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## Editor's Comments

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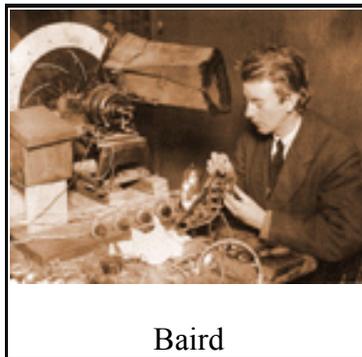
We noticed that Broadcast Engineering now has an online edition of their magazine. We also noticed that they are charging \$35.00 a year to receive it. Keep in mind that we're still free. You can sign up anytime from our website - <http://www.Tech-Notes.TV> Be sure to tell your friends and associates. We're trying one of our reader's suggestions. Notice above? There's an index that will take you directly to the story or section. Let us know what you think about this. I will say: it is a lot more effort and remember. None of us get paid for any of this.

One other thing: we've changed the font. We will now be using Times New Roman instead of Arial for the text. Times New Roman is default to the program we use to create this masterpiece and it's just easier to keep it there than to have to change it over. Also check out the bookmarks. Hope you like them. It has been a true pain in the you know what to make this happen. Let us know your opinion on this too.

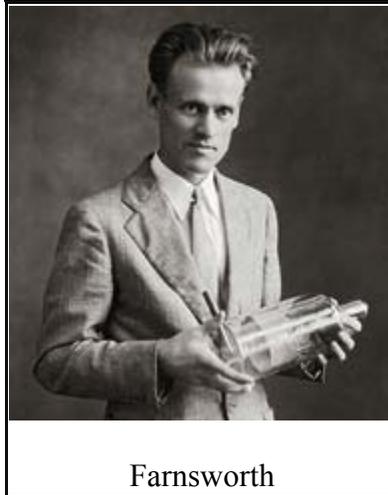


- **This edition's Editor's feature - keeping history alive -- A time-line.**

January 23, 1926 -- first public demonstration of a mechanical television was by John Logie Baird in England.



September 7, 1927 -- Philo T. Farnsworth demonstrated for the first time that it was possible to transmit an "electrical image" without the use of any mechanical contrivances whatsoever. During Zworykin's 1930 visit to Farnsworth's lab, many witnesses heard Zworykin say "I wish that I might have invented it." The US patent office, in its 1935 decision in Interference #64,027, states quite clearly "priority of invention awarded to Farnsworth."



May 9, 1946 -- ***Hourglass*** the first hour-long musical variety show, airs over NBC's three stations (New York City, Schenectady and Philadelphia).

June 7, 1946 -- England (BBC) resumes TV broadcasting after WWII. At three in the afternoon, Ms. Jasmine Bligh, one of the original television announcers, walked towards an Emotion camera on the terrace of Alexandra Park, smiled into the lens and said: "Remember Me?"

June 19, 1946 -- The first televised heavyweight fight (Joe Louis vs. Billy Conn), viewed by a record 140,000 (mostly at bars which had sets installed). One year later, the Louis-Walcott fight is viewed by 1,000,000 people.

October 2, 1946 -- ***Faraway Hills*** becomes the first TV soap opera, airing on the new DuMont network.

May 7, 1947 -- ***Kraft Television Theatre*** starts on NBC, becoming the first commercial TV dramatic series.

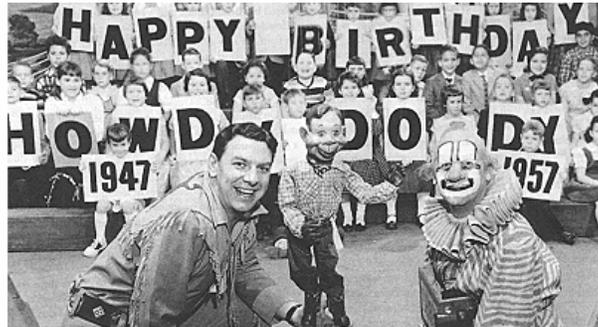
September 13, 1947 -- Kodak and NBC develop " kinescopes ", which are the use of a special film camera to shoot directly off a TV screen. This permits the recording and later distribution of live shows for sale, or archiving.

September 30, 1947 -- First telecast of a World Series game. NY Yankees vs. Brooklyn Dodgers.

October 5, 1947 -- Harry Truman becomes the first president to make an address to the public on TV from the White House. He discusses the international food crisis, proposing meatless Tuesdays.

November 6, 1947 -- *Meet the Press* premieres on NBC's local Washington station. Went network on Nov 20th.

December 29, 1947 -- *Howdy Doody Time* begins its first broadcast on NBC.



Note: Bob Keeshan, Captain Kangaroo was Clarabelle the Clown.

For more, visit: [http://www.psu.edu/dept/inart10\\_110/inart110/110time.html](http://www.psu.edu/dept/inart10_110/inart110/110time.html)

**NEWS**

New feature. Click on the story title and it will take you there.

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Subject: **Is ABC getting in bed with CNN?**

By: Fred Lawrence

If it weren't so, then why, at a media breakfast recently in New York, did Disney CEO Michael Eisner hinted that media speculation was hurting chances of such a merger? "It's become the most interesting thing to read about other than the butler," he said, a reference to Paul Burrell, Princess Diana's former aide whose revelations are causing headaches for the British royal family.

The Center For Digital Democracy plans to fight the Federal Communications Commission over any merger. Its organizations like this and the FCC battles that make executives in both camps a bit antsy. It may end up as one of the best un-kept secrets in the industry.

During a recent Larry King Live, ABC's 20/20 anchor Barbara Walters spoke in favor of such a merger and said it would allow her to offer increasingly media-savvy newsmakers a larger audience. "What it would mean to me is that if I do an interview, I can also say it's going to be played on CNN, or it will be longer on CNN. I have missed, on ABC, not having the international thrust that you have. I mean, you go to Europe, you go to any other country, you go to China, wherever, and there is CNN. We don't have that. I think for us it's very good." King, CNN's most valued asset, backed Walters' comments: "I agree completely with everything you said. And it would be kind of nice if maybe you and I do something together once."

You can bet that there will be a lot of consolidation if this goes through. Not only will engineers probably find their jobs in peril, but many of the on air talent who fled ABC will experience a déjà vu. Anderson Cooper, the former host of ABC's reality show The Mole who is now a CNN anchor. He recently said, during a NewsNight show that ABC News personnel would find lots of familiar faces at CNN. "Many of us here were employed by ABC. I worked there; so did Aaron Brown and Connie Chung. Jeffrey

Toobin, Beth Nissen, Jeff Greenfield, David Ensor, Sheila MacVicar, Jeanne Meserve, Tim O'Brien, Jim Bitterman, Mark Potter, Carol Lin. Oh, I could go on, but I won't. Many of us fled ABC in the dead of night, and at CNN, we found sanctuary. ... I know the merger is big news. The question I have: Does this mean I get to go do The Mole again? Probably not."

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**Subject: DTV Transition Score Board**

By: Larry Bloomfield

DTV signals are now being transmitted in 165 markets that include more than 94% of U.S. TV households. In addition, 62% of U.S. TV households are in markets where local broadcasters are delivering five or more DTV signals.

According to NAB's most recent count there are now 601 full power television stations broadcasting digital. DTV signals in 165 markets; that include 94% of U.S. TV households.

