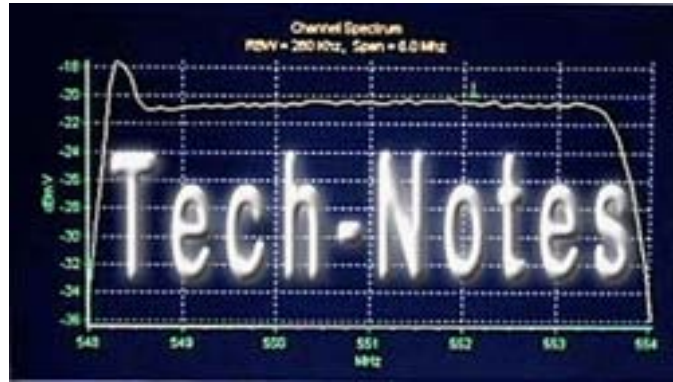


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<http://www.Tech-Notes.tv>

December 23, 2003

Tech-Note – 121

Established May 18, 1997

Our purpose, mission statement, this current edition, archived editions and other relative information is posted on our website.

This is YOUR forum!



Editor's Comments

Holiday Greetings

The following is a bit off topic, but very timely. In light of recent developments in Iraq, we can once again be proud of our men and women in uniform. Be they regulars or reservist, their job isn't an easy one and is often times forgotten. Many of us come from

such training and background. Some of the best techs I've ever worked with were products of our Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard. If we do nothing else, at this time of year, but to reflect on how they keep us free and acknowledge the sacrifices they make on our behalf, we will have fulfilled a great part of what this holiday season is all about.

Having spent many years in Uncle Sam's canoe club (USN), I recall, with fondness, the times when many of us were very grateful for those who took the time to visit us during the holidays. In that light and spirit, we share with you this e-mail that was forwarded to us from a Captain serving with our forces in Iraq. It is a first-hand report of the President's visit with the troops on Thanksgiving Day.

An Email from a Captain in Iraq

We knew there was a dinner planned with ambassador Bremer and LTGen. Sanchez. There were 600 seats available and all the units in the division were tasked with filling a few tables. Naturally, the 501st MI battalion got our table.

Soldiers were grumbling about having to sit through another dog-and-pony show, so we had to pick soldiers to attend. I chose not to go. About 1500 the G2, LTCol. Devan, came up to me and with a smile, asked me to come to dinner with him, to meet him in his office at 1600 and bring a camera. I didn't really care about getting a picture with Sanchez or Bremer, but when the division's senior intelligence officer asks you to go, you go.

We were seated in the chow hall, fully decorated for thanksgiving when aaaaaallllll kinds of secret service guys showed up. That was my first clue, because Bremer's been here before and his personal security detachment is not that big. Then BGen. Dempsey got up to speak and he welcomed ambassador Bremer and LTGen. Sanchez. Bremer thanked us all and pulled out a piece of paper as if to give a speech. He mentioned that the President had given him this thanksgiving speech to give to the troops. He then paused and said that the senior man present should be the one to give it. He then looked at Sanchez, who just smiled.

Bremer then said that we should probably get someone more senior to read the speech. Then, from behind the camouflage netting, the President of the United States came around. The mess hall actually erupted with hollering. Troops bounded to their feet with shocked smiles and just began cheering with all their hearts. The building actually shook. It was just unreal. I was absolutely stunned. Not only for the obvious, but also because I was only two tables away from the podium. There he stood, less than thirty feet away from me! The cheering went on and on and on.

Soldiers were hollering, cheering, and a lot of them were crying. There was not a dry eye at my table. When he stepped up to the cheering, I could clearly see tears running down his cheeks.

It was the most surreal moment I've had in years. Not since my wedding and Aaron being born. Here was this man, our President, came all the way around the world, spending 17 hours on an airplane and landing in the most dangerous airport in the world, where a plane was shot out of the sky not six days before, just to spend two hours with his troops, only to get on a plane and spend another 17 hours flying back. It was a great moment, and I will never forget it.

He delivered his speech, which we all loved, when he looked right at me and held his eyes on me. Then he stepped down and was just mobbed by the soldiers. He slowly worked his way all the way around the chow hall and shook every last hand extended. Every soldier who wanted a photo with the President got one. I made my way through the line, got dinner, and then wolfed it down as he was still working the room.

You could tell he was really enjoying himself. It wasn't just a photo opportunity. This man was actually enjoying himself! He worked his way over the course of about 90 minutes towards my side of the room. Meanwhile, I took the opportunity to shake a few hands. I got a picture with Ambassador Bremer, Talabani (acting Iraqi president) and Achmed Chalabi (another member of the ruling council) and Condaleeza Rice, who was there with him.

I felt like I was drunk. He was getting closer to my table so I went back over to my seat. As he passed and posed for photos, he looked my in the eye and "How you doin', captain." I smiled and said "God bless you, sir." To which he responded "I'm proud of what you do, captain," then moved on.

We're proud of you too, Captain, and all the troupes. We hope and pray that the issues are resolved swiftly with as few casualties as possible so that all of you can return home to all of us.

Happy Holidays from all of us here at Tech-Notes

One very important item: This is **NOT** a repeat from our last edition! This about the reply comments period for the Notice of Proposed Rule Making about the transition to digital of the LPTV and Translator part of our world is rapidly coming to an end. If you haven't put in your 2 cents, you should. These comments can be filed electronically. As we said with the comments period, you do not have to be any kind of great author to put your thoughts down and get them in. The FCC's webpage can get you to where you have to go. The reference docket is MBDocket 03-185 (NPRM FCC 03-198). The deadline for reply comments would normally be December 25th, but the FCC is closed the 25th & 26th, but don't wait until then. Our website can help you get this done:

http://www.tech-notes.tv/Seminar/Seminar_Index.htm, then select Item 3 [NPRM](#). It is a 1.6 MB file and the main part about how and what to do begin about slide #17.

For and even more in-depth reading on this very important topic, see: **DTV for Translators and LPTV – A Tip Sheet** By Michael Couzens, Attorney at Law, Oakland, CA on page six of our last edition.– It's the first story under the news caption below. Couzens is licensed to practice law before the FCC. ([Click here for a direct link to Tech-Notes #120.](#))

Letters to the Editor

Editor's Note: *Unless specifically asked not to print letters to us, we will.*

Editor's response to two bits of correspondence we received. We received interesting, if not tierce, letters from both Art Allison, Director of Advanced Engineering at NAB and from their attorneys. We were asked not to post those letters, so we won't.

Mr. Allison took issue with us posting his public comments from one of the public engineering on line reflectors forums we monitor. We were asked to remove them. We did not and will not. We have never removed anything since we began. We will, however post retractions and apologies, so if we have offended anyone, we're sorry.

As to the NAB attorney, we were told we could not use the NAB logo without their prior permission. We will comply with that request now and in the future.

We did advise the attorney that anyone who uses "company" e-mail when posting to these public forums, are normally considered to be speaking, like it or not, for their company – ex-cathedra.

Mr. Allison's input was and is most welcome and useful, as well as those post from many of the fine respected engineers who post to these forums, but if he or they don't want readers to think it is from their company or organization, than they should use their personal e-mail to post rather than their company's.



From: Jay Cordova arteffects@mindspring.com
Subject: Collectables

My "hobby" of collection old movie opens, network animations, promos, fall campaigns, graphics, etc., particularly from the mid-sixties to the mid- to late-eighties, has turned into a serious search for high quality versions of some these materials. I was thinking some of you might have materials stored away in a basement or closet somewhere and may be willing to share them with me. It's a purely personal hobby, but I do share small mpeg-1 versions (using the Tsunami encoder, which I think is excellent) on a "TV Vault" web page I've set up.

