prove it.

You will benefit from decades of knowledge, insight and experience gained working for and with the biggest names in the business, distilled into clear lessons, logically organized to build one concept on another. The result is a major career-enhancing and productivity-enhancing upgrade to your knowledge skills that you can't get on the job, reading magazines or talking to vendors... solid understanding that lasts a lifetime.

Like all of Teracom's core training programs, the CTNS Certification Package begins with the Public Switched Telephone Network and Wireless Telecommunications. To build a full, rounded knowledge of telecom, understanding the history, structure and operation of the telephone network built over the past 135 years is the starting point for everything else.

Then four courses on the IP telecom network provide a practical understanding of Ethernet LANs, VLANs, IP and MPLS, and how these key technologies work together to implement a converged network supporting differentiated services on a single network. We begin with the OSI Reference Model as a framework.

Each course has a course exam, consisting of ten multiple-choice questions chosen at random from a pool and shuffled in order. Passing the course exams proves your knowledge of these topics and results in your certification as a Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist, with Certificate and Letter of Introduction.

Instructions to Students

Browser to Use – Desktop and Laptops

CTNS courses and exams are in flash format
They run on desktops and laptops, windows and mac using any browser.
We recommend the free Chrome browser as it is fast and gives good results.
Some users report problems when using Microsoft Internet Explorer.
If you experience problems, please use Chrome.

Browser to Use – Tablets and Phones

CTNS courses and exams run on iPad, iPhone and android tablets & phones using a flash-playing browser. Chrome, Explorer and Safari do not work.
We recommend the free Puffin browser as it is fast and gives good results.

Login address

Go to <https://www.teracomtraining.com/user/login.jsp>

This can also be reached by going to teracomtraining.com and clicking the “sign in” or “myTeraCom” links near the top of the page.

Username

Unless told otherwise, your username is your email address.

Password

If you do not have a password, go to the login page
<https://www.teracomtraining.com/user/login.jsp>

Enter your email address in the username field and click “recover password”.

Your password will be emailed to you at the address you entered.

You’ll be prompted to change it the first time.

Initial Setup

Log in to the myTeracom Learning Management System following the instructions in the previous section.

Upon successful login, your myTeracom Home Page will be displayed, as in Figure 1.

The screenshot shows the myTeracom Home Page with the following content:

myTeracom Welcome, DO NOT SHIP. We're glad you're here!

Register for online courses and certifications
[How to register](#)
[Register a group](#)
[Someone else](#)
[Your invoices](#)

Lesson	Lesson Title
5	Routers
6	IPv4 Address
7	DHCP
8	Public and Pr

Online courses and certifications dashboard
 Access your courses, exams & certificates

Shopping cart & checkout for online courses and certifications
 Debit card, credit card, PayPal, PO, check ... it's all good!

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 CTNS Course Book:
[Google Play](#) [iBooks](#) [Amazon](#) [Nook](#)

Free tutorials
 These are also previews of the course materials
 Or simply learn something useful!
[Free Quiz](#)

Account settings
[Name / address](#) ①
[Newsletter](#)
[Email address](#) ②
[Password](#)
[Show clean dashboard](#)

FIGURE 1. MYTERACOM HOME PAGE LINKS

Click on the “Name / address” link ① as indicated in Figure 1 to verify and complete your information. If you have an initial username that is not your email address, use the “email address” link ② to set your email address as your username.

Accessing Courses and Exams

Click the “Online courses and certifications dashboard” link ③ on your myTeracom Home Page, as indicated on Figure 1.

Your Dashboard will list the courses and their exams:

Teracom Training Institute
Best of breed: telecom training - since 1992

TELECOMMUNICATIONS
CERTIFICATION
ORGANIZATION

Hello, Joe! sign out start a group registration management reports return to main website share this page: [social icons]

myTeracom Seminar Registration DVD/Book Ordering Online Courses & Certifications Catalog my Online Dashboard

view cart check out

Online Courses and Certifications Dashboard [help](#)

Certified Telecom Network Expert						
Order #	Learner Name	Learner Email	Item	Name	Status	Exam
L-558917	Joe User	you@bell.ca	L2201	POTS and The PSTN	available	available
L-558917	Joe User	you@bell.ca	L2206	Wireless Telecommunications	available	available
L-558917	Joe User	you@bell.ca	L2212	The OSI Layers and Protocol Stacks	available	available
L-558917	Joe User	you@bell.ca	L2211	Ethernet, LANs and VLANs	available	available
L-558917	Joe User	you@bell.ca	L2213	IP Networks, Routers and Addresses	available	available
L-558917	Joe User	you@bell.ca	L2214	MPLS and Carrier Networks	available	available



Click “available” in the status column to start a course or exam.

Though you may do the courses and exams in any order, it is recommended that the courses be done in the order listed.

Click “available” in the status column for L2201 POTS and The PSTN to be taken to the lessons page for that course.

Additional description of the dashboard is online at <https://www.teracomtraining.com/info-dashboard.htm>

Displaying the Lessons

After clicking the link in the status column in the Dashboard, a Course with its list of Lessons will be displayed:

The screenshot shows the Teracom Training Institute website. The header includes the logo and tagline 'Best of breed: telecom training - since 1992'. Below the header, there is a navigation bar with links for 'myTeracom', 'Seminar Registration', 'DVD/Book Ordering', 'Online Courses & Certifications Catalog', and 'my Online Dashboard'. The main content area is titled 'Lessons'.

Lessons

This page lists the lessons in the course you selected on the previous page.

The lesson you are currently working on is indicated by a link in the "Lesson Status" column.

Click the link to go to that lesson. You must complete lessons in order; "waiting" means you have to complete a prior lesson.

Course Name	Lesson	Lesson Title	Lesson Status
MPLS and Carrier Networks	1	Introduction - Packet Networks and MPLS	available
MPLS and Carrier Networks	2	Carrier Packet Network Basics	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	3	Service Level Agreements: Traffic Profile and Class of Service	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	4	Virtual Circuits	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	5	X.25: Data Packet Service from The Phone Company	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	6	Frame Relay	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	7	TCP/IP over Frame Relay	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	8	QoS Requirement for Voice Over IP	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	9	ATM	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	10	MPLS	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	11	TCP/IP over MPLS	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	12	Differentiated Classes of Service using MPLS	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	13	Integration and Convergence using MPLS	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	14	Managing Aggregates of Traffic with MPLS Label Stacking	waiting
MPLS and Carrier Networks	15	MPLS Services vs. Internet Service	waiting

[« back to courses](#)

Click "available" to load the first lesson. The lessons must be done in order.