As of June 30, 2002, the FCC says there are:

UHF Commercial TV Station 752

VHF Commercial TV Station 579

UHF Educational TV Station 254

VHF Educational TV Station 127

Total 1712

Do the math! this is only just over 35%. So now what? This does not include any requirement for the (2647 UHF Translators and 2094 VHF Translators) 4741 translators/LPTV stations to do anything. Where are they all going in 2006? Keep in mind that there are ten states that have over 300 translators in them and many cable companies get their feeds from 3rd and 4th hops. When do we panic?

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Subject: **New FCC Commissioner**

By: Fred Lawrence

It only took nine months from the time the White House nominated Jonathan Adelstein to jump through all the hoops and be sworn in as the newest of the FCC Commissioners. Adelstein will finish the open slot on the commission vacated by Commissioner Gloria Tristani, whose term ends in June. The delay was the result of political wrangling over several judicial nominations. Adelstein was confirmed by the Senate November 14, in a procedural floor vote.

Adelstein, a Democrat, is reported to be a protégé of South Dakota Sen Tom Daschle and is the only other Democrat on the FCC, besides Michael J. Copps. Copps called it "a happy day" for himself and the FCC. Copps said Adelstein will make "an exceptionally fine new colleague" whose addition will bring the FCC up and running at full complement.

It is interesting to note that there are no pictures of Jonathan Adelstein on the FCC website, nor is he listed there yet. An FCC official told us that that won't happen until he's sworn in and if that didn't happen today (Tuesday), it probably won't happen until next week sometime.

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Subject: **The Panasonic AG-DVX100 Camera.**

By: Jim Mendrala



This week we've included a little insight for those interested in the newest Panasonic AG-DVX100 camera. Nathan Haggard from DV Works put the camera through some tests and shares his thoughts with us. Nathan is a wonderful producer and trainer who works closely with the DV Guys to stay on the cutting edge of the digital desktop.



According to Nathan:

The AG-DVX100 24P DV camera is taking MiniDV to a place it's never been before. This new "Cinema Camera" from Panasonic will let you capture at 24 frames a second on a normal MiniDV tape, input it into your computer through firewire and edit on your favorite NLE. In addition to this feature, many of the camera's functions can be manually operated, making it very attractive to professionals.

The camera offers 4 shooting modes.

1. "60i" Traditional 29.97fps interlaced video.
2. "30P" 30 frames a second non-interlaced, or progressive scanned video.
3. "24P" 24 frames a second progressive scanned.
4. "24P Advanced" 24 frames a second progressive scanned.

The trick for the 24P mode, is that the camera captures at 24 frames a second, but still records 60 fields interlaced on the tape. In order to accomplish this the camera does a 3:2 pulldown as the video is recorded to tape. When set to the normal "24P" mode the camera converts the 24 captured frames into 30 frames using a 2:3:2:3 pattern. In the "24P Advanced" mode the camera converts the 24 captured frames into 30 frames using a 2:3:3:2 pattern. These numbers represent fields of video, so the "24P" normal mode is putting the first frame of 24fps video on 2 fields of 29.97 video, and then the next frame of 24fps video on the next 3 fields of 29.97fps video, and the next 24fps frame on the next 2 fields of 29.97fps video etc. In the "24P Advanced" mode the camera uses the first 2 fields of 29.97fps video and then the next 3 fields, then the next 3 fields again, and finally the next two fields etc.

Since every 29.97fps video frame is made up two fields, some 29.97fps video frames represent one 24fps video frame, and some 29.97fps video frame represents two 24fps video frames, one on each field. When a 29.97 video frame is made up of two different 24fps frames the image "jitters" when viewed on an NTSC monitor. When shot in the "24P" normal mode the video will have 3 solid frames followed by 2 "jittery" frames, then 3 solid frames and then 2 "jittery" frames etc. When shot in the "24P Advanced" mode the video will have 4 solid frames then 1 "jittery" frame, then 4 solid frames etc. Therefore the "24P Advanced" mode will have half as many "jittery" frames as the "24P" normal mode. Currently After Effects and Cinema Tools can remove the 3:2 pulldown of video shot in the "24P" normal mode but cannot do the same for video shot in the "24P Advanced" mode. Panasonic and other companies are working to make the "24P

Advanced" mode more compatible. For now if you plan to remove the 3:2 pulldown and edit your project at true 24 frames per second, it's probably a better idea to use the "24P" normal mode.

In addition to having "film-like" motion, the camera also provides "Cine-Like" Gamma curve setting that can further provide a film-look to your miniDV video. These "film" settings promises to make this camera a favorite with professionals videographers, and independant filmmakers. Look to see a lot more 24P workflows in the future. For more information or to download a sample video shot in 24P mode, go to [www.dvworks.net](http://www.dvworks.net)

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Subject: **Bravo for NBC!**

From: On line press release.



Earlier this month, NBC said that it will acquire the Bravo cable channel from Cablevision Systems Corp. and MGM for \$1.25 billion, making it the last of the major broadcasters to acquire a cable outlet for entertainment programming. For NBC parent General Electric Co., Bravo represents an increased commitment to media and entertainment while giving the network an addition outlet for promotions, advertising, news and sports and an audience of the same upscale-skewing viewers who flock to NBC.

Nothing was said about digital or the conversion of the Bravo cable channel to any digital formats.

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Subject: **CD copy protection 'a waste of time'**

By Fred Lawrence

We've been saying for years now that any measure to copy protect CDs is easy to circumvent and now the experts agree. The music industry's technical efforts to prevent CD piracy are "fundamentally misguided", according to US technology expert, Princeton University's John Halderman. Halderman told *New Scientist* (magazine) that CD copy protection measures will always be confounded by simple software upgrades.

Current copy protection wisdom is to issue CDs with dummy tables that interfere with the way computers read discs, thereby preventing them from working on computers. If the CDs can't be read on computers then they cannot be copied. Halderman, however told the magazine that this approach is flawed because the measures can easily be side stepped.

Makers of CD players and CD-Rom drives can make "relatively simple modifications" to bypass such measures, he said.

Halderman will detail his findings at a conference on digital copyright at a future date.

To quote Tech-Notes, "All it takes is some basement savant in silicon valley to come up with the code and all these efforts will be for not."

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**Subject: FCC Watch**

From: SBE Chapter 124 Newsletter (Portland & Eugene, OR)



When attending the Electronic Equipment Expo in Seattle, Chris McCowen, an Inspector out of the Federal Communications Commission's Seattle office, gave a chilling statement to those assembled. Her comments should be taken very seriously and spread around with much effort to all stations.

In the past it was at the FCC inspectors' discretion to find violations, notify the station that they were out of compliance, give them an opportunity to repair the problem, re-inspect, and then if everything was in order, you were golden. Times have changed. Those N.A.L.'s (Notice of Apparent Liability) will be issued automatically without any grace. We at the meeting asked if quota was the operative word here. She declined to say that, but her supervisors are making us aware that inspections will happen and fines will be a normal course of action. On a more positive note, she also mentioned that only a small percentage of stations have subscribed to "Self Inspections." Subscribing to them is a very good idea.

These inspections, performed by an independent engineer hired by the Broadcast Associations, do give stations grace periods to correct compliance issues and keep the FCC away from your door. The warning was given however that stations should make sure that their EAS equipment is functioning, and that monitoring assignments match what is in the Tab 4 of the state plan. It's most important that a Local Plan for each operational area be available at the station during inspection.

Her comments on testing were a little less severe. We asked her about Monthly Tests that fail. If it failed, log as to why it failed and don't make it a habit. Failed tests are not a source of NAL's. Ignoring them all together, however, may force your owner to get out the check book. Most violations from EAS are about monitoring assignments and failure to perform weekly tests.