I would take great care of all tapes or film (I keep my library sealed in large ziplock bags, and as a result my 20 year old 1" tapes still look great with minimal dropout). I would dub to digibeta and can accommodate just about any format - 1", BetaSP, digibeta, 3/4", even Quad (although I have to go outside for the quad dubs). And I still collect anything on VHS. I'm guessing many of you may have been some of the first people like me with a VHS machine around 1980, perhaps earlier, and may have old tapes of shows that contain classic opens, promos, IDs, etc.

Most of my trading has brought to me poor VHS copies of material, so I decided to seek out the highest quality versions I could. For example: I'm expecting a large box of Bill Feigenbaum's work next week. You probably know he did much pioneering 3D work in the early and mid-eighties, especially for CBS Sports, and he was also, I believe, art director at NBC back to the late 60's. He says he has dubs of NBC material that may no longer exist elsewhere. I've also contacted Lou Dorfsman, considered a legendary figure and responsible for the CBS airlook for about 40 years. All those movie opens and special effects we saw on CBS growing up -- Lou Dorfsman. He's 85 now but still has an office at CBS and is going to get his classic movie opens and more out of the CBS archives and his storage room at home for me. With time, I'm going to end up with a rare and priceless collection which I'll be happy to share with any of you who may be interested.

I've got hours of material so far but am only able to post tidbits at a time on our server. The postings there are rather weak, but if you want to take a look, you'll get at least a glimpse of the kind of material I'm seeking. I've done the web postings for only a month or so to date, so I've little to show so far, but I usually try to add new material each week, as time permits.

http://www.springboardcreative.com/TV_Vault/TV_Vault.htm

User is "vault" and password is "spring".

I've found that engineers and techs have saved old tapes that would have otherwise been trashed. For example: the first quad tape used by CBS for west coast delay broadcast of a live show (The Edsel Show) was said not to exist by CBS for 40 years. All they had was the kinescope that they ran simultaneously with the tape, anticipating tape machine

failure. But just several years ago, someone called engineering instead of CBS archives and a very old engineer had the tape in his desk -- where it had been for 40 years! I've seen a picture of it, labeled (scribbled) by hand "CBS worktape #1".

Combined with a need for one for my "hobby", I purchased a working VPR-80 w/ TBC for \$175; came from a guy who owns a post house in Louisiana, via eBay.

Jay Cordova



From: Tom Taggart tpt@eurekanet.com
Subject: Bureaucratic Idiocy

A client purchased a number of microwave tower sites. The big company selling the sites is not very well managed; they paid millions for great numbers of obsolete sites of little value, my client will buy ten clunkers looking for the rough diamond.

One such diamond of a site is in a rapidly growing area of Ohio. Soon he had a nice offer for the land. But the tower had to go before the buyer would close. My client found someone interested in brokering the tower, the old lighted tower was sold, and dismantled (which is another story in itself, but I digress).

Killing the tower registration was painless. Then I went to the FAA web site, and used their PDF form to print out a notice telling Great Lakes that this lighted tower--that they had studied about three years ago when strobes replaced the red beacon--was gone: In the mail.

Back comes the notice with a pre-printed form:

"Dear Proponent: Please submit a NON size reduced 7.5 minute topographic... with proposed location clearly marked by a cross hair."

UH, did any of these idiots read the notice? Guess what? I'm not buying a topo in order to tell these clowns that the tower doesn't exist anymore.

Making this even more ridiculous is a parallel project.

At my stations, we are going to split off a Class A now fed off-air. STL dish had to be a minimum of 200' above ground (25 mile path through the hills). Old Rohn 45G barely holding up our 4 bay FML, let alone a 6' dish. So we started--late--to replace the tower (one 20' section up, waiting for the snow to melt to complete the project--and waiting for the STL antennas! See second post about getting a good distributor).

Since the new tower will be at 225' on our ridge, I dutifully mailed in the proper 7460 FAA notice--in October, well before 30 days to our target date of early December. Notice

comes back the middle of November--wrong address (I used the address on the form. Silly me!)

Now we are in West Virginia, and instead of Great Lakes, our notices go to the Eastern Regional office in Jamaica Plains, NY. So I called that office, explained our then-proposed date of early December, and asked what to do.

No problem, said the fellow in N.Y. Just fax the 7460 to us with a copy of the map. We don't need the actual topo--besides, sometime next year, your filing will be on-line anyway.

Life would be so simple without these bureaucratic fiefdoms.

(P.S.: We figured painting and lighting, so we had World paint the tower at the factory, the 50-year old Hughey-Phillips beacon has been cleaned, rewired & sits in the shop, and the side markers are under the Christmas tree, Literally. Glad when this project will be over, our building is too small.)



From: Roy Trumbull roy_trumbull@hotmail.com
Subject: DBS

In San Francisco, Direct TV put in fiber to all participating stations and gathered the signals to a central point and then did a consolidated home run to Los Angeles. I believe the signals were compressed before going to LA but I don't know that for a fact.

As part of the FCC filings on the now dead merger between Direct TV and Dish, a scheme was described in which birds with multiple transmitters and antennas would reuse the same frequencies to serve different footprints. The intent at that time was that they would air the local signals of stations in 1 or 2 markets per state. I don't know what they are doing in the wake of the failed merger. The one thing that did make sense was that there wouldn't be a duplication of effort in carrying local stations if the two DBS companies merged. The downside was that the viewer would have to employ more than one receiving dish to get everything.

I wonder what the fate of DBS will be when the viewers take to HD pictures. DBS has about as much resolution as a VHS tape, if that. They cram 8 or more channels into 6 MHz of spectrum. Digital cable does the same. We are raising a generation who think they are losing their eyesight until they get it back when they go outdoors or to the movies.

If you have an optometrist amongst your readers you could get a comparison between lines of resolution and what line on the eye chart that corresponds to.

Roy

News

New Service to Help Engineers Plan



The Broadcast Buyers Guide, a new, independent online company and product reference for the broadcast industry, exhibited its new website at the 2003 Government Video Technology Expo. Steve Epstein, President of Broadcast Buyers Guide, stated: “The show was a success. Readers were given the opportunity to explore the site, provide feedback and get demonstrations of the new features.” As a result of the show, new readers have significantly increased the number of hits to the site.

<http://www.broadcastbuyersguide.com>

Broadcast Buyers Guide.com is designed to provide a user-friendly interface for readers and serve as an up-to-date reference of companies, products, systems integrators and service providers in the broadcast and professional audio/video industry. Among the site’s new features is “ShowStrategy”.

ShowStrategy provides a color coded map of the show floor based on user-selected product categories. The Government Video ShowStrategy was a hit with readers and will be enhanced for the upcoming NAB Show in Las Vegas.

About BroadcastBuyersGuide.com: Founded in 2003, Broadcast Buyers Guide is an independent online product and company resource, presented in a user-friendly manner, by an industry veteran. Steve Epstein has been in television and radio engineering for more than 30 years. He holds a BS in Broadcasting, and is SBE-certified (CPBE & CBNT).

Steve was the technical editor of both Broadcast Engineering and Video Systems magazines and the editor of BE's 1999 and 2000 Buyers Guides, both of which included some of BroadcastBuyersGuide.com’s features. Since 2000, as part of the Sprint PCS.com User Experience team, Steve helped research and enhance the usability of the Sprint PCS website. The applicable concepts are incorporated into this site.

