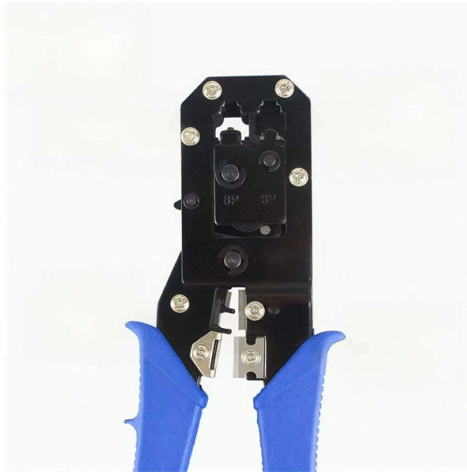


Reasons for Optical Cable Price Increase



AI Overview

Optical cable prices have surged due to a combination of unprecedented demand from AI data centers and military drone programs, supply constraints in raw materials, and extended production lead times.

Demand-Driven Factors

The most significant driver of the price increase is structural demand growth rather than cyclical market fluctuations. Hyperscale AI data centers and generative AI clusters require ultra-high-bandwidth, low-latency optical interconnects, both within and between data centers, leading to a surge in fiber consumption globally . Additionally, military applications, particularly fiber-guided loitering munitions and FPV drones, have created a new, large-scale demand for specialized optical fibers, directly competing with civilian telecom and data center projects . This dual demand has caused prices for standard single-mode (G.652D) and bend-insensitive fibers (G.657A1/A2) to rise between 45% and 90% since mid-2025 .

Supply-Side Constraints

Optical fiber production is material- and energy-intensive, relying on high-purity silicon tetrachloride, germanium tetrachloride, and specialty gases like helium and hydrogen . Rising costs of these inputs, combined with energy inflation and limited refining capacity, have significantly increased production costs. Helium shortages, critical for cooling fibers during manufacturing, have further constrained supply . Preform availability, which determines the fiber drawing capacity, is limited, and new capacity requires 18-24 months to come online, preventing rapid supply adjustments .

Market and Logistical Impacts

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