I did ask her about her supervisors' comments about weekly testing, and she also mentioned the random-day-and-time issue

with a simple statement. The inspector will look at any seven day period and find two weekly tests during that period. Stations are free to determine in any way they wish how to define when that seven day period begins.

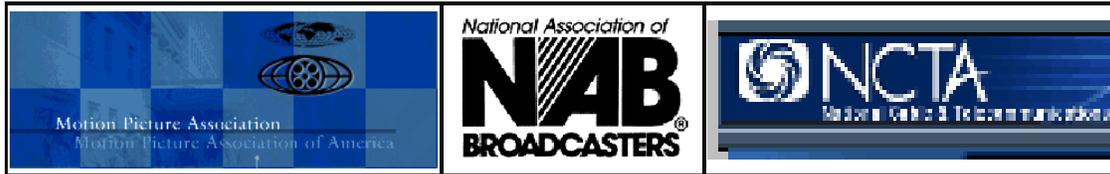
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**Subject: Court Squelches Narration for the Blind**

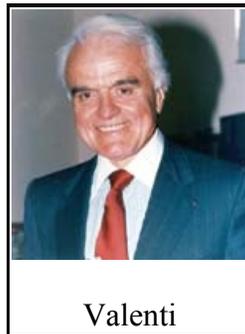
By: Fred Lawrence

According to a story from *Variety* by Pamela McClintock, t



The decision strikes down a Federal Communications Commission rule that required major market TV stations, top cable networks and satellite broadcasters to supply about four hours a week of such narration for primetime shows.

The court battle over the regulation was waged by the Motion Picture Assn. of America (MPAA), the National Assn. of Broadcasters and the National Cable & Telecom Assn. They said the service could cost anywhere from \$1 million to \$5.4 million by the end of this year alone.



MPAA president-CEO Jack Valenti said the FCC lacked the authority when approving the access rule in 2000. He welcomed Friday's court ruling, which overturned a lower court's order affirming the regulation.

"The MPAA and our member companies support video description on a voluntary basis, and we will continue to make available our filmed entertainment to as wide an audience as possible, specifically including the blind and those with impaired vision," Valenti said.

When drawing up the rule, the FCC said it was deluged with letters from the blind or visually impaired who were eagerly awaiting the advent of video description. Such narration is inserted into natural pauses of audio programming.

The National Council for the Blind had long fought for video description; the National Federation for the Blind had opposed making it a mandate. The Council for the Blind

could not be reached for comment regarding Friday's decision.

The TV business was in the process of implementing the new narrative requirement when the federal appeals court handed down its decision.

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Subject: **Korean Digital TV Exports More Than Triple**

By: Larry Bloomfield

According to a story that appeared in the Korea times this past week, the monetary volume of DTV sets exported from Korea has more than tripled during the first nine months of this year when compared with the same period last year.

Korea's digital TV exports between January and September of this year amounted to 470,000 units, according to government officials. The shipment of plasma display panel (PDP) TVs, highly profitable flat-screen TVs, totaled 57,000 units, up 631.1 percent from a year ago. Projection TV exports rose 430.3 percent to 156,000 units. The good old fashioned Cathode-ray tube TV will be around for a while and their exports rose 204.2 percent to 130,000 units. Liquid crystal display (LCD) TV exports jumped 332.5 percent to 130,000.

Just think! The US used to make a lot of TV sets too.

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Subject: **HDFEST 2002-2003**

From a press release

HDFEST, [ the world's only high-definition film festival ], will soon be embarking on its world tour. The tour will begin in Europe, December 2002 and conclude June 2003 in New York City, New York. Each city on the tour will feature a unique selection of HDFEST material. HDFEST projects were exclusively chosen for each city on the tour. HDFEST features projects created exclusively using high-definition format, all projects

are also showcased using high-def projection. Panel discussions throughout the tour discuss the medium of high-definition and the future of filmmaking. Since its first event in 2000, HDFEST has been enormously successful in promoting and stimulating interest in high-definition among industry professionals, the general public and the filmmaking community through film festival events.

The first two stops on the HDFEST tour are Paris on December 1st, 2002 and London on December 7th and 8th, 2002. Both events will showcase some of the best recent productions created exclusively in high-definition format. The European HDFEST events will feature shorts, documentaries, and features; however, HDFEST London and HDFEST Paris are the briefest events on the tour schedule. More information about projects chosen for HDFEST Europe as well as other HDFEST tour projects are available at [www.hdfest.com](http://www.hdfest.com). The below-listed European HDFEST projects represent only a small percentage of the many high-definition films that will be showcased during the HDFEST tour.

For additional information and a complete schedule of Europe events, please visit [www.hdfest.com](http://www.hdfest.com). The HDFEST 2002-2003 World Tour will also visit Toronto, Los Angeles and New York. Tickets are available for both HDFEST Paris and HDFEST London by reservation only- please email [admin@hdfest.com](mailto:admin@hdfest.com) or call (773) 782-9790 for more information.

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**Subject: Self-Fixing Computer Software**  
From a Reuters News story

International Business Machines Corp. recently said it will begin selling new versions of two software products based on autonomic computing, advancing the industry's goal of creating technology that can take care of itself.

With the recent release of a new version of its database software, DB2 Version 8, the company will release its WebSphere Version 5, middleware software that forms the foundation on which programmers build and run their applications.

Both products incorporate the goals of Autonomic Computing, which aims to create computer systems that need less human intervention.

According to IBM's vision, a company's information technology staff will concentrate on running its daily operations and the technology -- the servers, software and storage products -- will be able to set itself up and keep itself operating.

In addition to setting itself up and running, autonomic computing includes enabling

systems to run in the most efficient manner and stay running, fixing itself when something goes wrong.

The move is part of a broader goal the computer services, hardware and software company has of bringing computing that would allow all parts of a computer system to monitor all its parts, analyze the data, predict and prevent trouble and fix disruptions if they occur.

In addition to the take-care-of-myself features, WebSphere 5 also is equipped with incremental advances in the software architecture based on the Java programming language. Also, unlike its prior versions, WebSphere Version 5 comes complete with built-in Web services technology, which is used to allow different programs to share information and work together.

Does this mean no more Blue Screens of Death?

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**Subject; Large Fines Anticipated For RFR Violations**

From: Steve Hopkins, Tower Structures, [hopkins@towerstructures.com](mailto:hopkins@towerstructures.com)



Amazing as it may seem, many broadcasters profess not to be aware of the requirement to have an RF study performed on their tower. I hear comments such as "It's okay -- we have had crews climbing this tower for years without any problems." At issue is not whether there have been problems, or even whether the FCC standards are reasonable, but rather that those standards are the law and that it is the responsibility of the licensee to comply.

I recently met with Linda Blair, Deputy Chief of the FCC's Enforcement Bureau, who stated that enforcement of RF safety standards was one of her three main goals. She emphasized that the way they intend to achieve compliance is with large fines, and that the first fine would be coming soon. If anyone is unclear about the law, they can visit the FCC website and check OET #65, or call Jerry Ulcek of the Enforcement Bureau at 303-231-5205, Ext. 205.

We have seen a lack of cooperation among broadcasters at some sites. While it is understandable that the broadcasters have competing commercial interests, they should look at the bigger picture. Someday they will be the ones asking to have power turned down.