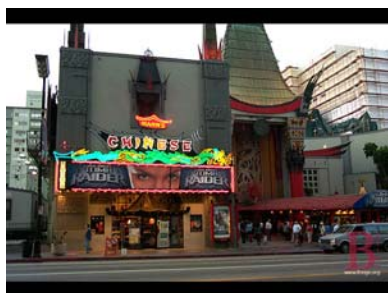
BroadcastBuyersGuide.com’s goal is to become “Broadcasting’s most comprehensive Buyers Guide”. We realize the keys to our success are sponsors and readers. The more we have of one, the easier it will be to attract and retain the other. Because of that, we welcome your comments and suggestions.



Digital Cinema Milestone

By Fred Lawrence

In a recent press release, it was announced that Hollywood's Mann's Chinese Theatre installed a 2K DLP Projector. This is nearly four times more pixels than are available in any of the ATSC formats and approaches the native resolution of 35mm film. Making the announcement,



Texas Instruments said that this was the first US commercial installation of a projector in a theatre of this quality. When the announcement was made, Mann's Chinese Theatre was projecting Warner Bros.' "The Last Samurai" in 2K digital.



The announcement also mentioned that 2K DLP Cinema projectors have been installed in Taiwan and Thailand and are now commercially available from all three OEMs: BARCO, Christie Digital and NEC/Digital Projection. Other 2K DLP Cinema projectors are scheduled to be installed in early 2004, including 20 in Singapore; 20 in China, and 10 in Belgium.



NAB, MSTV Oppose Second Channels for LPTV, Class A Stations

By Larry Bloomfield



In a story that appeared in TV Technology, the [Association of Maximum Service Television \(MSTV\)](#) and the [National Association of Broadcasters \(NAB\)](#) have filed [comments](#) in the FCC's [Notice of Proposed Rule Making](#) to establish rules for digital television translator, booster and LPTV stations and amend rules for digital Class A television stations. It would appear that these organization are strongly opposed to granting any second channels to existing television translator, LPTV and Class A stations. What is fair to their members doesn't appear to be fair for others who wish to bring FREE over the air television to our nation. The comments note that section 336(f)(4) of the Communications act makes it clear the FCC "is under no obligation to award a second digital channel to Class A, LPTV or translator stations during the transition." The comments do allow, however, that the commission should permit these stations to transition on channel, providing technical rules for the low power/translator services are strengthened. You can see the whole story at:

<http://www.tvtechnology.com/dlrf/signup.shtml>



We Don't Want to be Told What To Do!

By Charlie Nulla

In an Ex-Parte letter filing with the FCC the National Cable Television Association (NCTA) in a very wordy document told the FCC of their displeasure over any considerations regarding



Must Carry. The impetus for this filing was in response to NAB's and MSTV's letter of November 25, 2003, which purports to address the Commission's concerns about imposing a dual carriage obligation on cable. In their letter, NCTA says that the NAB and MSTV submitted what they call a "new proposal for a must carry rule during the DTV transition" and claim that it "allays the Commission's constitutional concerns by never requiring cable systems to carry more than one signal of any local television station." The NCTA goes on to say that nothing in the NAB's and MSTV's proposal should allay the FCC's legitimate concern about the constitutional infirmity of requiring dual carriage. NCTA says there is nothing new about NAB's and MSTV's repackaged proposal to force cable carriage of each broadcaster's digital signal, in addition to its analog signal, during the DTV transition.

Those in the know say that until cable carries the unaltered digital signals of local broadcasters, the transition to digital for the nation is will remain in a quagmire.

For the whole document, visit either www.FCC.gov or <http://www.ncta.com> CS Docket No. 98-120



Lots of Football in HD

By Fred Lawrence



According to ABC Sports, they will broadcast college football's Nokia Sugar Bowl, the national championship game of the Bowl Championship Series, in HDTV Jan. 4.

The network said they plan to air more than 800 hours of HDTV this season, including most of prime time and all of Monday Night Football. It averages about 17 hours per week.

Last season, ABC aired the Super Bowl, the National Basketball Association Finals and the National Hockey League's Stanley Cup Finals all in HDTV.



That said, CBS recently announced it will broadcast its full slate of five NFL Playoff Games, culminating in the live broadcast of SUPER BOWL XXXVIII on Sunday, Feb. 1 (6:25 PM, ET), in high definition television format. Sony Electronics will sponsor the HDTV broadcasts, which will begin Sunday, Jan. 4 (4:30 PM -



TBD, ET) with the CBS Television Network's first AFC Wild Card Playoff Game.

In addition, the CBS/Sony collaboration will make possible the broadcast of the Network's NFL pre-game show, THE NFL TODAY, from the AFC Championship Game on Sunday, Jan. 18 (2:00-3:00 PM, ET); the Network's XXXVIII pre-game show, THE SUPER BOWL TODAY, on Sunday, Feb. 1 (2:00-6:00 PM, ET), and the America Online Super Bowl XXXVIII Halftime Show in HDTV.



For a complete listing of daily HDTV programs on the broadcast networks and dedicated HD networks, visit: <http://www.ilovehdtv.com/>

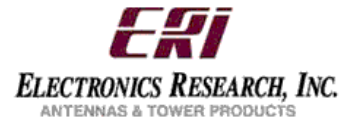


Andrew has been busy

From Press Releases



[Andrew Corporation](#) announced it is selling its broadcast products division to [Electronics Research Inc. \(ERI\)](#). The [Andrew press release](#) said the assets sold include filters, combiners and RF components for television and FM radio (Andrew Passive Power Products), antenna systems for television broadcast applications and rigid transmission line products, including the MACXLine coax and GUIDELine circular waveguide brands. Andrew's Heliac, microwave and satellite antenna and elliptical waveguide lines are not included in the sale.



More information should also be available on the [Electronics Research, Inc. \(ERI\)](#) web site as the sale progresses

Andrew Corp. has also announced that it has acquired selected assets of Channel Master and certain subsidiaries.



The acquired assets include equipment, inventory, intellectual property, and a lease on a portion of Channel Master's Smithfield, N.C., facility for up to 18 months, the company said.

Andrew said it's working with former Channel Master customers to assure delivery and service continuity. Integration teams are examining customer, commercial and employee implications of combining Channel Master's U.S. and overseas operations into existing Andrew locations. For those not familiar, Channel Master is known for its antenna and antenna related products such as VSATs, its DBS antenna business and television accessory markets.



Editorial Change to FCC DTV Transmission Standards

From an FCC Press Release

The FCC has made editorial changes to Part 73, Section 73.682(d). This section defines the U.S. digital broadcast television transmission standard. The modified section now reads:



(d) Digital broadcast television transmission standard. Transmission of digital broadcast television (DTV) signals shall comply with the standards for such transmissions set forth in ATSC A/52: "ATSC Standard Digital Audio Compression (AC-3)" (incorporated by reference, see § 73.8000) and ATSC Doc. A/53B, Revision B with Amendment 1: "ATSC Digital Television Standard," except for Section 5.1.2 ("Compression format constraints") of Annex A ("Video Systems Characteristics") and the phrase "see Table 3" in Section 5.1.1. Table 2 and Section 5.1.2 Table 4 (incorporated by reference, see § 73.8000). Although not incorporated by reference, licensees may also consult ATSC Doc. A/54, Guide to Use of the ATSC Digital Television Standard, October 4, 1995, and ATSC Doc. A/65A, Program System and Information Protocol (PSIP) for Terrestrial Broadcast and Cable, December 23, 1997 for guidance. (Secs. 4, 5, 303, 48 Stat., as amended, 1066, 1068, 1082 (47 U.S.C. 154, 155, 303)).

