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APPLICATION NOTE NO. 68

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Using USB Ports to Communicate with Sea-Bird Instruments

Most Sea-Bird instruments use the RS-232 protocol for transmitting setup commands to the instrument and receiving data from the instrument. However, many newer PCs and laptop computers have USB port(s) instead of RS-232 serial port(s).

USB serial adapters are available commercially. These adapters plug into the USB port, and allow one or more serial devices to be connected through the adapter. Sea-Bird tested USB serial adapters from three manufacturers on desktop computers at Sea-Bird, and verified compatibility with our instruments. These manufacturers and the tested adapters are:

- **IOGEAR** (www.iogear.com) –
  USB 1.1 to Serial Converter Cable (model # GUC232A).
  Note: This adapter can also be purchased from Sea-Bird, as Sea-Bird part # 20163.

- **Keyspan** (www.keyspan.com) -
  USB 4-Port Serial Adapter (part # USA-49WLC, replacing part # USA-49W)

- **Edgeport** (www.ionetworks.com) -
  Standard Serial Converter Edgeport/2 (part # 301-1000-02)

Other USB adapters from these manufacturers, and adapters from other manufacturers, **may** also be compatible with Sea-Bird instruments.

We have one report from a customer that he could not communicate with his instrument using a notebook computer and the Keyspan adapter listed above. He was able to successfully communicate with the instrument using an XH8290 DSE Serial USB Adapter (www.dse.co.nz).

We recommend testing any adapters, *including those listed above*, with the instrument and the computer you will use it with before deployment, to verify that there is no problem.