Steve Hopkins

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Subject: **Major studios to launch Net movie rentals**  
From a story in the San Jose Mercury News

Five major motion picture studios plan to launch an Internet movie rental service that positions Hollywood for the day when computers emerge as the hub of digital home entertainment.

MovieLink is the first among a handful of nascent online movie ventures to offer a full library of recognizable, mainstream movie titles for rent. It boasts a collection of more than 170 contemporary and classic films, including "A Beautiful Mind," "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" and "Breakfast at Tiffany's."

And while no one expects proceeds from online movie rentals to surpass DVD sales or Blockbuster video rentals anytime soon, the Internet could emerge as a powerful new way to bring entertainment into the home.

For more information visit:  
<http://www.siliconvalley.com/mld/siliconvalley/4492236.htm?template=contentModules/printstory.jsp>

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Subject: **250GB Hard Drive Available Now**

By Larry Bloomfield



Maxtor Corporation recently announced it is shipping the world's highest capacity ATA hard disk drive available in the retail market. The Maxtor 250GB Hard Drive Retail Kit offers consumers a way to upgrade their PCs and extend their systems to meet growing storage needs.

The 5400RPM Maxtor drive included with each kit is designed for storage intense applications including multimedia production, storing huge audio and graphic files, digital photos and MP3s.

How much can I store on a Maxtor 250GB Hard Drive?

- 250GB of capacity holds up to:
- 380 interactive games or
- 62,500 4-minute MP3 tunes or
- 250 hours of compressed digital videos or
- 250,000 high-resolution digital photos

It was only a half dozen years ago, while Chief Engineer at a San Francisco television station when we install the Bay Area's first video server. It had five 6 GB hard drives and held about ten hours of program material with stereo sound. Boy did we think what we had. This new Maxtor 250 GB hard drive holds over 40 times as much. What will this next year bring?

The MSRP for the Maxtor 250GB Hard Drive Kit is \$399.95. For additional information, visit their website at:

<http://www.maxtor.com/>

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Subject: **Shift in Power Could Increase DTV Pressure on Broadcasters**

From: Weekly e-newsletter

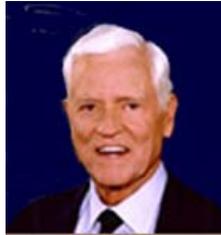
The recent election favoring Republicans, Senator John McCain becomes the new chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee and the main overseer of matters involving digital television. That could mean trouble may be looming for broadcasters dragging over the slow moving transition to DTV operation.



McCain

John McCain is back. The feisty, independent Republican senator from Arizona is

expected to become the new chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee and the main overseer of matters involving digital television. That could mean trouble for broadcasters who are still dragging their feet over the slow moving transition to DTV operation.



Hollings

With last week's elections favoring Republicans, Sen. Ernest F. Hollings, the Democrat from South Carolina, loses his Commerce Committee chairmanship. During his tenure, Hollings has mainly focused on the interests of Hollywood content producers, igniting the protests of computer users for introducing legislation that would implant copy-protection technology into all personal computers. Although openly critical of broadcasters for breaking their promises to Congress on DTV, Hollings has done little to penalize station owners for their lack of performance.

McCain, a tough critic of broadcasters, may not be so hands off. "Chairman McCain is very knowledgeable, very strong and also very independent," said Gary Shapiro, president and CEO of the Consumer Electronics Association. "McCain is one who has a strong opinion about broadcasters giving back their spectrum--in fact, he thinks they should have paid for their spectrum. I think you can expect more pressure on broadcasters to perform coming from the Senate."



Shapiro

Shapiro predicts some kind of legislation on high definition television coming out of Congress next year. On the front burner issue of copyright protection, he's not sure much was changed by the election.

"It has not been a particularly partisan issue," Shapiro said, "though the Democrats

have had a natural affinity to Hollywood and the recording industry because there's so much money in the content industry that goes to the Democrats.

Another area to watch is a possible shake-up over spectrum policy, a pet issue of FCC Chairman Michael Powell, and a close ally of McCain. "Spectrum will be an issue," Shapiro said. "Everyone agrees that unlicensed spectrum is a good thing and we'd like to see more of it.

But that requires action by Congress and I don't really know what will happen.

Fewer changes are expected in the House of Representatives, since the Republicans already controlled that legislative body.

As a clue to how the election might affect the interests of the overall high-tech community, Republicans tended to vote more for the industry's interests than Democrats, a recent analysis found. In a Congressional scorecard compiled last month by the Information Technology Industry Council, it was found that Senate Republicans voted in accordance with the tech industry's views 84 percent of the time, compared with 65 percent for Democrats. On the House side, Democrats received a collective score of 43 percent, with Republicans having an 89 percent total score.

For more information visit [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

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**Subject: SBE National Board Approves Dues Increase**



The SBE Board of Directors, meeting on October 16 in Phoenix as part of the SBE 2002 National Meeting, approved the national organization's budget for 2003. Citing increasing costs, the Board unanimously approved an increase in membership dues for Regular, Senior, Associate and Student Members, effective January 1, 2003.

"After eleven years of maintaining dues at the same level for the vast majority of members, the Board, agreeing with a recommendation from the Finance and Executive Committees, determined an increase was necessary at this time to keep SBE on a firm financial footing," said SBE President, Troy Pennington. He went on to say, "SBE has

operated with a deficit budget in both 2001 and 2002, using cash from reserves to make up the difference. Expenses have been kept as low as possible while still providing the resources to carry out the programs and services of the Society."

The rate for Regular, Senior and Associate members will increase \$5 to \$60 per year. This is the first increase since April 1992. Dues for Student Members will increase \$3 to \$18 per year, which will be the first increase since 1996.

The new rates will apply to new members that join on or after January 1, 2003 and for current members who are due to renew April 1, 2003. Membership dues for Youth Members will remain at \$10 while dues for Sustaining Members will stay at \$550 per year.

Life Membership remains free. There is a one-time \$35 application fee for those applying for Life Membership. Members who are retired and have held membership in SBE for at least ten consecutive years at the time of application for Life Membership, can qualify. Life Member applications can be submitted at any time and are available from the National Office.

Chapters will also share in the increased revenues from the dues increase. Rebates to qualifying chapters will go up since they are determined by the amount of dues paid by Regular, Senior and Associate members. The overall increase will bring the total rebates earned by qualifying chapters to more than \$36,000 beginning in 2003.

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Subject: **Getting Ready for NAB2003**

By Larry Bloomfield



According to the National Association of Broadcasters, they are working with 20 -- count them, twenty hotels in Las Vegas to provide rooms to attendees for the 2003 convention (April 5-10) Their housing offices will officially open December 4th.

Hotels participating in this year's room block are Alain; Alexis Park; Bally's; Bellagio; Caesars; Palace Tower; Circus Circus; Flamingo; Gold Coast; Harrah's; Las Vegas Hilton; MGM Grand; Mirage; New York, New York; Paris; Rio; Riviera; Sahara; Stardust; Treasure Island and Venetian. Prices range from \$45 to \$235 per night. Tiered pricing for a variety of check-in

and -out dates will be available.

Attendees can make their reservations by calling +1-888-622-8830 or +1-703-205-9114 or online at: [www.nab.org/conventions/nab2003](http://www.nab.org/conventions/nab2003) In addition, international attendees will be able to access housing forms in multiple languages. NAB2003 Housing is now accepting forms, but confirmations won't be sent out until housing officially opens December 4th. NAB recommends that attendees make their housing reservations early, for the best availability and rates.