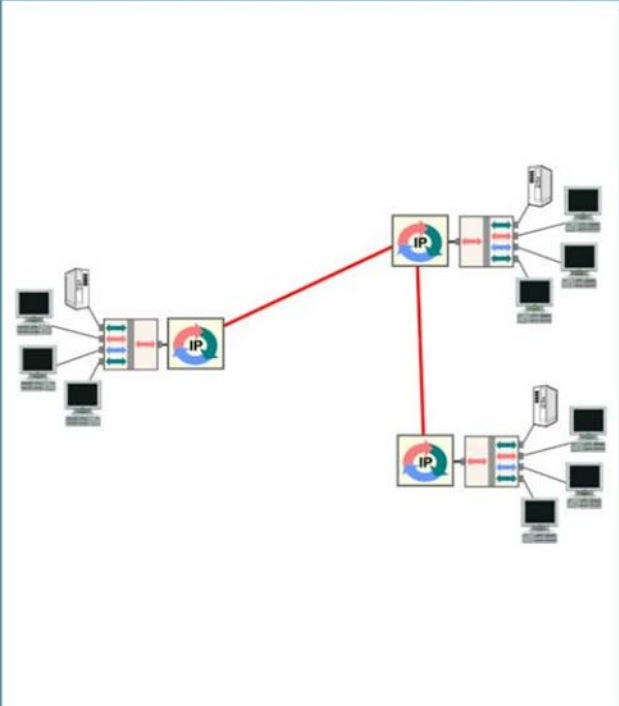
If you are repeating a course and wish to skip to a particular lesson, please click available then use the navigation arrows on the lesson to quickly click through to get to the desired lesson.

The lesson file will download and be displayed onscreen.


Teracom Training Institute Online Learning and Certification

TELECOMMUNICATIONS
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T-C-O

Course Introduction - MPLS and Carrier Packet Networks



In the previous course, we used a private network, i.e. dedicated point-to-point circuits connected with routers, as the simplest framework for understanding packets, bandwidth on demand, routers, and network addresses.

Introduction 

Online help is provided via links on many of the screens in this sequence.

Writing Certification Exams

Each course has a course exam, consisting of ten multiple-choice questions chosen at random from a pool and shuffled in order. Passing the course exams for all six courses proves your knowledge of these topics and results in your certification as a Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist, with Certificate and Letter of Introduction.

Go to your Dashboard, then click “available” in the exam column.

Follow the on-screen instructions to write the exam. You must begin writing the exam within 30 minutes. Once you have begun, you have 20 minutes to complete the 10 multiple-choice questions, 2 minutes per question. This is a closed-book exam.

If you fail, your score in percent will be displayed and an “add to cart” link will appear in your Dashboard. Follow the “Unlimited Plan Instructions” to repeat the course and/or exam at no charge.

If you load the exam then go to lunch or close your browser, the exam result will be “fail” with no percentage displayed. Follow the “Unlimited Plan Instructions” to repeat the exam at no charge.

Online help is provided via links on many of the screens in this sequence.

Getting Your Certificate

Once you have passed the exams for all six courses, a “Get Certificate” button will appear. Click the button to render your certificate and display it as a PDF.

Right-click and choose “Save file as...” to save your certificate.

Certificate Hard Copy

Follow the steps above, then print the PDF file on any colour printer.

You may then take it to any framing shop who will frame it for you.

Certificate Hard Copy with Embossed Seal

A hard copy with embossed seal may be purchased separately from the Telecommunications Certification Organization.

Please see <http://www.certify-tco.org/package.htm> for more information.

Repeating Courses and Exams

To repeat a course or exam, the procedure is the same: purchase the correct CTNS Component Course and use a coupon in the shopping cart to reduce the price to zero.

Once you have re-purchased the course, you may take the course again, or write the exam again, either or both.

Detailed instructions for both repeat after fail and repeat after pass are provided on the web help page:

<https://www.teracomtraining.com/info-unlimited-plan.htm>

Detailed Course Descriptions

Course 2201 POTS and The PSTN

Loops and Trunks • Circuit-Switching • LECs and IXCs • Analog • Voiceband • DTMF • SS7

8 interactive multipart lessons, multiple-choice exam and certificate. Produced 2012.

This course is dedicated to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) and Plain Ordinary Telephone Service (POTS). Understanding the fundamentals of this technology and network architecture is a starting point for understanding everything else related to telecommunications.

You'll gain a solid understanding of the fundamentals of the telephone system: customer premise and Central Office, loops, trunks, remotes, circuit switching and how a telephone call is connected end-to-end. We'll cover LECs and IXCs, sound, analog and the voiceband, twisted pair, DTMF and SS7.

Based on Teracom's famous Course 101, tuned and refined over the course of 20 years of instructor-led training, we'll cut through the jargon to demystify telephony and the telephone system, explaining the jargon and buzzwords, the underlying ideas, and how it all works together... in plain English.

Featuring many photos of actual equipment both inside a Central Office and in the outside plant, this multimedia course is an excellent way to get up to speed on traditional telephony.

Course Outline

1. Introduction

Course introduction and overview.

2. History of Telecommunications

Local phone companies, long distance; US: Bell System, breakup, LECs and IXCs; Canada

3. The Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN)

Loops and trunks, CO, customer premise, circuit-switching, outside plant, loop length, remotes

4. Analog Circuits and Sound

What analog means, microphones and speakers, copper wires and electricity, sound: trees falling in the forest

5. The Voiceband

Reproducing thoughts vs. reproducing sound, frequency range, filters, limitations

6. Plain Ordinary Telephone Service (POTS)

Twisted pair, analogs on two wires, dial tone, ringing, supervision, lightning protection

7. Signaling: Pulse Dialing and DTMF

Dial-up, make-or-break signaling, touch-tone, DTMF, in-band signaling

8. Signaling System 7 (SS7)

Control system for the PSTN, SCPs and SSPs, examples of sophisticated call routing

9. Multiple-Choice Exam

Prerequisites

None.

Course Objectives: What You Will Learn

The objective of this course is to understand how the physical telephone network is organized, the characteristics of basic telephone service, how calls are established end-to-end, and to demystify common telephony jargon and buzzwords.

In particular, on completion of this course, you will be able to explain:

Why telecom networks are divided into local access wiring and long-distance transmission

The founding, breakup and re-emergence of AT&T in the US; TELUS and Bell in Canada

A basic model for the PSTN and its main components

Loops, why they are called loops and why there is a maximum loop length

The outside plant

Circuit-switching

Central Office and Customer Premise

How and why remotes are used; fiber to the neighborhood

Plain Ordinary Telephone Service

What analog is, and how it relates to copper wires, electricity, circuits and sound

How microphones and speakers work

The human hearing range

Whether trees falling in the forest if no-one is there to hear them cause a sound

The voiceband

Why and how the telephone system can limit frequencies to the voiceband

Why two wires are used

Why they are twisted together (twisted pair)

Tip and ring, -48 volts

Supervision, dial tone, ringing, lightning protection

Dial-up

Touch-tone and DTMF

Basics of SS7

Examples of sophisticated call routing using SS7

Detailed Course Description

This course covers the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) and Plain Ordinary Telephone Service (POTS). Understanding the fundamentals of this technology and network architecture is a starting point for understanding everything else related to telecommunications.

It is tempting for newcomers to telecom to think "this is old stuff, we don't need to know this, it's all IP now"... but it is not difficult to come up with a list of reasons why understanding POTS and the PSTN is still necessary. First, the vast majority of telecommunications still involves POTS and this will not disappear overnight. Second, on a Voice over IP telephone, the last foot – the signals on the curly cord attached to the handset are analog. Third, SONET transmission systems are based around 64 kb/s DS0 channels, designed to support POTS. Fourth, DSL is delivered over the physical infrastructure initially deployed for POTS.

