

Frequently Asked Questions

Firewire failures



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Question

Why do firewire (also know as I-link, IEEE-1394 or DV-out) ports on professional AV equipment sometimes fail?

And as the repair-costs of these defects are often high, what can be done to minimize the risk of damaging these ports?

Answer

There are several conditions that could cause a firewire port to fail. The following are the most common causes:

Cause	Description	Solution
ESD / Voltage transients	This is the most common as well as the most expensive failure. It's caused by connecting / disconnecting devices which are still powered on.	The best way to minimize this risk is to always connect / disconnect devices when <u>both</u> devices are powered down.
Cabling	Often low-cost and poor quality cables are used. These cables can cause short circuits and other problems.	Always use high quality cables. Replace worn or often used cables when needed.
Reverse insertion	It is possible (with force) to insert the cable reversed. The 6 pin firewire connector / port are most prone to reverse insertion. Reverse insertion will cause short circuits and physical damage to the port.	Always carefully align the cable before connecting it.
Pulling cables with force	Pulling a cable when it is connected to the port can cause a short circuit and can damage the cable/port physically.	Make sure no cables are connected when a device is moved.

As the repair costs on firewire ports can be high, VOCAS recommends users to use extra protective measures when working with firewire connections. Although these extra measures can't guarantee 100% protection, they will provide an added level of protection.

This is especially interesting because most of these measures are low cost (a fraction of the repair costs) and very self-explanatory.

For advise on what device is best for your setup, please don't hesitate to contact us!