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Subject: **Technicolor Digital Cinema Closes**  
By Jim Mendrala



Technicolor Digital Cinema (TDC) has closed its business development and exhibitor relations departments because of the slow development of digital cinema standards. TDC, the Thompson backed division, laid off or repurposed more than half it's staff on November 15th. This leaves only nine employees to maintain the current Technicolor digital systems installed theaters. In August of this year Ken Williams, division president, departed TDC, as well as six other staff members, back in May of this year.

Since DCI, formerly Newco, was established by the studios back in May, digital cinema systems installations have slowed to a crawl. Until standards are set that make sense some manufacturers and vendors, it appears, are finding little reason to keep up development of digital cinema. Some are in a holding pattern until something concrete comes out of the standards committees.

The major studios and DCI, have indicated that for digital cinema to succeed it must be better than the film experience as film is not "Broken" and is raking in millions. According to the "Bean Counters," the industry has to pay attention to the business realities. There must be a good return on the investment that makes economic sense. Just because its digital does not justify it.

In Hollywood, new ideas evolve: therefore nothing revolutionary has instantaneously been adopted overnight. Digital cinema is a relatively new idea and it will evolve into the theaters when people in the movie industry chain realize its economics. Digital cinema will take time, but *will* happen; however not as fast as some companies, like TDC, had thought it would.

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Subject: **Nothing New - DTV Interference**  
By: Larry Bloomfield

Reports have it that the police communications system in Camden County, N.J. is being interfered with, or as they are calling it, "jammed" 24-hours a day by digital television signals from WCVB-DT in (Boston) Needham, Mass. WCVB-TV operates on Channel 5 and was host for the Tech-Notes Taste of NAB Road Show earlier this year.



The answer is simple. About twenty some years ago, the land-mobile radio service was becoming a zoo in major metropolitan areas. Spectrum was needed for the various radio services that serve the larger metropolitan areas. The FCC, in their infinite wisdom, decided to utilize the 470-512 MHz. part of the UHF television band (Channels 14 - 21) in communities where these channels were not being used. In Los Angeles, for example, 476-482 (Channel 15) was not used as it would have played havoc with KPBS-TV, Channel 15 in San Diego, just a little over a hundred miles south of the megalopolis. It only solved the congestion problem briefly.

Anyone who has been watching the broadcast industry for any length of time knows that TV channels have always been the target of anyone who wanted spectrum. Remember the UHF tuners when they first came out? What happened to the TV channels from 70 and above? Don't look now, but the Television industry is about to loose everything above Channel 52 -- and then what?

There is no question about the importance of the Public Safety Radio Service, but not on TV frequencies! The FCC should know that RF bounces and can be "ducted." Page Communications had a entire network of communications at frequencies not much lower then the 470 MHz range that linked the island of the Pacific from Hawaii to Guam, that I personally know about. It was called Tropospheric Scatter. Hams, for years, have made use of the Ionosphere for the global communications. And most any Electronics student who has taken any of my classes, be they college or Ham, leave there knowing about ducting and the propagation of RF over land, water, etc. They also know that weather and heat inversion do strange things.

With the power and tower height of WCVB-DT, their signal "normally" travels about 50 miles. Under certain atmospheric conditions, however, it can extend to hundreds of miles. The New Jersey police officials rightfully blamed the interference on a weather condition known as Tropospheric ducting.

I remember one evening, when I was Central Control Supervisor at KNXT (now KCBS-TV) Channel 2, in Los Angeles, *All In The Family* was on. I was trying to watch our transmitter off Mt. Wilson, not even 20 air miles away. I couldn't even see it because of the "skip" from a station in Houston, TX. Don't remember the Texas show, but it was coming in like gang busters.

When the Executive Producer of *All In The Family* called and was irate, I tried to explain, but he was convinced we were doing something wrong. I tried to explain, but to no avail. So after listening to his stuff for nearly the whole length of the half-hour show, I suggested the only thing that could be done was to pray. I heard about that advise from my boss the next day.

WCVB-DT began broadcasting a digital signal on Channel 20, 506 through 512 megahertz, in 1998. But the problem did not occur until this year when the station began around-the-clock DTV broadcasts.

There is nothing new about skip, ducting, troughs, etc. It's going to happen and there is nothing anyone can do about it except change frequencies. TV stations within their bands should not have to do that, so guess what Camden County, NJ, either live with it or change frequencies and that may only be a temporary fix. It's going to cost, but the FCC should never have put you there in the first place. My advice is to bight the bullet (excuse the pun) and change frequencies, but don't send the FCC the bill.

For more information visit [www.courierpostonline.com/news/southjersey/m110102a.htm](http://www.courierpostonline.com/news/southjersey/m110102a.htm)

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Subject: **HDTV leaps 'last hurdle' in transition**



According to Paul Davidson of USA TODAY, TV makers and cable companies have tentatively reached a landmark agreement aimed at kick-starting the tepid rollout of

digital high-definition TV (HDTV) - and eventually eliminating the need for cable set-top boxes, say people close to the matter.

The overall effect would be to remove most of the hurdles, and extra equipment, involved in making full use of an HDTV set and in receiving digital-TV programming of all kinds via cable.

(**EdNote:** There is nothing like myopically oversimplifying a situation.)

For the full story visit: [http://www.usatoday.com/money/media/2002-11-07-digital-tv\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/money/media/2002-11-07-digital-tv_x.htm)

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Subject: **Auxiliary Rules Modified.**

From: THE CGC COMMUNICATOR, Robert F. Gonsett, W6VR, Editor

BROADCAST AUXILIARY RULES MODIFIED, CABLE TELEVISION RELAY SERVICE RULES CHANGED, WIRELESS ASSIST VIDEO DEVICES ("WAVD") APPROVED, OTHER RULE CHANGES MADE



After reading page 1 of the Executive Summary of this Report & Order, you may want to spend some time reviewing the exact rule changes of interest. This is an important document but it isn't all honey and roses. Take note of one of Howard Fine's concerns below. (Fine is with the Southern California frequency coordinating committee) Fine says: "The FCC [has] changed the Part 74 rules." By mid-December, "the FCC Part 74 rules will be tightened up to require the strict and expensive Part 101 type coordination. This will a costs of about \$1,500.00 to each filing....

File now!

For more, see: [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/FCC-02-298A1.doc](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-02-298A1.doc)

and

MANDATORY ELECTRONIC FILING OF FCC FORMS 319 AND 340

The Media Bureau has announced that mandatory electronic filing is now required for the following FCC Forms:

Form 319 - Application for a Low Power FM Broadcast Station License (June 2000 Edition) and

Form 340 - Application for Construction Permit for a Reserved Channel Noncommercial Educational Broadcast Station (March 2001 Edition).

The FCC announcement is dated November 25, 2002 and states that mandatory electronic filing began on November 18, 2002.

[http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DA-02-3247A1.doc](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-02-3247A1.doc)

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**Subject: FCC Revisits EEO Rules for Broadcasters, MVPDS**

From: An FCC press release



The Federal Communications Commission recently issued a Second Report and Order establishing new equal employment opportunity ("EEO") rules and policies for broadcasters and revising EEO rules for cable and satellite providers (known as multichannel video programming distributors, or "MVPDs"). According to the FCC news release, the new rules require broadcasters and MVPD to provide broad community outreach and notice of job vacancies. The new rules also adopt significant reporting and record-keeping requirements with respect to job vacancy announcements and recruitment efforts and new rules specifying required records to be retained in stations' public file and EEO file. The new rules also provide "limited relief" for broadcasters and MPVDs in smaller markets. Enforcement of the EEO rules will occur at license renewal, and through mid-term review for larger broadcasters random audits and other investigations. This action represents the FCC's first attempt to craft EEO rules since the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit struck down EEO requirements that the FCC had adopted in 2000.