Based on Teracom's famous instructor-led Course 101, tuned and refined over twenty years, this course will give you solid foundational knowledge that will be useful to anyone in the telecom business: how the physical telephone network is organized, the characteristics of basic telephone service, how calls are established end-to-end, and understanding of telephony jargon and buzzwords... in plain English.

Lesson 1. Course Introduction

The first lesson begins the course with an overview of the course and lessons.

This lesson is available for free on teracomtraining.com and provides both a walkthrough of the course and a sample of the production quality.

Lesson 2. History of Telecommunications

We begin the course proper with a history lesson. We'll understand why telecom networks are divided into local access wiring and long-distance transmission, the invention of the telephone and Bell's patent and the emergence of local telephone companies. Then, in the USA: the founding of AT&T, the expiry of the patent and emergence of independents, its breakup, the emergence of cellular and internet telephony, the end of long-distance as a standalone business and the re-combination of pieces of the former AT&T into AT&T and Verizon. An optional section on Canadian telecommunications covers the establishment of provincial telephone companies, then consolidation under TELUS and Bell Canada.

Lesson 3. The Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN)

In this lesson, we will establish a basic model for the PSTN and understand its main components: Customer Premise, Central Office, loop, trunk, outside plant, circuit switching, attenuation, loop length, remotes, and why knowledge of the characteristics of the loop remains essential knowledge even though we are moving to Voice over IP.

Lesson 4. Analog Circuits and Sound

The technique for representing information on an ordinary local loop is called analog. This term is often thrown about with little regard for its actual meaning, so we will spend a bit of time understanding what is meant by "analog", how this relates to copper wires, electricity, circuits and sound, the human hearing range, whether trees falling in the forest cause sound if there are no humans present, and choices for designing the telephone system related to that question.

Lesson 5. The Voiceband

In this lesson, we examine the bandwidth provided with Plain Ordinary Telephone Service, which is often referred to as *the voiceband*. We'll understand what the term "bandwidth" means, and how it is measured in the analog world. We'll look at the details of the voiceband, what frequencies it covers and why, and its limitations.

Lesson 6. Plain Ordinary Telephone Service

Loops, trunks, circuit-switching and the voiceband are all aspects of Plain Ordinary Telephone Service (POTS). In this lesson, we will cover the remaining principal aspects of POTS along with associated jargon and buzzwords including twisted pair, the function of the microphone, speaker and hybrid converter, how the voltage analogs for each direction are added together on the loop, supervision, loop-start signaling and ringing and lightning protection.

Lesson 7. Signaling: Pulse Dialing and DTMF

This lesson covers one last principal aspect of POTS: the mechanism for signaling the called party telephone number from the calling party's telephone to the line card. We first cover the original design, using a rotary dial, then an improvement using tones called Dual Tone Multiple Frequency (DTMF) signaling.

Lesson 8. Signaling System 7 (SS7)

This lesson provides a top-level overview of the system used for signaling the called number from the near-end switch to the far-end switch, which is part of the call setup function. This called Signaling System 7 (SS7) in the USA and Canada. It is used for many functions in addition to call setup. In the rest of the world, other systems are used, including ISDN and proprietary systems. This lesson covers SS7, though the basic principles are applicable to any network signaling system.

Multiple-Choice Course Exam

Course 2206 Wireless Telecommunications

Mobility • Cellular Networks • GSM and TDMA • UMTS and 1X CDMA • LTE • WiFi • Satellite

10 interactive multipart lessons, multiple-choice exam and certificate. Produced 2012.

Wireless Telecommunications is a comprehensive course on wireless, mobile telecommunications plus wireless LANs and satellites.

You'll gain a solid understanding of the key principles of mobile networks: the objectives of coverage, capacity and mobility, what a cellular radio system is and why they are used, mobile network components and principles of operation including registration and handoffs, digital radio, data over cellular and the cellular technologies and generations: 1G analog FDM, 2G GSM and IS-136 TDMA, 3G UMTS and 1X CDMA and 4G LTE OFDM.

Plus, you'll receive an overview of the radio frequencies and standards for wireless LANs and an overview of satellite communications.

We'll cut through the jargon to demystify wireless, explaining the jargon and buzzwords, the underlying ideas, and how it all works together... in plain English.

Course Outline

1. Introduction

Course introduction and overview. Basic radio principles, analog and digital over radio.

2. Mobile Network Components, Jargon and Basic Operation

Handset, base station, airlink, handoffs, connection to wireline systems

3. Cellular Principles and AMPS (1G)

Coverage, capacity and cellular radio systems, mobility, spectrum, FDM spectrum sharing

4. 2G: Digital Radio - Voice Communications

Components and operation of a digital radio: microphone, codec, RF modem, antenna

5. Digital Cellular: Data Communications

Using only the RF modem and antenna of the cellphone as a "tethered" modem for another device

6. Spectrum-Sharing Technologies: FDMA, TDMA, CDMA, OFDM

Sorting out the generations and standards; GSM and IS-136 TDMA vs. CDMA and OFDM

7. 3G Cellular: CDMA

Basic ideas behind CDMA and its operation; 1X vs. UMTS standards

8. 4G Mobile Cellular: LTE

Steve Jobs ends the standards wars; OFDM basic principles of operation

9. 802.11 Wireless LANs - WiFi

Basic principles of operation, 802.11 standards, frequency bands and limitations

10. Communication Satellites

Basic principles of operation, geosynchronous and LEO

11. Multiple-Choice Exam

Prerequisites

None. Course L2101 POTS and the PSTN has some relevance, as the mobile networks connect to the wireline Public Switched Telephone Network. Courses L2111 Ethernet, LANs and VLANs and L2113 IP Networks, Routers and Addresses are relevant to Lesson 9.

Course Objectives: What You Will Learn

The objective of this course is to develop a solid understanding of mobile cellular communications networks and technologies. After taking this course, you will be up to speed on the fundamental principles of cellular radio networks, components and operation, digital radio, spectrum-sharing technologies and the four generations of mobile cellular technology. An additional objective is a basic understanding of WiFi and satellites.

In particular, on completion of this course, you will be able to explain:

The principal components of a mobile communication system

Coverage, capacity and mobility

The reason for and basic layout of a cellular radio system

Basic operation of a mobile network including registration and handoffs

How digital cellular is implemented

How digital cellular can be used for data communications, either as a tethered modem or using the phone as a data terminal

The principles and operation of the different spectrum-sharing technologies: first-generation FDMA, second-generation GSM and TDMA, third-generation UMTS and 1X CDMA and fourth-generation LTE and its OFDM

The different radio bands and standards for 802.11 wireless LANs

The two main types of communication satellites and their advantages and disadvantages.