The standards referenced have not changed. Comparing the new 73.682(d) with the old one, the new section is shorter. The spelled out reference to "Advanced Television Systems Committee" and information on where to obtain the standards was removed. Refer to the [FCC Order - Editorial Modification of Part 73 of the Commission's Rules](#).



DTV Transition Scoreboard

From an NAB and an FCC Press Releases

Within the past week, 28 additional local broadcast stations have joined the list of television stations broadcasting in digital, bringing the total number of DTV stations on air to 1,129 in 202 markets that serve 99.35% of U.S. TV Households.

In addition, 84.15% of the more than 106 million U.S. TV households are in markets with five or more broadcasters airing DTV and 59.23% are in markets with eight or more broadcasters sending digital signals.

For additional information, visit: www.nab.org and for a complete list of stations on air visit: <http://www.nab.org/Newsroom/issues/digitaltv/DTVStations.asp>



Eimac Releases Tube Reference Book



The Eimac division of CPI has released the latest edition of the Care & Feeding of Power Grid Tubes handbook. This new edition is an updated edition of the Eimac publication, which is sometimes referred to as the "tube bible." The updates include additional information on oxide cathodes, grids, anodes, vac-ion pumps and cooling, including a discussion of multiphase cooling. Examples have been updated to reflect tubes currently in common usage. In addition, a new section covering inductive output tubes (IOTs) has been added. Eimac has taken the original work of the project and added new material to make this publication timely and up to date.

The book is available through Eimac's global distributor, Richardson Electronics. Contact Richardson at 800-882-3872 or broadcast@rell.com.



FCC Gets Tough With LPFM About EAS



The FCC has told an LPFM it has 6 months to install an EAS decoder. Under the original commission rules for LPFM's the stations were granted waivers from the requirement to have EAS equipment installed until at least one FCC certified EAS-decoder was available. (At the time, there were only EAS encoders-decoders on the market.)

In 2002, the agency said there was one such device on the market, and it gave LPFMs until Oct. 24 of this year to comply.

South Arundel Citizens for Responsible Development, licensee of WRYR(LP), Sherwood, Md., asked for a 24-month waiver extension, citing financial hardship. It argued the EAS decoder would cost \$1,800 and the station has no advertising and is run by volunteers and funded through donations.

The commission said the station has known for a year about the requirement, and managed to budget \$12,000 for equipment in 2003. Buying the decoder, "is not sufficient magnitude" to justify a 24-month extension, stated the agency.

Further, WRYR(LP) has not shown there are any other stations "within its coverage area with EAS capability, and its efforts to supply emergency information to its listeners, while laudable, are not a sufficient substitute for complying with EAS requirements," stated the agency in its decision.

The station has six months to comply.



LPTV's Have Until March 5, 2004 to Get It Together

By Larry Bloomfield

Those who have filed the 2,900 "mutually exclusive" applications for low-power TV stations have until March 5 to work out settlements and prevent the licenses from being decided by auction, the FCC.



Mutually exclusive applications are requests for the same channel in a market or for channels that would overlap with an applicant in an adjacent market. The settlement period gives applicants opportunity to negotiate changes to their coverage areas so both could hold a license or deals giving one applicant the channel. By settling, winning applicants to get the license free and clear, just an uncontested applicant would.



Larry Thorpe Leaving Sony

From a Sony Press Release



Larry Thorpe, long-time Sony executive, is leaving the company January 5. Thorpe is senior vice president of Content Creation Systems. In recent years, Thorpe has been very much involved in Sony's developments in high-definition and digital cinema production.

Thorpe has been closely associated with Sony broadcast cameras since he joined the company in 1982. He has represented the manufacturer on various standards bodies including the ATSC, FCC and SMPTE. He holds 10 broadcast patents,

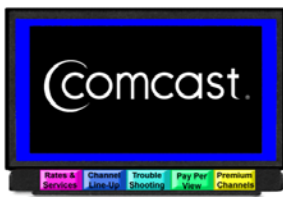
Thorpe has also worked for RCA's Broadcast Division and before that, the British Broadcasting Corporation. He's an IEE Graduate (1961) of the College of Technology in Dublin, Ireland and received his Chartered Engineer (C. Eng.) and MIEE distinction in 1961 from the Institute of Electrical Engineers in London, England.

Thorpe will be replaced by Robert Willox, who will serve as general manager of Content Creation Systems.



Comcast Makes Deal for CBS Multicasting

From a story that appeared in Broadcasting & Cable



The carriage of digital broadcast signals is a red-hot issue in Washington, as cable and broadcasters lobby regulators over whether operators will carry all of a



broadcaster's programming. In what can be considered a significant development for broadcast digital multicasting, which has been gaining traction in the last months of the year, the No. 1 MSO, Comcast has agreed to carry the digital multicast signals of Viacom divisions CBS and UPN as part of their renewal deal to distribute the cable channels from MTV Networks.

Many broadcasters are lobbying to force cable carriage of all their digital product, not just HD programming but any other channels they conjure up. Cable operators, in turn, are resisting full digital must-carry, in part out of fear that many independent stations will stuff digital channels with infomercials and paid TV preachers.

The wide-ranging deal ensures that whatever multicast and high-definition programming CBS and UPN owned-and-operated stations launch will be carried to Comcast subscribers in their respective markets. Comcast will pick up CBS's HD feed immediately, but the CBS stations' multicast package, plus digital signals of HD-free UPN, will be picked up some time later.

In what appears to be a win-win situation, Viacom will also allow Comcast same-day access to the CBS Evening News, The Early Show and newsmagazine 48 Hours plus stations' local newscasts for Comcast video-on-demand services as part of the new deal.



TV Helicopter Crashes in RI

A television helicopter leased by News Channel 10 made a hard landing in Cranston one afternoon in late November. The two crew members on board were not seriously hurt.

For more, visit: <http://www.turnto10.com/news/2667645/detail.html>



Is There A Glimmer Of Light At The End Of The Tunnel?

From a story that appeared in CableFAX : Vol. 14 No. 243 from PBI Media, LLC



House Commerce Committee Chairman Billy Tauzin (R-LA) and other committee leaders called on GAO to provide a report on how Berlin used a hard deadline to structure its digital TV transition. Congress junked a hard date for the US ('06). Instead, once markets approach DTV penetration of 85% of householdss, the entire market must halt analog broadcasting. Broadcasters in Berlin have been broadcasting only in digital since August of this year.



F.C.C. Approves Deal Giving Murdoch Control of DirecTV

By Fred Lawrence

This past week, the Federal Communications Commission, in a vote of 3 to 2, conditionally approved News Corporation's acquisition of control of Hughes Electronics and its DirecTV subsidiary from General Motors removing the final obstacle to the \$6.6 billion media merger that will combine the DirecTV satellite television service with News Corporation's Fox studios, pay television networks



like Fox News and Speed, its Fox broadcast channel and 35 local stations, not to mention Murdoch's many other foreign satellite services. News Corporation, which is controlled by Rupert Murdoch, will become the only media conglomerate with such broad offerings and national reach. Time Warner also combines studios, cable and broadcast networks and cable systems, but it does not own local stations and its cable systems reach only certain parts of the country. The deal is expected to close within days.



Nanoparticle Arrays Explored For Terabit-Level Disks

By Larry Bloomfield

With the ever increasing need for electronic storage, be it video, data or whatever, breakthroughs are most welcomed bits (excuse the pun) of information. The ability to get more and more information into a given space has exceeded even the wildest expectations. For example: the density of information stored on magnetic films has increased by a factor of 2 million since disk drives were introduced back in 1957. Drives that store 70 Gbits/square inch are on the market now, and research projects have demonstrated densities three times as high.