For more information, see: [http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-228257A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-228257A1.pdf)

Subject: Technology Retreat  
From: Mark Schubin

It has been a busy week of presentation confirmations. Is it possible TODAY to target specific commercials to specific viewers through existing, non-interactive TV media? And, if you're going to deliver more than a hundred different versions of a commercial, how do you take less than a hundred times as long to make them and less than a hundred times the bandwidth to deliver them? Find out from Gerrit Niemeijer of VisibleWorld, and play with the actual technology in the demo area.

When the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) says a certain number of "DTV Products" have been sold to U.S. dealers, what, exactly, does that mean? And just how many actual ATSC receivers HAVE been sold? How about 16:9? How many homes have it? Ask Sean Wargo, CEA's senior industry analyst. Now ATSC, CEA, and MPAA will ALL have top officials at the Retreat.

Of course, you know what 2003 is. Right! It's the 50th anniversary of NTSC color! In celebration, Dr. Alexander Magoun, director of the David Sarnoff Library, will present fab fun facts on The Birth of Color Television (or some similar as-yet-undetermined title).

Thanks to United Entertainment Media for helping to make that presentation possible. Speaking of David Sarnoff, very few people have won SMPTE's David Sarnoff Gold Medal. One of them is Charles Poynton, author of "Technical Introduction to Digital Video." He'll be doing a pre-retreat (post-ATSC-seminar) half-day seminar on "Color Transforms among Video, Computer Graphics, Film, and Digital Cinema." Attendees will receive a copy of his latest (not-even-off-the-presses-yet) book, "Digital Video and HDTV Algorithms and Interfaces" (plus seminar handouts):

[http://www.inforamp.net/~poynton/notes/events/20030206\\_PSP\\_HPA.html](http://www.inforamp.net/~poynton/notes/events/20030206_PSP_HPA.html)

In the main retreat, Steve Lampen of Belden will present the history (pre-NTSC) and future (post-2k) of video coax. Want to know how far you can run HD-SDI? He's the one to ask. That's in addition to Dave Bancroft of Thomson on logarithmic RGB from cameras and Matthew Straeb of daVinci on HSDL for high-end work. With the addition of Eric Edwards on JPEG2000 and George Scheckel on wavelet, the compression-algorithms panel is complete (there are also the previously announced proponent experts for DV, JVT, MPEG-2, and MPEG-4). The projection-displays panel is still being confirmed, but GLV is committed. That's all in addition to MPEG-7 and MPEG-21, pre-compression processing, digital content protection, HD dailies, AAF, the digital-cinema panel moderated by Charles Swartz of the Entertainment Technology Center at USC, Warner Bros.' Alan Bell on HD-DVD, NATO's Stephen Long on military imaging and metadata, Jim Burger's Washington update, and much, much more!

There have been more confirmations. Graham Jones of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) will be on the broadcasters panel as will Mark Aitken of Sinclair Broadcast Group. So now ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC, PBS, WB, UPN, and NAB will be represented, not to mention ATSC, CEA, MPAA, and NAB being in the same room. And that's only a few of this week's confirmations. How much difference does pre-

compression noise reduction make? Find out from Peter Forman of DemoGraFX. What's going on in loudness standardization and real-world measurements? Learn from Craig Todd and Jeff Riedmiller of Dolby. Internet video distribution isn't just for streaming anymore. What are the pitfalls of IP video distribution? Sony's Lowell Moulton will share his research. And even I was surprised to discover that Nielsen will be represented, too -- at least at the HPA/ATSC joint seminar on datacasting and DASE. The program for that seminar has now been posted on the HPA web site as has registration info for it at the rest of \*\*\*The Technology Retreat\*\*\*. Do not read past this paragraph without clicking on the link below and registering IMMEDIATELY. Don't let a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity slip through your keyboard. BE THERE!

This will probably be the best Technology Retreat ever (after all, each of the previous years has been)! Don't hate yourself for missing it! BE THERE! Reminder: ATSC/HPA all-day seminar on datacasting and DASE, February 5; Charles Poynton half-day seminar on "Color Transforms among Video, Computer Graphics, Film, and Digital Cinema," morning of February 6; \*\*\*The Technology Retreat\*\*\*, afternoon of February 6 through the end of February 8 -- all at the Palm Springs Marquis (except for the Friday night softball game) -- do it!  
<<http://www.hpaonline.com>>

TTFN,  
Mark

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Subject: **HD-DVD System Chosen**

From: Warren Publishing's CONSUMER ELECTRONICS DAILY



The advanced Optical Disc (AOD) format proposed by Toshiba and NEC has been approved as standard for next-generation HD-DVD by 212-member DVD Forum. In establishing AOD as standard, Forum signaled abandonment of efforts to merge Toshiba-NEC technology with Blu-ray Disc format being developed by Hitachi, LG, Matsushita, Philips, Pioneer, Samsung, Sharp, Sony, Thomson.

DVD Forum will develop AOD specs and publish them in spring, Nikkei reported. Member companies won't be required to support AOD format, but those that do can use DVD logo. Blu-ray camp has said its format differs from DVD so it doesn't need Forum's blessing or logo. After announcement of standard, NEC said it would release AOD drive

recorder in 2004, Nikkei said.

(**Ed Note:** Don't be surprised if you find these making their way into television stations and used on the air.)

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## Letters to the Editor

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From: **Mark Schubin**

RE: Parting Shots Tech-Notes #110

FYI, that was me with the Toshiba press-release story (it was in my Monday Memo), not Craig Birkmaier.

TTFN,  
Mark

(**EdNote:** *Sorry Mark*

*- Larry stands corrected.)*

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From: **Jay Mathis**

RE: PDF and HTML

Thanks for all your hard work! I was fine with the HTML, but the .PDF works just as well, and is a universally accepted format, thanks to the free Acrobat reader from [www.Adobe.com](http://www.Adobe.com). I can see why a road warrior in a hotel with his laptop might also like the text version, so your decision should make everyone happy.

Thanks Again, Admiral Jay Mathis, CSTE, W4SBE

(Mathis is an Admiral in the Order of the Iron Test Pattern)

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From: **David P. Allen**

RE: new PDF format

Three cheers for the new PDF format!!! Long may it wave!!!

David P. Allen  
Contributing Editor, emeritus, Videography Magazine

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From: **Frank Eory**  
Re: Tech-Notes #110

Not much this week. My latest stance is something most broadcasters will hate me for -- an argument for a hard NTSC shutoff date, government tax credits for the "disenfranchised poor" to help subsidize DTV adapters for those who really need them and can't afford them, and some general comments about the irrelevance of VHF and UHF wireless transmission as a means of distributing TV programming.

It didn't have to be this way, and if broadcasters had been given a system that allowed them to truly compete with cable & DBS, they could be INCREASING the percentage of viewers watching with an antenna, rather than watching that percentage continue to dwindle.  
-- Frank

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From: **Art Botterell**

RE: new PDF format

Hi! -

While I heartily endorse putting the worthy Tech-Notes in PDF form, I'm afraid you may get some push-back on sending it as an attachment. (Ever been in a hotel room with a slow dial-up connection and have someone hit you with a large, unexpected attachment? In these days of DSL it's easy to forget that many of us frequently are still bandwidth-impaired, through no fault of our own!)