Detailed Course Description

In this course, we cover wireless, concentrating mostly on mobile communications. We'll cover the principles of operation, jargon and buzzwords in the mobility business, the idea behind cellular radio systems, and explain the different spectrum-sharing technologies, including 1G analog FDMA, 2G TDMA/GSM vs. CDMA, 3G 1X vs. UMTS CDMA and 4G OFDMA. We'll conclude with a lesson on 802.11 wireless LANs (WiFi) and a lesson on satellite communications

Lesson 1. Course Introduction

The first lesson begins the course with an overview of the course and lessons, plus general radio principles.

This lesson is available for free on teracomtraining.com and provides both a walkthrough of the course and a sample of the quality of the course graphics, text and presentation.

Lesson 2. Mobile Network Components, Jargon and Basic Operation

The basic components and operation of a mobile communication network, including handset, airlink, antennas, base station, transceiver, mobile switch, backhaul, registration and handoffs.

Lesson 3. Cellular Principles and AMPS (1G)

In this lesson, we'll begin with the requirements on the communication system: mobility, coverage and capacity, then cover the idea of a cellular radio system, and how it is used to meet the coverage requirement, how frequency-division multiplexing was used to meet the capacity requirement in the first generation of "cellular", called AMPS in North America, the implications of a handoff to implement mobility, and end the lesson with the limitations of the first generation and room for improvement.

Lesson 4. 2G: Digital Radio - Voice Communications.

2G cellular involved a change to digital radio, and also saw the emergence of warring factions with different views of how the spectrum should be shared. In this lesson, we'll examine the components of a digital radio system at a block diagram level to understand just what exactly someone means when they say "digital" radio and key aspects of the second generation of cellular.

Lesson 5. Digital Cellular: Data Communications

Next, we'll understand how a system designed to carry digitized speech using modems, which was the subject of the last lesson, can be employed to carry anything coded into 1s and 0s. We'll see how a "data terminal" can plug into the block diagram of the previous lesson and what it connects to, and the difference between using a cellphone as a tethered modem vs. using the cellphone as a terminal.

Lesson 6. Spectrum-Sharing Technologies: FDMA, TDMA, CDMA, OFDM

Cellphones transmit and receive signals over shared radio bands. To separate users so that they do not interfere with one another, nor hear each other's conversations, service providers use one of four radio band or spectrum sharing methods: Frequency-Division Multiple Access (FDMA), Time-Division Multiple Access (TDMA), Code-Division Multiple Access (CDMA) and Orthogonal Frequency-Division Multiplexing (OFDM). In this lesson, we'll begin to sort out these technologies. We'll explain how FDMA, TDMA, CDMA and OFDM work, and in this lesson how they were deployed for first and second generation with names like AMPS, GSM, TDMA (IS-136), and 2G CDMA (IS-95). In subsequent lessons, we'll take a closer look at CDMA for third generation (UMTS and 1X), then 4G LTE which uses OFDM.

Lesson 7. 3G Cellular: CDMA

In this lesson, we'll cover 3G mobile cellular radio technologies: how the quest for an international standard to resolve the I-95 CDMA vs. GSM TDMA incompatibility led to a Frankenstein standard called IMT-2000, with five incompatible variations for implementing 3G, and how two of them were of most interest: IMT-MC, also known as 1X, and IMT-DS, also known as UMTS, both employing CDMA technology. We'll cover the data-optimized variations of the two, 1XEV-DO and HSPA respectively, and the capitulation of the 1X camp to the UMTS camp's plan for 4G – probably pushed past the tipping point by Steve Jobs and his iPhone – and how that led to the widespread deployment of HSPA for 3G.

Lesson 8. 4G Mobile Cellular

In the last lesson on mobility, we'll explore the technology that emerged as the consensus for 4G: the fourth generation of mobile cellular radio communications, called LTE, and the spectrum-sharing technology it employs called OFDM.

Lesson 9. 802.11 Wireless LANs - WiFi

Here, we provide an overview of the 802.11 wireless LAN standards, sometimes referred to as WiFi and hotspots. We concentrate on understanding the variations of 802.11, the frequency bands they operate in, bit rates to be expected and practical issues.

Since 802.11 is wireless LANs, there are a number of associated topics: LAN frames, also called MAC frames, MAC addresses, LAN switches, IP addresses, routers and network address translation. Those topics are covered in other courses, particularly "Ethernet, LANs and VLANs", "Introduction to Datacom and Networking" and "IP Networks, Routers and Addresses". In this course, we concentrate on radio.

Lesson 10. Communication Satellites

In this last lesson of the course, we will take a quick overview of communication satellites, understanding the basic principles and the advantages and disadvantages of the two main strategies: Geosynchronous Earth Orbit and Low Earth Orbit.

Multiple-Choice Course Exam

Course 2212 The OSI Layers and Protocol Stacks

Protocols & Standards • Open Systems • OSI Model • Layers • Protocol Stacks • FedEx Analogy

14 interactive multipart lessons, multiple-choice exam and certificate. Produced 2012.

The OSI Layers and Protocol stacks is the first course in both the Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist (CTNS) and the Certified IP Telecom Network Specialist (CIPTS) certification packages.

This course establishes a framework for all of the subsequent discussions: the OSI 7-Layer Reference Model, which identifies and divides the functions to be performed into groups called *layers*. This framework is required to sort out the many functions that need to be performed, and to be able to discuss separate issues separately.

You'll learn what a layer is, the purpose of each layer, see examples of protocols used to implement each layer, and learn how a protocol stack really works with the famous "FedEx Analogy" presented as an embedded video by our top instructor, Eric Coll.

We'll cut through the jargon to demystify layers, explaining jargon and buzzwords, and most importantly, the underlying ideas, and how it all works together... in plain English.

Course Outline

1. Introduction

Course introduction and overview.

2. Open Systems

Open systems vs. proprietary systems.

3. Protocols and Standards

The difference between a protocol and a standard.

4. ISO OSI 7-Layer Reference Model

Top-level overview and introduction to Layers

5. The Physical Layer

Fiber, Twisted Pair, Cable and Wireless

6. Data Link Layer

LANs and MAC Addresses

7. Network Layer

IP, MPLS, Packets and Routers

8. Transport Layer

Reliability, Connections, Ports and Sockets

9. Session Layer

SIP, POP and HTTP

10. Presentation Layer

ASCII, MIME, Compression, Encryption, Codecs

11. Application Layer

SMTP, HTML and English

12. Protocol Stacks

The FedEx Analogy

13. Protocol Headers

Babushka Dolls

14. Standards Organizations

15. Multiple-choice Exam

Prerequisites

None. This is the best course to begin learning about IP and MPLS.

Course Objectives: What You Will Learn

This course can be taken by both those who need simply an overview and introduction to the idea of layers and the OSI model, and by those embarking on a certification and/or planning to take further courses.

If you're in the first group, the objective is not to become an instant expert, but rather to become familiar with the structure that is used to be able to discuss separate issues separately, what a layer is, the basic functions of each layer, what a protocol stack is and how it works, and where things you've heard of before like Ethernet, IP and TCP fit into the picture... to demystify the jargon and buzzwords, to eliminate frustration and increase your confidence and effectiveness.