There was no sign of a slowdown in such innovations. It was only last week at the fall meeting of the Materials Research Society where Bruce Terris from the Hitachi San Jose (Calif.) Research Center described a process for creating cobalt-palladium nanoscale islands on silicon dioxide that he believes could carry magnetic media densities into the terabit/square-inch realm.

For more, see the original article at: <http://www.eetimes.com/story/OEG20031210S0031>



NTSC Color Celebrates 50 Years

On December 17th, NBC was the first to broadcast using the NTSC color format, using a still of the NBC "Chimes" logo at 5:31:17 PM EST. But, CBS had the first live color program on



the air at 6:15 P.M. featuring Rocky Marciano, using its Chromacoder cameras. NBC followed at 6:30 P.M. with a special program with Pat Weaver, General David Sarnoff, and Jimmy Durante.

These were not the first NTSC standards. Back in the spring of 1941, a proposed NTSC Standards was under consideration and the Los Angeles based Society of Television (STE) engineers sent a letter to the FCC urging their acceptance of these NTSC Standards and letters were sent to organizations in the television industry requesting their support of the NTSC Standards. This work continued up to the acceptance of those Standards by the FCC, which Standards became effective April 30, 1941. For more about STE, visit: <http://ste-ca.org/history.html>



A very informative and interesting website that tracks the history of color is: Ed Reitan's Color Television History Website: <http://www.novia.net/~ereitan/>



ABC Stations To Offer Digital Multicast

By Larry Bloomfield



According to a story that appeared in the Beyond the Headlines newsletter from Broadcast Engineering magazine, ABC-TV plans to do multicasting through their 10 owned and operated television stations on their digital channels. Walter Liss, president of the station group was quoted as saying it will be “in the near future.”

ABC has been using KFSN-TV, its Fresno, CA as a test platform for the past year as they experimented with multicasting technology. KFSN-TV offered three programming streams including HDTV, local news/weather and public affairs. Liss, in a letter to the FCC, said ABC now plans to extend the multicast concept to their other nine markets, including Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and San Francisco.

In the same letter, Liss plugged the “must carry” issue, urging the FCC to require cable operators to carry all of its DTV programming streams on local cable systems. For more information visit www.abc.com.

In a related story By Doug Halonen (<http://www.tvweek.com>) that appeared in Via ShopTalk, ABC and their affiliates are considering a 24-Hour Service, but it may depend on FCC approval for must-carry of multiple DTV channels on cable

No business plan is set, and several factors could derail the effort. One of those is uncertainty about whether cable operators will be forced by the Federal Communications Commission to carry the signals, which is currently the subject of intense discussions in

Washington. Sources said the channel will need that kind of broad broadcast and cable distribution to be viable.

Several affiliate sources said that unless the FCC revises the rule to require cable carriage of all of the free programming streams broadcasters offer on their DTV channels, all new broadcast DTV networks may be in jeopardy. Currently the FCC is only requiring cable to carry one DTV stream offered by the broadcaster-the stream that carries the main programming.

Sources said the concept of a joint DTV venture between ABC and its affiliates has been under discussion since summer, with the affiliates represented by a committee headed by John Lansing, senior VP, Television Station Group. E.W. Scripps Co. ABC executives involved in discussions, according to sources, include David Westin, president of ABC News, and John Rouse, ABC TV Network senior VP, affiliate relations.

The launch of a new news channel would be something of a vindication for ABC News, whose much ballyhooed efforts to expand in the news business have often turned into embarrassments.

NBC's owned-and-operated stations recently briefed the FCC on similar plans to launch several new digital multicasting TV networks with NBC affiliates, including a weather channel.

In addition, DIC Entertainment has offered to launch a 24-hour children's TV network for broadcast DTV channels on the condition that the FCC require carriage of all of a broadcaster's free DTV programming streams.



History Channel Program on Tower Collapse

From: Randy Miller randy_miller@witf.org

Here is a possibly a good program with John Windle, our PE for our tall tower. On Tuesday, Dec. 30 at 10 p.m. on the History Channel, the show Modern Marvels will feature a broadcast tower collapse. John is one of the commentators for this program, his interview was an hour and forty-five minutes, but will probably be edited down to a minute or two. Just wanted to let you know this might be a show of interest.

Randall F. Miller Jr – CBNT



Congratulations!

The following is a list of new SMPTE "Fellows" The new Fellows are:

Darcy Antonellis, executive-vice president, distribution and technology operations for Warner Bros. Technical Operations. Her responsibilities include the management of the studio and network technical operations components for content storage, fulfillment and distribution. Antonellis has served as Program Chair for SMPTE conferences and is a Manager in the Hollywood Section.



Curt Behlmer is managing partner and CTO of Digital Cinema Venture (DCV), responsible for management of technical affairs, including system design and integration, vendor relations and training. He is Chair of the SMPTE Digital Cinema Technology Committee and is a member of both the Standards Committee and the Study Group on Audio Production and Post-Production for Motion Picture and Television Entertainment Programming.

Roy Brubaker is senior-vice president, video post-production and general manager, film laboratory, for Crest National. While previously employed at Lorimar, he was an active participant in the launch of the electronic post-production process for editing and distributing television programming worldwide. Brubaker is SMPTE's Sustaining Membership Chairman and a Governor for the Hollywood Region.

Colin Davis is vice-president, imaging technologies, at Command Post & Transfer Corp., responsible for the film operations in both Toronto and Vancouver. Prior to that, he worked at Kodak Canada for 27 years, Davis is an active member of SMPTE and has held numerous positions in the Toronto Section and at International conferences.

Bruce Devlin is considered the father of the Material eXchange Format (MXF). He established the European Union Integrated Society Technology funded project G-FORS, designed to create a standardized file format for the exchange of content between storage devices. Devlin is co-chair of the Pro-MPEG/AAF MXF File Format Working Group, chairman of the Pro-MPEG MXF Implementation Group, and most recently, an active participant on SMPTE technology committees. Bruce Devlin, principal research and innovation engineer with Snell & Wilcox, who, at age 39, is the youngest SMPTE Fellow ever.

Alan Hart is currently an executive-vice president at Modern VideoFilm, where he is responsible for all technical resources. He started his television career in 1967 with KCET Channel 28, the PBS station in Los Angeles. Hart has served as Manager and Chair of the Hollywood Section. He is now serving his second term as a Governor for the Hollywood Region and is also on the Board of the SMPTE Foundation.

Masaru "Mac" Jibiki retired from Fuji Photo Film Co. in 2003 after a tenure of 37 years. He contributed significantly to building new film stocks such as the industry's first high-speed color negative, Fuji 500T speed product. Jibiki has served on various committees and organizations, including SMPTE Standards committees.

Stephen Lyman is a senior staff broadcast engineer at Dolby Laboratories. He began his career designing custom audio equipment for a recording studio and console manufacturer. Prior to joining Dolby, he worked at the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. and developed a system of standard audio and video measurement techniques. He was heavily involved with the company's effort to implement high-definition television, digital audio broadcasting, and other new technologies.

Tom McMahon is a senior architect for Dolby Research, where he is responsible for identifying opportunities for the company to establish positions in new technology areas. McMahon is currently a SMPTE Head of Delegation to MPEG. He is also on the Board of the Hollywood Post Alliance.

Takuo Miyagishima began his career with Panavision in 1955. Since then, under his guidance, the company has been honored with two Academy Awards of Merit: In 1978, for the Panavision Panaflex motion picture system, and in 1994, for the anamorphic taking system. Miyagishima serves on the SMPTE Projection Technology Committee and the Working Group on Telecine Practices. He is an associate member of the American Society of Cinematographers.

