Robert D. Maurer Encyclopedia Article

Robert D. Maurer

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1924-

American physicist who, with Donald Keck and Peter Schultz, helped develop the first practical glass for use in fiber optics systems. The key problem that Maurer and his collaborators faced was finding a way to reduce signal loss and degradation to the point where at least 1% of the original signal remained after traveling one kilometer. This was accomplished by adding germanium impurities to the glass in a process called "doping." At present, over 90% of long-distance telephone calls in the United States travel over fiber optic lines, attesting to their importance.