If you're in the second group, and your objective is to put in place a structure for subsequent courses, following is a list of concrete objectives. On completion of this course, you will be able to explain:

- The concept of an open system and its advantages
- What a protocol is and what a standard is
- The OSI Model and its purpose
- What a Layer is
- The seven layers of the OSI model
- The name of each layer
- The functions each layer is responsible for
- Examples of actual protocols for each layer
- What a protocol stack is and how it operates
- Examples of standards organizations that publish protocols

Detailed Course Description

There are so many functions that need to be performed to be able to interwork different systems, a structure is required to be able to categorize and separate functions, so that it is possible to discuss separate issues separately and not mix things up. The method most commonly used to enable discussion of separate issues separately is the ISO OSI 7-layer Reference Model.

We'll start our discussion with some definitions, then an overview of the OSI model, introducing the ideas of layers, layered architectures and protocol stacks. Then we'll go through the layers individually and give examples of protocols like IP, TCP, LANs and DSL to see where they fit into the stack. We'll finish off understanding how a protocol stack actually works in operation, and conclude the course with a review of different active standards organizations.

Lesson 1. Course Introduction

The first lesson begins the course with a preview of the different functions that must be performed with a multimedia slideshow to illustrate the functions, then an overview of the course and lessons.

This lesson is available for free on teracomtraining.com and provides both a walkthrough of the course and a sample of the quality of the course graphics, text and presentation.

Lesson 2. Open Systems

In this lesson, we'll understand what is meant by an "open" system, and its advantages over proprietary systems and previous methods of interoperation.

Lesson 3. Protocols and Standards

Here, we'll sort out what is meant by the term "protocol", and how that relates to the concept of a standard. We will also start considering how many functions have to be performed to interoperate systems, and how these functions might be organized.

Lesson 4. The ISO OSI 7-Layer Reference Model

The ISO OSI 7-Layer Reference Model is the model most commonly used to define the structure of the "set of structured protocols" introduced in the previous lesson. We'll understand the reference model and how it operates, then introduce the layers in the OSI model, the name of each layer and the functions of each layer. In subsequent lessons, we'll go over the story again, more slowly, one layer at a time.

Lesson 5. The Physical Layer: Fiber, Twisted Pair, Cable and Wireless

Layer 1 is moving bits over Fiber, Twisted Pair, Cable and Wireless

Lesson 6. The Data Link Layer: LANs and MAC Addresses

Next is Layer 2, the Data Link Layer, responsible for managing aspects of communications between two stations on the same circuit. We'll cover frames, LANs and MAC addresses.

Lesson 7. The Network Layer: IP, MPLS, Packets and Routers

Here, we'll see that the definition of a network is connecting many data links together with network equipment, usually with redundant paths for availability and performance reasons. This implies the requirement to make route decisions. We'll see that the two basic kinds of networks are circuit-switched, i.e. the traditional telephone network, and packet-switched, networks using routers to forward packets from one link to another.

Lesson 8. The Transport Layer, Ports and Sockets

In this lesson, we'll cover Layer 4: the Transport Layer. We will see that there are two main functions: reliability of communications between the two end-point devices, and narrowing down the communications to particular software applications running on the devices. TCP and UDP are Layer 4 protocols in the OSI Model.

Lesson 9. The Session Layer: SIP, POP and HTTP

Layers 5, 6 and 7 are referred to as the "upper layers". In this lesson, we will understand the functions associated with Layer 5: the session layer, responsible for initiating, maintaining and terminating sessions between software applications on different machines connected by a transport service. We will see that the usual implementation follows a client-server scenario, with the client logging on the server with a user name and password and having permissions after being authenticated. In other cases, the session establishment is less sophisticated, for example, no authentication and a session that lasts for the transfer of one web page; and in yet other cases is more sophisticated, involving the communication of the endpoints' IP addresses to each other so they can subsequently communicate directly as is the case with SIP.

Lesson 10. The Presentation Layer: ASCII, MIME, Compression, Encryption, Codecs

Layer 6 is the Presentation Layer, a very important discussion, as this is the coding step, where messages are coded into 1s and 0s for eventual communication. ASCII, MIME, compression, encryption, and codecs all fit into this layer.

Lesson 11. The Application Layer: SMTP, HTML and English

In this lesson, we'll examine the uppermost layer of the OSI model, Layer 7, the application layer. We will see that the application layer specifies the message to be transmitted to another system. It defines the format, vocabulary and syntax of messages. The same software that implements the application layer usually also implements a Human-Machine Interface... since in many instances, a human generates the content of the message.

Lesson 12. Protocol Stacks: The FedEx Analogy

In this lesson, we'll employ an analogy of business-to-business communications using FedEx to illustrate how a protocol stack works, and better understand the OSI layers from a procedural point of view: how information travels down through the protocol stack on the left, through the network equipment in the center, and back up the protocol stack on the right. This lesson features video of our top instructor, Eric Coll, explaining the FedEx analogy to you via the camera on the left side of the screen, plus a graphical illustration on the right. Enjoy!

Lesson 13. Protocol Headers and Babushka Dolls

We'll understand how a protocol stack works from a bits point of view: how one layer passes a block of 1s and 0s called a Protocol Data Unit to a lower layer, which performs its functions and adds control information in a header to create a bigger PDU, which is then passed down to the next lower layer. The result is like Russian Babushka dolls: a small doll inside a bigger one, inside a bigger one, inside a bigger one... and in our case, repeating seven times.

Lesson 14. Standards Organizations

The last lesson in this course is Standards Organizations, a brief overview of organizations that publish what they hope will become standard protocols for communications.

Multiple-Choice Course Exam

Course 2211 Ethernet, LANs and VLANs

MAC Addresses • 802.3 and Ethernet • Broadcast Domains • LAN Cables • Switches • VLANs

8 interactive multipart lessons, multiple-choice exam and certificate. Produced 2012.

Ethernet LANs are the standard method of implementing Layer 2 of the OSI Model, data links for communications between two machines. Taking this course, you'll gain a solid understanding of LANs: Ethernet and its bus topology, CSMA-CD access control, broadcast domains and MAC addresses; MAC frames, the IEEE 802 standards, evolution of Ethernet from 10BASE-T to Gig-E, hubs and switches, LAN cables, the TIA-568 cable categories, basic cabling design; what "bridging" means, how a LAN switch works, VLANs and finishing with a preview of the next course: using routers to move frames between broadcast domains.

We'll cut through the jargon to demystify Ethernet, MAC addresses, LANs and VLANs, explaining the jargon and buzzwords, the underlying ideas, and how it all works together... in plain English.

Course Outline

1. Introduction

Course introduction and overview

2. Bus Topology

Broadcast domains, MAC addresses, CSMA-CD access control

3. Ethernet and 802.3

IEEE 802 standards, 802.2 and 802.3, MAC frames

4. Evolution of Ethernet

10BASE-2, 10BASE-T → Gigabit Ethernet and Optical Ethernet

5. LAN Cabling and TIA-568 Categories

Category 5, 5e and 6 cables, basic cabling design

6. Bridging

Connecting broadcast domains, bridged services

7. LAN Switches

Layer 2 switches, MAC tables

8. VLANs

Broadcast domains defined in software

9. Multiple-Choice Exam

Prerequisites

None. Course L2112 The OSI Layers and Protocol Stacks is useful to understand where LANs fit into the overall picture and how LANs and VLANs relate to routers and IP.