Roger R. A. Morton is a research fellow at Eastman Kodak Co., currently working on scene-to-screen optimization of both cinema and television systems. Morton has recently developed a method to predict one type of digital artifact in motion picture systems. Morton has received 64 U.S. patents, plus the corresponding foreign patents.

Peter Mulder is the owner of Digiframe and a consultant in digital media technology. In 1998, he received the award for "outstanding contribution" to the enhanced and interactive TV Davic 1.3 specification. Mulder is an active participant in many broadcast-related international standards committees such as the SMPTE engineering committees.

Iain Neil is currently executive vice-president, R&D and optics, and chief technical officer at Panavision. He has more than 150 worldwide patents, issued and pending, in visual and infrared optical design, systems for defense, industrial and consumer applications, including HDTV.

Peter Owen currently serves as chairman and technical consultant of the International Broadcasting Convention (IBC) Council. Prior to joining IBC, he worked at Quantel, Inc., where he held several positions involving product design, development, manufacturing, customer support, and interfacing with the creative and technical communities. Owen has served as International Governor of SMPTE.

Karl Paulsen is vice-president of engineering at Azcar USA and Azcar Technologies, where he leads the technology efforts and manages a staff of 22 engineers and technicians. He currently participates on SMPTE engineering committees and has served as Section Chair and held other Officer positions in the Pacific Northwest Section.

Graham Roe has made numerous contributions to the European color system trials in the late 60s, culminating with the launch of the U.K. color TV service in 1967. Roe also introduced and refined the Chroma Key to replace back projection and led the development team that designed the pioneering "Ace" field store standards converter. Roe has worked on SMPTE and RTS (Royal Television Society) technology committees, as well as the IBC conference committee.

Stephen Scott is a television equipment architect consultant. He previously worked at Miranda Technologies as group leader of an engineering design team and concentrated on time code, audio, and the non-active picture aspects of the digital video signal. Scott participates on several SMPTE technology committees.

Leon Silverman, executive vice-president of Laser Pacific Media, has helped introduce new technology to Hollywood for the past 26 years. He played a key role in establishing Laser Pacific's electronic laboratory, which pioneered many of the tools and techniques that are now the standard for the electronic post-production of film. Silverman is a Manager of the SMPTE Hollywood Section and also chairs the Education Committee. He is president and a founder of the Hollywood Post Alliance.

(Editor's Note: If there ever was a list of potential members for the Order of the Iron Test Pattern, this one certainly is. www.OITP.org.)



DVD Forum selects NEC & Toshiba for HD DVD

From a story that appeared in Beyond the Headlines



The DVD Forum in Tokyo has decided to adopt the compatible DVD format proposed by NEC and Toshiba Corporations for the storage and display of HD television programs and feature films. Using the same blue laser technology, 0.6-mm bonded disk, it is the same substrate and maintains the same key features used in current DVD systems.

The format was proposed to the 212-member Forum in August. The selection means a rival blue-laser technology, which was not formally submitted to the DVD Forum, will not be considered. Hitachi, LG, Matsushita, Philips, Pioneer, Samsung, Sharp, Sony and Thomson back the Blu-ray approach, which uses a disk with a 0.1-mm cover layer. Supporters of the Blu-ray technology have acknowledged its technology differs from DVD. The group does not need the approval of the DVD Forum to market its own incompatible products.

A key benefit of the NEC-Toshiba approach is its compatibility with the current DVD infrastructure. The aperture of the system's lens is 0.65 and the DVD disk consists of two 0.6-mm platters bonded back-to-back. Each side can store 20 GB for a single-layer recordable disk and 15 GB for a read-only disk.

The Blu-ray disk system, with a higher storage capacity, can hold 27 GB per side of a single-layer disk. It uses a 0.85 aperture lens. It is expected that NEC will market the new DVD drives for personal computers next year and Toshiba will offer a home DVD recorder in 2004.

For more information visit www.dvdforum.org.



Public Television Presents "PTV Now" Carriage Case

From a Press Release



In a filing earlier this month, the Association of Public Television Stations (APTS), the Public Broadcasting Service, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting presented a case that the Federal Communications Commission has the authority to adopt digital cable carriage rules now for public television stations. Arguing again for mandatory cable carriage of all free, over-the-air digital programming - commercial and noncommercial, the filing nevertheless cites "the unique statutory, factual, economic and historical circumstances of public television stations" in supporting a "PTV now" position.

One of the key statutory differences between commercial and noncommercial broadcasters was highlighted in the filing. Congress gave commercial broadcasters the option to choose either retransmission consent rights or must carry as a counterweight to the cable compulsory copyright license. Public broadcasters, however, must provide their signals free-of-charge under copyright laws in exchange for mandatory cable carriage alone.

Ensuring mandatory cable carriage of all public television programming is essential to the viability of public television stations' digital service and to the ability of public television to deliver multicast services to both cable and non-cable homes. Lawson said: "Public television stations are excited by the capacity of digital television to provide a new generation of high-speed digital services to the communities we serve. Digital public television (D-PTV) stations are able to broadcast multiple streams of standard definition digital television programming at a visual quality better than the current analog standard - all within the same bandwidth used by one cable channel. This 'multicasting' will be an invaluable tool in enabling public television stations to meet their public service obligations - as repeatedly acknowledged by Congress and the FCC - in ways never before possible. Our filing today again asks the FCC to provide for mandatory cable carriage of all of public television stations' mission-related program streams."



Cable HDTV Available in 96 of Top 100 U.S. Markets and 143 Markets Overall

From: Media Outreach at the National Cable Television Association.

MediaOutreach@NCTA.com



70 Million Homes Can Receive High-Definition TV over Cable, Reflecting a jump of nearly 90 Percent during first 11 months of 2003

At least one cable operator in 96 of the top 100 Designated Market Areas (DMAs) - including all of the top 30 markets - is offering a package of HDTV programming to consumers, according to the National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA).

The new information released by NCTA is based on a survey of NCTA-member companies. It shows that 70 million U.S. television households were passed by a cable system that offers HDTV as of December 1, growth of nearly 90 percent since the first of the year when HD was available to 37 million households. In addition, 47 markets beyond the top-100 are being served by a cable operator offering HDTV, bringing the total number of DMAs in which at least one cable operator is offering HDTV to 143 of the 210 DMAs nationwide.

As cable operators have continued their nationwide rollout of HDTV service to more communities, cable networks have continued to produce more high-definition programming. Cinemax, The Movie Channel and Starz HD! Are the most recent cable networks to offer HDTV services. Other cable networks offering HD programming include HBO, Showtime, Discovery HD Theater, ESPN HD, iNDEMAND, Madison Square Garden Network, Comcast SportsNet and HDNet. In addition, A&E Network and The History Channel have announced plans to provide HD content in the near future.



ATSC approves new metadata protocol

From an article in a Broadcast Engineering on line newsletter & an ATSC press release



The Advanced Television Systems Committee (ATSC) has elevated the "Programming Metadata Communications Protocol (PMCP) to Candidate Standard, paving the way for full industry adoption.

The compatibility and interoperability issues that plague current deployments of digital asset management systems could soon be a thing of the past. The Advanced Television Systems Committee (ATSC) has elevated the "Programming Metadata Communication Protocol" (PMCP) to Candidate Standard, paving the way to full industry adoption.

The new PMCP specification will enable broadcasters and manufacturers to interconnect systems that process PSIP and other DTV metadata such as traffic, program management, listing service, automation, MPEG encoder and the PSIP generator.