Fortunately there's another alternative available. Post the PDF the website, and just email

the list the text of an announcement... maybe with a few select headlines... and sponsor credits, of course... and the link to the download. (In the online ad biz that's called a "web driver" email.)

That way folks can choose to download the file when it's convenient to do so. And for those who want to go right ahead as soon as they get the email, it's the same number of clicks as to open an attachment.

Just a thought. Thanks for Tech-Notes!

- Art Botterell



From: Name withheld on request.

RE: new PDF format

Hi there,

I've been a subscriber to Tech-Notes for a year or so, and it's been a useful source of information - useful because it's compact, in a convenient text form, and takes up little space in my inbox.

I could have told you that HTML was the wrong way to go, but to move to PDF now seems like a very bizarre decision to me. I'm sure that putting the PDF together takes more time than simply putting the text version together, and I'm not sure that 'regressing' to the text version is the right phrase - given that the information you're trying to convey is all text based anyway!

What was a nice little 4-5KB text file is now a 700KB PDF monstrosity, and Adobe Acrobat is quite frankly a pain in the arse for on screen browsing - hence forcing you to print it out, which negates the whole point of an e-mail newsletter.

I strongly urge you to reconsider the PDF route and revert back to a simple text solution - it's quick, it's easy to use and fits in with the busy work lives we all lead these days.

I've unsubscribed for the moment - I'll check back in a couple of months to see if you've moved back to text.

Name withheld on request.

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**(EdNote:** *We have received several other letters on the subject of our transition to HTML and PDF. The preponderance were in favor of the move.*

*One said: "When traveling I just don't download everything through a narrow pipe, only critical items, items that are known to be important & critical. These folks must be on servers that immediately try to download all whenever they connect perhaps a more selective mail program or server service (ISP) would help."*

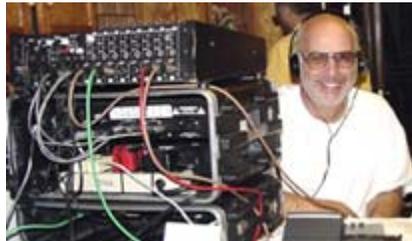
*Much though was give to this transition. First we don't want to loose any of our readers, but the ability to a graphics and pictures and the enhancement they give to our stories out weighs our staying with plane text only. Being an occasional traveler and having actually published the Tech-Notes from on the road, we fully emphasize with most of our readers. We will be changing the text only list to a notification list. Since we normally publish the Tech-Notes on our website shortly after we send them out, this would be the best way for those who do not wish to receive the larger HTML or PDF files. Subscribers can make these changes themselves on the front page -- bottom of our website. <http://www.Tech-Notes.TV>)*

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## Features

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Subject: **Some of My Observations**

By: Burt I. Weiner [biwa@earthlink.net](mailto:biwa@earthlink.net)

Recently a spot has been airing on a local L.A. news station. It starts out talking about how weather is going to be affected by El Nino. It then goes to a "voicer" with a guy talking about how El Nino will not have as much an effect as first thought because of a new cooling created by this car. At that point I change stations. Too many commercials are being written to sound like news stories that get your attention and turn out to be spots. I don't know about the rest of you but this station as well as the others doing this kind of thing is losing their credibility with me.

### **ASYMMETRY: WHERE DID THE MODULATION GO?**

Some years ago I had a problem with an announcer at a small AM station. The sound of the station was consistent with one exception. Whenever this one announcer was on the air the "volume" of the station dropped noticeably. His board levels were normal but when I checked the processing while he was on I noticed that it worked considerably harder than normal.

I connected a scope to the output of the modulation monitor and discovered that the modulation was very low in the positive direction, but only with this announcer's voice. I checked the output of the console with the scope and found the same symptoms. As an experiment, I reversed the microphone leads. Now he sounded louder than anyone else on the air. This man had a big, full, resonant voice, but, it only went (very far) in one direction. Pondering over this for a few minutes I remembered I had an old Symetra-Peak on the shelf. I installed it at the output of the console and hoo hoo hooooooooooooo! This totally solved the problem!

Asymmetry in the voice is a normal part of speech. It's like a secret ingredient of the voice mechanism which contributes to making one voice unique from another. An easy way to see this is to look at the voice on an oscilloscope. Preferably right out of a microphone pre-amp. Kill the horizontal sweep and Center the vertical trace on the scope. Also, kill the audio to the scope long enough to center the dot vertically on the screen for an easily seen reference. Without the horizontal sweep you can easily see all of the audio in one vertical line. If you look at different voices you'll see that each one has its own uniqueness in average center. Some will swing more in one direction than the other depending on such things as, would you believe, phrasing and emphasis.

Unless you do something to deliberately control the asymmetry, it can cause difficulties in being able to fully modulate a transmitter. This applies to FM as well as AM. On most FM modulation monitors you'll find a polarity switch for positive or negative peaks. This same asymmetry in FM can cause high deviation peaks in one direction from the carrier which can over modulate the transmitter. This is also true for some musical instruments.

Let's say for example you have a voice that averages positive 20 percent and negative 80 percent, which is not really that unusual. Let's also say you do nothing to remove this "normal" asymmetry. What happens when you try and stuff this through your Wizz-Bang Mark VII Belchfire hydraulic processor? Indicators on the processing say, "We're doing a great job!". Can't modulate worth beans in the positive direction for some reason can you.

Burt Weiner



## **Broadcast/Pro Video/Audio Research News from SCRI.com**

### **Des Chaskelson ([des\\_chas@scri.com](mailto:des_chas@scri.com))**

- SCRI's 2002-2004 Broadcast/Pro Video Trends Survey is now online. As usual, broadcast and pro video survey facility respondents get access to the SCRI Insider Report.
- The new Digital Cinema Survey is online on Digital Cinema Magazine and related United Entertainment Media websites.

Report due in December. Contact [des\\_chas@scri.com](mailto:des_chas@scri.com) for more info.

- SCRI's 2002-2004 Pro Audio Trends goes online on DigitalProSound.com and related DigitalMediaNet websites next week.
- SCRI has several other new 2002 Reports available ([http://www.scri.com/sc\\_reprt.html](http://www.scri.com/sc_reprt.html)) including:

[2002-2004 Streaming Media Trends Report](#)

[2002 Pro DVD Usage Trends and Brand Share Report](#)

- [H/DTV Migration 2002-2007 - TV/Cable](#)
- [H/DTV Migration 2002-2007 - Production/Post](#)
- [2002 Digital Media Facility Report](#)
- [2002 Βροαδχαστ/Προ ζιδεο Προδυχτ Ρεπορτσ](#)
- [2002 Βρανδ Αωαρενεσσ & Ρατινγσ Ρεπορτ](#)

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## Parting Shots



By Larry Bloomfield

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Normally this is where I'd rant and rave from my bully pulpit. Well you've got a reprieve for this edition. I'm turning the bully pulpit over to two friends of mine. The first is an attorney who asked not to be identified. When you read what he has to say, you probably understand why. He should know these kinds of things. We pass along jokes on the internet; we pass along just about everything. His hard earned education has little to do with digital television, unless it is happening to you what happened to him. I'm thankful that he is sharing this with us. Pass this information along. It could really help someone you care about.

The second is also a good friend and associate, Dale Cripps, Publisher of HDTV Magazine; probably the only daily national HDTV program guide available. He has a keen insight in the viewer's prospective of our

industry. Enjoy!