Course Objectives: What You Will Learn

The objective of taking this course is to become familiar with the standard technology used to implement Layer 2 in IP-based packet networks. After taking this course, you will be up to speed on MAC addresses and MAC frames, broadcast domains, LAN cables and LAN switches, VLANs and Optical Ethernet.

In particular, on completion of this course, you will be able to explain:

- The original bus design for a LAN, called Ethernet
- How the bus created a need for an access control protocol, and the CSMA-CD protocol that was implemented for Ethernet
- How the bus implements a broadcast domain, and the MAC addressing scheme that was implemented to identify stations
- The standardization of Ethernet with the IEEE 802 series of standards, understanding 802.2 and 802.3
- Evolution of Ethernet from 10 Mb/s on coaxial cables to Gigabit Ethernet on copper and fiber, and the codes like 10BASE-T used to refer to the various versions
- LAN cables and the TIA-568 cable categories
- How LANs are connected together: bridges and LAN switches, also called “Layer 2” switches, and
- How VLAN technology is used to separate devices on LANs into different broadcast domains.

Detailed Course Description

LANs are the standard method of implementing data links for communications between machines. This began as in-building communications using bus cables, and has evolved to switches and twisted pair cables inside the building, and Optical Ethernet equipment and fiber outside the building.

We'll begin the course with the original fundamental ideas of a bus topology, contention-based access control, broadcast domains, MAC addresses and MAC frames. Then we'll review the IEEE 802 standards and evolution of Ethernet from 10BASE-T to Gig-E, LAN cables, the TIA-568 cable categories, basic cabling design; what "bridging" means, how a LAN switch works, and finishing with VLANs and a preview of the next course: using routers to move frames between broadcast domains.

Lesson 1. Course Introduction

The first lesson begins the course with an overview of the course and lessons.

This lesson is available for free on teracomtraining.com and provides both a walkthrough of the course and a sample of the quality of the course graphics, text and presentation.

Lesson 2. Bus Topology

In this lesson, we will understand the fundamental ideas behind LANs: the original bus design for Ethernet, the CSMA-CD access control protocol, the concept of a broadcast domain and the need for MAC addresses.

Lesson 3. 802.3 and Ethernet

Next, we'll understand how the original Ethernet technology was transformed into the set of "802" standards from the IEEE, including changes from coaxial cable to twisted pair cables and the need for hubs.

Lesson 4. Evolution of Ethernet

The purpose of this lesson is to understand the evolution of Ethernet from the initial bus-cable design, which is now called 10BASE-5, through to variations of Gigabit Ethernet, including 1000BASE-T.

Lesson 5. LAN Cabling

In this lesson, we'll explore the TIA standards for LAN cables, and understand which category of cable is applicable for which line speed of LAN.

Lesson 6. Repeaters, Bridges and Loading Curves

Here, we will relatively quickly cover the older idea of using bridges to connect LAN cable segments together. This allows us to discuss overloading problems, and paves the way for the next lessons, LAN switches and routers, and the advanced idea of VLANs.

Lesson 7. Ethernet Switches

In this lesson, we'll understand the technology that has replaced bus cables, hubs, repeaters and bridges: Ethernet switches, also known as LAN switches and Layer 2 switches. We'll understand what an Ethernet switch does, why it is faster than a bridge, how it solves the overloading failure mechanism, but how it still connects all of the stations in a single broadcast domain from a security point of view.

Lesson 8. VLANs

In the last lesson, we'll cover Virtual Local Area Networks or VLANs, a software trick allowing broadcast domains to be defined in software rather than just in hardware. This is used to separate computers into different broadcast domains so that they can not communicate directly for security reasons.

We'll finish the lesson with a peek at the next course: how the broadcast domains are connected via a router, which uses IP packets, and implements a point of control to allow or deny communications between broadcast domains.

Multiple-Choice Course Exam

Course 2213 IP Networks, Routers and Addresses

IP Packets • Networks • Routers • Static, Dynamic, Public, Private Addresses • NAT • IPv6

11 interactive multipart lessons, multiple-choice exam and certificate. Produced 2012.

IP Networks, Routers and Addresses is a comprehensive course on Layer 3 of the OSI Model, concentrating on IP addresses, routers and packets.

You'll gain a solid understanding of the key principles of packet networks: bandwidth on demand, packet forwarding and packet filtering, how routers work, all of the different types of IP version 4 addresses: static and dynamic, public and private, network address translation plus IP version 6.

Based on Teracom's famous Course 101, tuned and refined over the course of 20 years of instructor-led training, we'll cut through the jargon to clearly explain IP and routers, packets and addresses, the underlying ideas, and how it all works together... in plain English.

Course Outline

1. Introduction

Course introduction and overview

2. Review: Channelized Time-Division Multiplexing (TDM)

Traditional TDM – and why it is inefficient

3. Statistical Time-Division Multiplexing: Bandwidth-on-Demand

Overbooking and opportunistic capacity

4. Private Network: Bandwidth on Demand + Routing

The simplest framework for understanding routers and bandwidth on demand

5. Routers

Routers and routing tables. Packet forwarding and packet filtering. Customer Edge.

6. IPv4 Addresses

Address classes and dotted-decimal notation.

7. DHCP

Dynamic addresses and static addresses – and how both are assigned using DHCP

8. Public and Private IPv4 Addresses

How to obtain public addresses, and why private addresses are used in many cases

9. Network Address Translation

How a NAT glues private IPv4 addressing used in-building to public addressing used on the Internet

10. IPv6 Overview

Introduction to IPv6, what's new, the improvements on IPv4 and the IPv6 packet format.

11. IPv6 Address Allocations and Assignment

Types of IPv6 addresses, registries and allocations to ISPs. How subnets are assigned to end-users.

12. Multiple-Choice Exam

Prerequisites

None. Course L2112 The OSI Layers and Protocol Stacks is useful to understand where IP and packets fit into the overall picture. Course L2111 Ethernet, LANs and VLANs complements this course, as IP packets are usually carried on Ethernet.

Course Objectives: What You Will Learn

The objective of this course is to develop a solid understanding of IP. After taking this course, you will be up to speed on the fundamental principles of packet networks: bandwidth on demand, also known as overbooking or oversubscription, and packet forwarding. You will know the IP packet format and how IP addresses are allocated, assigned and displayed. You will know the difference between static and dynamic addresses, public and private addresses and how Network Address Translation works. An additional objective is to become familiar with the basics of IPv6.