“Because PSIP and other DTV metadata is originated or processed by several separate systems and equipment, up to now there have been some difficulties in communicating the metadata to the PSIP generator,” said Graham Jones, chairman of the specialist group handling the standard. “Implementing PMCP will help ensure that transmitted PSIP information is complete and correct, with minimum manual intervention by the broadcaster.”

The Candidate Standard stage is a call for implementation and technical feedback. The PMCP Candidate Standard is available at www.atsc.org/standards.htm



A Bit off Topic, but Timely



According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer retain their antlers till after they give birth in the spring. Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, every single one of them - from Rudolph to Blitzen - had to be a girl. We should've known. Only women, while pregnant, would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night and not get lost.

Job Shop

As you might have heard, Clear Channel Broadcasting of Salt Lake (radio) is selling three stations to 3-Point Media which will start operating under an LMA agreement starting Monday the 22nd. Along with the sale of KALL 910 about six months ago to Radio Disney, this has reduced the number of stations in our engineering care from eleven down to seven. Being a large corporation, we are held to strict budgetary, and profitability guidelines and we have been required to terminate one of our engineering employees, based upon tenure, because of the reduced number of stations in our care. We have let go Hal Christensen, our local IT manager. Hal has come to several of the recent SBE meetings and you might have recognized him in attendance there.

This is not something I would have chosen to do in an eon of time because Hal is such a great employee. I would like to ask you to pause and consider if your organization, or any others you are aware of, might have need for a phenomenal IT employee. Hal is very experienced in Microsoft networking, and desktop applications. He has attended several

Microsoft training programs, and has held Microsoft certification in the past. He has many other abilities, and experience that I won't take time to expound upon here, but he is very reliable employee, in all aspects of his job responsibilities, and attendance.

Through the wide range of contacts we have as SBE members, I would like to ask that we, as an organization, help find appropriate employment for this man. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, or Hal at: halc2k@msn.com

Barry McLellan, Director of Engineering, Clear Channel of Salt Lake
801-908-1472
barrymclellan@clearchannel.com

Features History & Opinions

My observations

By: Burt I. Weiner biwa@earthlink.net



I'm sure we've all got some really great stories about things that have happened while running radials. One time we had to make measurements through an Orange Grove that was part of a large ranch operation. This was one of those situations where we had to make measurements only once and would never have to repeat them (hopefully). There was a sign in front that said, "No Access Without Prior Permission". No phone number, no contact information. We'll, we drove in looking for the office or someone to get permission from. We couldn't find anyone. So we started to make measurements: One eye on the meter, one eye scanning the landscape. Finally someone came up to us, asked what we were doing and told us we had to get permission from the corporate office's of the ranch located 300+ miles away. We agreed but suggested that in order to save time that we make a few measurements just to see if it would be necessary to make measurements. We were granted permission to make test measurements.

Another time, on private ranch property, a man came riding out on a tractor with a shot gun and asked what the hell we were doing on his property. We told him and he responded sharply, "Well, when you're done come on up to the house. The wife is just about to put lunch on the table and there's plenty". We had a really great time visiting but it blew the rest of the day.

In 30 years I've yet to come across a threatening situation. Well, there was the bull.

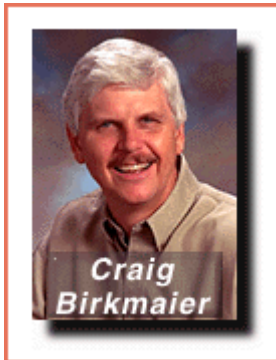
Burt



Commentary

New displays reaching mass market status?

From Craig Birkmaier



"Whatever display technology dominates--and it is likely each will have a niche--consumers will enjoy picture quality equal to looking out a window within a decade."

A story that appeared in Forbes supports the contention that "thin screen TVs" are moving into the mass market phase of employment. The report tells us that 25% of the global revenues for TVs are from "panel" displays. Please note that this does NOT automatically equate to HDTV displays, as many of the panel displays being sold offer only EDTV resolution.

The article also provides some clues as to the reasons that the big CE companies (outside of Korea and China - are dropping the production of CRT displays like hot potatoes.

Could it be that the CRT was the real barrier to convergence, and it has finally dawned upon the big CE companies that any further delays, intended to prop up legacy markets, could put them at a disadvantage, as traditional computer vendor's move into the family room?

Recently I talked with a salesperson at the local Sears. Apparently he is one of their top salesmen - he indicated he did not know why (maybe just luck), but he has sold more plasma displays than any other salesperson at the store. He provided me with some data points about what people are buying here in Gainesville.

The top seller is still a 27" CRT display - Sears has these units starting at \$199, with a 32" model for \$249.

In the big screen segment, he indicated that about 60% of the sales are CRT-based RPTVs; the other 40% are panel and thin RPTV units using LCD and DLP chips. The top seller in this segment is a \$2,600 LCD based RPTV unit. he indicated that when customers see the image quality on panel and chip based RPTVs(compared to CRTbased units) they fall in love. But many still buy the CRT-based units because of price.

Looks like there is a real shift happening...

One other comment: He STRONGLY recommends to his customers that they NOT buy the models with integrated ATSC receivers, telling them that they are not worth the extra

price since there is almost no broadcast HDTV content locally. If a customer wants HDTV programming he shows them DBS receivers.

Regards
Craig



Oldest Transmitter Sites in Continuous Use

From: Scott Fybush scott@fybush.com



I had an interesting question posed to me recently by a reader of my Tower Site of the Week column (www.fybush.com). He suggested that in future weeks, I should feature the oldest AM, FM and TV sites in continuous use in the US, which I think is a great idea.

Now, TV is easy - NBC began transmitting from the Empire State Building in 1933, just after it opened, and its W2XBS became commercial WNBT in July 1941. And while that station (today's WNBC 4) moved to the World Trade Center in the seventies, there were already several UHF stations at Empire (WXTV 41 and WNYE-TV 25) by then - and of course everyone's back there now. So unless anyone can point to another site that's been in continuous TV use since before 1933, I think we have our winner there.

FM is a bit trickier - NBC did some FM experiments from Empire in the late thirties, but then shut down for a while. Alpine went dark on FM after Major Armstrong died in 1954 (the fiftieth anniversary of which is rapidly approaching) and didn't return on FM until WFDU in the early seventies. Mount Washington in New Hampshire was silent on FM from 1950 until 1958, so it doesn't count (though it does get featured in this year's Tower Site Calendar), which leaves us with two other early Armstrong sites: Asnebumskit in Massachusetts, in constant use since 5/27/39) and the apparent winner, West Peak in Meriden, Connecticut, in constant use (by W1XPW/W65H/WDRC-FM/WFMQ/WHCN) for FM since 5/13/39. Again, if someone can point to a site that's been in use longer, I'll be very surprised, to say the least.

But what about AM? Most of the early AM sites were rooftop inverted-Ls or Ts, and of course those are in short supply nowadays. In a discussion about KYPa in Los Angeles leads me to think that it may take the crown for oldest transmitter site in continuous use. A message from Burt Weiner dated the present site to 1923 or 1924, with a rebuild in the seventies. That certainly predates any and all vertical antennas in the U.S. by a good seven or eight year.

A few honorable mentions: WTIC has been at its Talcott Hill site in Avon, Connecticut since 1929, though its present antenna system is a few years newer than that. The Scranton Times in Pennsylvania has owned WEJL (formerly WQAN) since 1923, and I suspect its tower atop the Times Building in downtown Scranton has been there nearly that long.

Any other contenders I'm not thinking of?