In particular, on completion of this course, you will be able to explain:

- The concept of statistical multiplexing, also known as oversubscription, overbooking and bandwidth on demand, why and how it can be implemented and its benefits.
- What a private network is
- What a router is and how it implements the network by connecting data links
- How routers move packets between broadcast domains, including VLANs
- How routers also act as a point of control for traffic, called packet filtering
- The basic structure and contents of a routing table
- The Customer Edge
- IPv4 address blocks: Class A, Class B and Class C, and dotted-decimal notation
- Static addresses and dynamic addresses, and how and why DHCP is used to assign both
- Public addresses and private addresses, how, why and where each is used
- Network Address Translation for interfacing domains where public addresses are used with those where private addresses are used
- The improvements and changes between IPv4 and IPv6, and
- The types of IPv6 addresses, how IPv6 addresses are allocated to ISPs then assigned to users, and how each residence gets 18 billion billion IPv6 addresses.

Detailed Course Description

Packet networks embody two main ideas: bandwidth on demand and packet switching. First, we'll recap channelized TDM and its limitations, then understand statistical TDM or bandwidth on demand. Next, we'll understand how routers implement the network with packet-switching, that is, relaying packets from one circuit to another, and how routers are a point of control for network security. We'll introduce the term Customer Edge (CE), and understand the basic structure and content of a routing table.

Then we'll cover the many aspects of IP addressing – needed to be able to do the packet switching: IPv4 address classes, dotted decimal notation, static vs. dynamic addresses, DHCP, public vs. private addresses, Network Address Translation, and finish with an overview of IPv6 overview and IPv6 address allocation and assignment.

Lesson 1. Course Introduction

The first lesson begins the course with an overview of the course and lessons.

This lesson is available for free on teracomtraining.com and provides both a walkthrough of the course and a sample of the quality of the course graphics, text and presentation.

Lesson 2. Review: Channelized Time-Division Multiplexing (TDM)

We'll review the idea of channelized Time-Division Multiplexing (TDM), what channels are, and how they can be used to aggregate traffic onto a high-speed circuit. Then we'll raise some questions: is that an efficient way to connect devices that produce traffic in bursts, which means devices that are normally doing nothing? And what about the problem of a single point of failure for all the aggregated traffic? Subsequent lessons explore the answers to those questions.

Lesson 3. Statistical Time-Division Multiplexing: Bandwidth-on-Demand

In this lesson, we'll understand how circuits that move bits constantly can be used efficiently when the user's traffic profile is: "idle most of the time, interspersed with bursts of data every once in a while." The answer is overbooking. This is also called statistical multiplexing and bandwidth-on-demand, and is a key part of a packet network: the internal circuits are heavily overbooked, to give users the highest speed at the lowest cost. It is necessary to know the users' historical demand statistics – also called their traffic profile – to know how much to overbook, hence the term statistical multiplexing.

Lesson 4. Private Network: Bandwidth on Demand + Routing

The purpose of this lesson is to expand the discussion of the previous lesson to include multiple circuits. The result is called a private network, and is the simplest framework for understanding routers, routing, network addresses and bandwidth-on-demand.

Lesson 5. Routers

In this lesson, we'll take a closer look at a router, more precisely identifying the functions a router performs to implement a packet network, and understand how a router routes by examining the basic structure and content of a routing table. We'll also understand how the router can act as a point of control, denying communications based on criteria including network address and port number, why this is implemented and its limitations. The term Customer Edge (CE) is defined in this lesson.

Lesson 6. IPv4 Addresses

Here, we'll understand IPv4 addresses, address classes and the dotted-decimal notation used to represent them.

Lesson 7. DHCP

In this lesson, we'll cover DHCP: the Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol, and understand the mechanism by which a machine is assigned an IP address. We'll also understand how the "dynamic" host configuration protocol can be used to assign static addresses to machines and the advantages of this method.

Lesson 8. Public and Private IPv4 Addresses

The purpose of this lesson is to define the terms "public" and "private" IP address, review how IP addresses are assigned and the costs for those addresses, then cover the ranges of IPv4 addresses that are used as private addresses, and understand how and why they are used.

Lesson 9. Network Address Translation

In this lesson, we'll explore how private IPv4 addresses used in-building and a public address required for Internet communications can be joined together with a software function called Network Address Translation.

Lesson 10. IPv6 Overview

Completing this course on IP, we'll first review the next generation of IP: IPv6, understand the improvements compared to IPv4 and review the format of the IPv6 packet and its header.

Lesson 11. IPv6 Address Allocations and Assignment

Finally, we examine the structure of the 128-bit IPv6 address, review the different kinds of IP addresses, the organizations that allocate them, and the current plans for how addresses will be assigned to end users... and how every residence gets 18 billion billion IPv6 addresses.

Multiple-Choice Course Exam

Course 2214 MPLS and Carrier Networks

Carrier Packet Networks • Technologies • MPLS • SLAs • CoS • Integration & Aggregation

15 interactive multipart lessons, multiple-choice exam and certificate. Produced 2012.

MPLS and Carrier Networks is a comprehensive training course designed to build a solid understanding of carrier packet networks and services, the terminology, technologies, configuration, operation and most importantly, the underlying ideas ... in plain English.

We'll cut through the buzzwords and marketing to demystify carrier packet networks and services, explaining Service Level Agreements, traffic profiles, virtual circuits, QoS, Class of Service, Differentiated Services, integration, convergence and aggregation, MPLS and other network technologies, and how they relate to TCP/IP without bogging down on details.

You will gain career- and productivity-enhancing knowledge of the structure, components and operation of carrier packet networks and services, how they are implemented, packaged and marketed by carriers and how they are used by government, business... and other carriers.

Course Outline

1. Introduction

Packet Switching and Bandwidth on Demand concepts. Course overview.

2. Carrier Packet Network Basics

Customer Edge, Provider Edge, Access and Core

3. Service Level Agreements

Traffic Profile and Class of Service

4. Virtual Circuits

Traffic Classes, Virtual Circuits and Virtual Circuit IDs

5. X.25

Packet Network Protocol Stack & OSI Layers

6. Frame Relay

Frame Relay vs. Packet Switching, IP, TCP, FRADs

7. TCP/IP over Frame Relay

Tracing a file download end-end through the equipment and protocols

8. QoS Requirement for Voice over IP

How packetized voice works and what is needed

9. ATM

Brief overview: ATM objectives, cells, Service Classes

10. MPLS

MPLS components, jargon, basic operation

11. TCP/IP over MPLS

Tracing a file download end-end, MPLS for VPN or VPLS

12. Differentiated Classes of Service using MPLS

QoS, traffic classification, Diff-Serv: multiple CoS

13. Integration and Convergence using MPLS

Carrying all traffic on a single network technology

14. Managing Aggregates of Traffic with MPLS Label Stacking

Carrying virtual circuits on virtual circuits – access and core

15. MPLS Services vs. Internet Service

Similarities and differences, pros and cons. The Future.

16. Multiple-choice Exam

Prerequisites

Courses L2112 OSI Layers, L2111 LANs and L2113 IP are recommended. Those courses along with this one are included in both the Certified Telecommunications Network Specialist (CTNS) and the Certified IP Telecom Network Specialist (CIPTS) certification packages.

Course Objectives

This course can be taken by both those who need simply an overview and introduction to carrier packet networks and MPLS, and by those who need to build a solid base and get up to speed on all or most of the listed topics.