Scott



Safety Belt Issues

By Larry Bloomfield



A fellow I know bought a good used climbing belt, but needed to get a rebar hook assembly for it to do tower work (mostly ham, but also needed it to change a beacon flasher and it's just out of reach standing on the tower pier.

Keep in mind that a BELT is illegal these days. OSHA requires a harness and fall-arrest lanyard, not just a belt and positioning lanyard as we used to use. Many, for strict compliance, use two fall-arrest lanyards, as OSHA also requires that AT LEAST one be hooked off at ALL times. Yes, strict compliance with OSHA makes it almost impossible to do many of our jobs, but they do make the rules.

You can get a new one, but even then the least expensive one is about \$86. So this fellow started his search for a good used one for around \$50, saying it would be more within his budget. If he could get it free and it cost him his life, what good would it be to him or his budget?



There is a condition called: orthostatic intolerance. This is a phenomenon which leads to suspension trauma death. It is worthwhile reading for anyone using safety harnesses during tower work and especially to those responsible for their rescue. The article can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/elcosh/docs/d0500/d000568/d000568.html> and a number of other OSHA-related sites.

An associate who has worked in and around towers for many years shared this with me recently. I had no idea that such a condition existed. It appears to have become more prevalent since the advent of the full-body safety harness. I wasn't aware of the dangers 30 minutes AFTER getting down from the ground either. It's worth the time to read over.



MPEG LA Announces
Terms of Joint H.264/MPEG-4 AVC Patent License

Comments From: Frank Eory Frank.Eory@motorola.com

If H.264 is "one more nail in the coffin for broadcasters", it is only because satellite & cable will deploy it in earnest (when it is cheap enough) and broadcasters will continue to whine "where did my OTA audience go?"

\$10,000/year is a drop in the bucket for a medium or large market broadcast station -- assuming there is a revenue enhancement play with H.264 that justifies any expense at all. If a station chooses to remain a 'single program at a time' operation, then there may not be much advantage in moving to H.264 -- unless datacasting becomes a much bigger business and they really need the extra compression on the single A/V program.

Some speak of the real silver lining for broadcasters behind the DTV transition being the "protection of the NTSC legacy" or "NTSC cash cow" or words to that effect. So now MPEG-2 is the "legacy"? Funny, since 99.9% of consumers' experience with MPEG-2 is limited to DVDs, and MPEG-2 DTV broadcasting still hasn't earned a nickel of additional revenue for anybody. Hardly what I would call "legacy" if I were a broadcaster.

Frank Eory



New 2003-2008 H/DTV Migration Reports

FROM: Des Chaskelson, Research Director, SCRI International
(www.scri.com)



SCRI is in the process of tabulating the thousands of responses received from television stations and production and post facilities responding to SCRI's 2003-2008 H/DTV Migration. Reports are due out soon. For table of contents, see online at: 2003 - 2008 H/DTV Migration Trends Report - TV Stations

http://www.scri.com/sc_hdtv_2003trends.html 2003 - 2008 H/DTV Migration Trends Report - Production / Post -

http://www.scri.com/sc_hdtv_2003trendsnb.html



Had to run this picture

Parting Shots

By Larry Bloomfield

I saw the following somewhere recently and it rings true of nearly every topic I've encountered recently: "The irony is that the issues America and the planet face now are far more complex and difficult to understand than at any time in history. If people don't inform themselves and get beyond simple bumper-sticker slogans, it's not only the networks that will be in trouble, but the nation."

That said, it would appear that there are those who just have too much time on their hands. Having live in Los Angeles, I know this to be ever so true there, not to mention many other places – you know busy-body time. In a recent article that came via Reuters news service, it said that Los Angeles officials have asked that manufacturers, suppliers and contractors stop using the terms "master" and "slave" on computer equipment, saying such terms are unacceptable and offensive.

"Based on the cultural diversity and sensitivity of Los Angeles County, this is not an acceptable identification label," Joe Sandoval, division manager of purchasing and contract services, said in a memo sent to County vendors. This will give a whole new meaning to 'PC' language. Can you think of the man-hours that will be spent in updating cable labels, IDE drives etc?

What's worse, the memo did not include any suggestions for alternative labels. Talk about budgeting studies and more man-hours to come up with something that a few years down the line will lapse into political-incorrecness.

In June, the Los Angeles city council unanimously passed a law requiring that any companies doing business with the city disclose profits they may have made from slavery in the 19th Century. In 2000, the council supported federal legislation seeking reparations for descendants of slaves, but what about the Native Americans whose land was displaced or even in LA's own backyard, the land in Chavez Ravine that was given to the Dodgers?

May be its time to bring a lawsuit against the English for religious intolerance; remember the stuff that caused many of our ancestors to leave the British Isles for North America. Then there was the Huns, the Visigoths and the Mongol Hordes. This could go on for ever.

These are probably the same folks who have a problem labeling jacks and plugs, male and female. GET A LIFE!

For a really good laugh, read the entire article at:

<http://www.cnn.com/2003/TECH/ptech/11/26/master.term.reut>

In my last Parting Shots, I took issue with the language that is being used on the airwaves. Well, a California lawmaker is looking to take some soap to the mouths of the nation's broadcasters. Reps. Doug Ose (R-Calif.) and Lamar Smith (R-Texas) not too happy over regulators not taking action after rock star Bono swore on live T-V last January. If you'll recall, the FCC said Bono's comment during the Golden Glob Awards wasn't indecent or obscene because it didn't describe a sexual function.

Ose's response is -- quote-- "Give me a break." And he and Smith have introduced the Clean Airwaves Act"...The legislation will make eight words and phrases indecent no matter how they're used: "s__t", "p___", "f__k", "c___", "a__hole", "c___sucker" and "motherf___er". They also stipulated that combining them with other words and all their grammatical derivations would be no-nos, too, and the story goes on regarding punishment for the use of "any of eight specific words"...

Check it out. <http://thomas.loc.gov/> Ose's bill is H.R. 3687 Think it will go anywhere

Before I forget, please take a minute to visit www.stopsatellitetax.com and join the campaign to prevent new taxes on satellite TV service.

Also here's a little something for the kids:

<http://www.nps.gov/plants/color/>

Well that's it for this time and this year, so please accept with no obligation, implied or implicit, our best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, low stress, non-addictive, gender neutral celebration of the winter solstice holiday, practiced within the most enjoyable traditions of the religious persuasion of your choice, or secular practices of your choice, with respect for the religious/secular persuasions and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions at all.

In addition, please also accept our best wishes for a fiscally successful, personally fulfilling and medically uncomplicated recognition of the onset of the generally accepted calendar year 2004, but not without due respect for the calendars of choice of other cultures whose contributions to society have helped make this country great (not to imply that this country is necessarily greater than any other country or area of choice), and without regard to the race, creed, color, age, physical ability, religious faith or sexual orientation of the wishers.

This wish is limited to the customary and usual good tidings for a period of one year, or until the issuance of a subsequent holiday greeting, whichever comes first. "Holiday" is not intended to, nor shall it be considered, limited to the usual Judeo-Christian celebrations or observances, or to such activities of any organized or ad hoc religious community, group, individual or belief (or lack thereof).

Note: By accepting this greeting, you are accepting these terms. This greeting is subject to clarification or withdrawal, and is revocable at the sole discretion of the wisher at any

time, for any reason or for no reason at all. This greeting is freely transferable with no alteration to the original greeting. This greeting implies no promise by the wisher to actually implement any of the wishes for the wisher her/himself or others, or responsibility for the consequences which may arise from the implementation or non-implementation of it.

This greeting is void where prohibited by law.



Stay tuned.

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