If you're in the first group, the objective is not to become an instant expert, but rather to become familiar with the structure, components and operation of carrier packet networks and services, how they are packaged, marketed and used, and to demystify the jargon and buzzwords, to eliminate frustration and increase your confidence and effectiveness.

If you're in the second group, and your objective is to get up to speed on all or most of the listed topics, putting in place a base that project- or job-specific knowledge can be built on, following is a list of concrete objectives. On completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Explain the components and basic structure of a carrier packet network including core, provider edge, access and customer edge,
- List three ways packet services are better than dedicated lines for wide-area networking,
- Define a Service Level Agreement, Class of Service and traffic profile,
- Define a traffic class and explain what a virtual circuit is, and what they are used for,
- Differentiate between a reliable and unreliable Class of Service and what must be done to accommodate the latter, and briefly explain connection-oriented and connectionless communication modes,
- Explain the fundamentals of Frame Relay: how Frame Relay got its name, how IP is carried over Frame Relay, why TCP is also required, and the traffic profiles supported,
- Identify the steps involved in communicating voice in packets, and what transmission characteristics are critical to call quality,
- Briefly describe the characteristics of ATM and the classes of service it was supposed to implement to support telephone calls,

- Show how MPLS is essentially the same thing as X.25, Frame Relay and ATM but with different jargon – and identify that jargon, including defining the meaning and purpose of a label, and identifying where the label is placed in the headers,
- Trace the flow of a message transported by TCP in IP packets over an MPLS network,
- Identify the benefit of MPLS compared to Frame Relay from the user's point of view,
- Explain what Differentiated Services are, and how MPLS labels can be used to implement Diff-Serv, and an alternative,
- Explain how and why MPLS can be used to achieve service integration,
- Show how MPLS can be used to aggregate traffic,
- Explain what exactly someone means when they say "MPLS service" and explain why "IP service with a service level agreement" would be a more accurate term, and
- Identify two differences between MPLS service and Internet service, and the pros and cons of each.

Detailed Course Description

Lesson 1. Course Introduction

The first lesson recaps the concepts of packet switching and bandwidth on demand, then provides an overview of the topics that will be covered, the course objectives and a description of each lesson. This lesson is available for free on teracomtraining.com and provides both a walkthrough of the course and a sample of the quality of the course graphics, text and presentation.

Lesson 2. Carrier Packet Network Basics

The fundamental concepts of packet switching and bandwidth-on-demand or overbooking, the physical components involved in using a carrier packet network service including Customer Edge, types of access circuits, the Provider Edge and the network core – and why PE equipment is sometimes deployed at the customer premise. This lesson is completed with a roundup of the benefits of packet services over dedicated lines and circuit-switched connections.

Lesson 3. Service Level Agreements: Traffic Profile and Class of Service

How performance is specified, measured, guaranteed and controlled on an overbooked bandwidth-on-demand network – the Service Level Agreement where the network guarantees specified transmission characteristics, sometimes called a Class of Service, on condition that the customer stays within a defined traffic profile ... and what happens to out-of-profile traffic.

Lesson 4. Virtual Circuits

The fundamentals of virtual circuits, an essential part of all packet communication networks. We'll cover the concepts of traffic classes, virtual circuits, virtual circuit IDs and the fundamental principles of operation that are common to all technologies, including MPLS, and how virtual circuits are a powerful traffic management tool.

Lesson 5. X.25: Data Packet Service from The Phone Company

Beginning with this lesson, we'll run through the main virtual circuit technologies, starting with X.25. We won't spend any time on details of X.25, as it was replaced with Frame Relay then MPLS, but instead use it to introduce a graphical method of showing how packets travel between routers in frames over physical connections from user to network to user, plus concepts and jargon including connection-oriented vs. connectionless network service and reliable Class of Service vs. unreliable and pave the way for understanding current technologies Frame Relay and MPLS, and the improvements each brought to the table.

Lesson 6. Frame Relay

How Frame Relay was an improvement, why it's called "Frame Relay" along with other jargon, and why IP and TCP are required in conjunction with Frame Relay service. We'll identify the equipment used for Frame Relay and the traffic profiles it supports.

Lesson 7. TCP/IP over Frame Relay

In this lesson, we'll trace the flow of information from a server to a client across a Frame Relay service, identifying the protocol stacks on the terminals and edge equipment. This will allow understanding how Frame Relay network service from a carrier relates to TCP and IP used by a customer, and the requirements for connecting to a carrier's Frame Relay service.

Lesson 8. QoS Requirement for Voice Over IP

Packet network services were originally designed for datacom. In this lesson, we'll understand how voice is packetized, carried over a packet network, then reconstructed at the far end – and the transmission characteristics necessary for voice quality.

Lesson 9. ATM

ATM was supposed to be The Solution, allowing integration and convergence of all services on a packet network, as it was designed to guarantee the transmission characteristics necessary for voice and video in packets – but it became horribly complicated and expensive and is on the way out, so will simply provide an overview of ATM and its jargon.

Lesson 10. MPLS

IP has emerged as the standard for packets that will carry all traffic. Since IP provides a connectionless network service, additional protocols are required to implement virtual circuits to enable management and prioritization of traffic. The choice for IP is Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS). The concepts are the same as other virtual circuit technologies X.25, Frame Relay and ATM... but the jargon is changed. We'll begin by identifying MPLS components, jargon and basic principles of operation.

Lesson 11. TCP/IP over MPLS

In this lesson, we'll revisit tracing the path of a file download from server to client, this time over an MPLS network. This will reveal a significant advantage of MPLS-based network services compared to Frame Relay in the user-network interface. We'll also discuss the "M" in MPLS, noting how MPLS can be used to carry frames for VPLS in addition to the usual IP packets.

Lesson 12. Differentiated Classes of Service using MPLS

Here, we'll examine how classifying traffic and mapping classes onto virtual circuits can be a Quality of Service (QoS) mechanism to implement multiple Classes of Service on a packet network. This is sometimes referred to as *differentiated services* or *Diff-Serv*, i.e. providing a different Class of Service for each application: VoIP, IPTV, email, web surfing and others.

Lesson 13. Integration and Convergence using MPLS

In this lesson, we'll see how virtual circuits and traffic classification can be used to combine all of the types of communications of a business or organization onto a single access circuit. This idea is sometimes called *convergence*, though *service integration* is a more accurate term. It results in a large cost savings compared to one access circuit for each type of communications.

Lesson 14. Managing Aggregates of Traffic with Label Stacking

Here, we'll understand how MPLS labels can be stacked... virtual circuits carried over other virtual circuits, and how this is implemented to *aggregate* traffic for both routing and prioritization reasons – both on access circuits and in the network core.

Lesson 15. MPLS Services vs. Internet Service

This lesson completes the course with a discussion of terminology used in sales and marketing of MPLS services, and how that translates to reality. We will use a quiz question-and-answer format to understand the difference between Internet service and what sales brochures call "MPLS service"... and what exactly an "MPLS service" is.

Multiple-choice Exam