First my attorney friend....

The next time you order checks have only your initials (instead of first name) and last name put on them. If someone takes your check book they will not know if you sign your checks with just your initials or your first name but your bank will know how you sign your checks.

Put your work phone # on your checks instead of your home phone. If you have a PO Box use that instead of your home address. If you do not have a PO Box use your work address. Never have your SS# printed on your checks (DUH!) -- you can a it if it is necessary. But if you have it printed, anyone can get it.

Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine, do both sides of each license, credit card, etc. You will know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call and cancel. Keep the photocopy in a safe place. I also carry a photocopy of my passport when I travel either here or abroad.

We've all heard horror stories about fraud that's committed on us in stealing a name, address, Social Security number, credit cards, etc.

Unfortunately I, an attorney, have firsthand knowledge because my wallet was stolen last month. Within a week, the thief(s) ordered an expensive monthly cell phone package, applied for a VISA credit card, had a credit line approved to buy a Gateway computer, received a PIN number from DMV to change my driving record information online, and more.

But here's some critical information to limit the damage in case this happens to you or someone you know:

We have been told we should cancel our credit cards immediately. But the key is having the toll free numbers and your card numbers handy so you know whom to call. Keep those where you can find them easily.

File a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where it was stolen, this proves to credit providers you were diligent, and is a first step toward an investigation (if there ever is one).

But here's what is perhaps most important: (I never even thought to do this)

Call the three national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number. I had never heard

of doing that until advised by a bank that called to tell me an application for credit was made over the Internet in my name. The alert means any company that checks your credit knows your information was stolen and they have to contact you by phone to authorize new credit.

By the time I was advised to do this, almost two weeks after the theft, all the damage had been done. There are records of all the credit checks initiated by the thieves' purchases, none of which I knew about before placing the alert. Since then, no addition damage has been done, and the thieves threw my wallet away this weekend (someone turned it in). It seems to have stopped them in their tracks.

The numbers are:

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285

Experian (formerly TRW): 1-888-397-3742

Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289

Social Security Administration (fraud line): 1-800-269-0271

And now Dale.....

### **It's Still Tricky**

By Dale Cripps, Publisher HDTV Magazine



Reporting on HDTV for newspapers and magazines is a tricky sport. There has grown up this conventional wisdom that HDTV is too expensive; it's elitist; there is not enough programming, and it's rife with technical misery. xxx

Let's tackle this programming issue.

I heard it again in San Francisco at the CEA Fall Conference where it is still popular to

stand with an angelically professional all-knowing look with a demeanor of Solomon, and say, "There is not enough compelling content to drive the market."

CSI draws 30 million viewers a week to itself in the most competitive program and diversion market ever. How compelling is that? And, you can get it on HDTV for free if you live anywhere near a CBS DTV station. In fact, you have to sit there this season in your neat-o HDTV space and carefully chose among five or more program choices if you have the signals coming from towers, from satellites, or from a cable. You might chose a movie from HBO, some of Mark Cuban's wonderful reports from the Mile East, his college football or NHL games, his music and travel specials, or you might have to chose from a Showtime movie, or, how about some of that Discovery programming? Doesn't that knock your socks off? Heck, I have learned more about insects and dinosaurs than when I was a kid absorbing those subjects in my back yard. Terrific stuff, and very satisfying. I mean, I don't have all day to watch HDTV because I have to be out here in the office sputtering about it to the choir, but if I did have that time on my hands, I could watch 24 hours a day. And that is just from satellites because I live so far out in the country between canyons that no over-the-air signal would even dare to reach me. And, I am satisfied (if not a little bit envious of those folks in the city watching that good ABC programming, the new NBC stuff, and yes, I want to see the WB in HDTV too). I am still a kid at heart and I want to know what the heck is going on in Smallville. I sure wish Hal (Porter) from The WB would cut a deal with one of those satellite guys! Or, why don't we just pool our money and buy one of those two jokers of the high orbit out and make it one of the satellite services entirely for HDTV? O.K, I know, I floated that one before and someone sank it, but think....it is for sale! Where is our imagination when we really need it? Aren't you activist tired of waiting for THEM to do it? We have the money collectively, and I bet Charlie would pay us pretty handsomely if we turned our NTSC customers over to him. I mean competition be damned, there is duplicate programming eating up our bandwidth needlessly.

But back to my rant today on programming...if I have to read another ill-informed newspaper or magazine or newsletter story that smugly proclaims their superior knowledge by repeating the old convention that there is not enough compelling programming to drive the HDTV market I am going to sit right now and write or call my Congressman, er..well...maybe...er...OK., how about the president?...er.... Hell, I will write myself! I am supposed to be the authority around here, right? I know, I will write Gary Shapiro of CEA. He is famous for saying there is not enough compelling programming to drive the market right and maybe if we can get him to stop saying that it will no longer appear in every press account in the nation! What can that statement do but dissuade any would-be buyers? .If I read that there isn't any programming out there I sure as heck would not enter into a contract to own a machine to not receive it. What Mr. Shapiro can say to his heart's content is that there is not enough "compelling transmission" of HDTV out there. Now that the program guys are dishing it up we need

to get the transmission guys to dish it out to us. That is the campaign if you are looking for dividends. Ragging anymore on the content guys is going to get you a backlash.

DC

This story below prompted this rant.....

Satellite News reporter, Jimmy Schaeffler, offers an example of industry reporting that we no longer need. He starts off just fine with:

At a recent satellite conference, a panel discussion that focused on the prospects of high-definition television (HDTV) could hardly contain itself with its unbridled enthusiasm for the burgeoning service.

Granted, the price of high-definition television sets is falling, content is slowly finding its way to the medium, and Americans appear to be on their way toward enjoying great new television. That is what the U.S. Congress and the U.S. consumer electronics (CE) industry had in mind. In addition, HDTV offers captivating images. Some observers have described the vivid video as "almost better than real life!"

It pretty much goes downhill from here leading off with: "But Some Things Aren't Right." Turns out the rest of his article is what is not right. I made some notations in red.

Nonetheless, the build-out of HDTV in the United States is expected to be slow. By our estimates, HDTV's "critical mass" is many years away. The primary reason has less to do with its cost than it does with the superior quality of the much less expensive standard digital TV (SDTV). In a nutshell, the increase in quality is not yet worth the substantial extra cost required to receive HDTV. (Who makes this judgment call? DC)

Aside from the SDTV vs. HDTV comparisons about quality and cost, HDTV is hurt by: 1) limited availability in markets nationwide, 2) a lack of content, 3) high hardware costs, 4) a lack of interface standards (I give him one here), 5) large head-end costs, 6) channels that require four times as much bandwidth as SDTV. (The Cripps' axiom for the 21st century is this: have less channels performing better rather than more channels performing worse.)

Mixed

Demands?

In a study conducted recently by The Carmel Group, we discovered that while industry demand is warm, at best, today's consumer demand for DTV is "cold." (And whose fault might that be if it is even remotely true?) These two demand factors are closely tied together and, when combined, they suggest that "better-than-life" pictures will take a few

more years to reach a mass audience in the United States.(Granted a few years, but the way this is stated it suggests decades.)

Another dilemma arises from the "what comes first?" syndrome affecting the early growth of HDTV in the United States. There simply are not enough HDTV sets in consumers' homes to compel most content providers to invest heavily in HDTV. Yet, without enough content, consumers are less likely to want to buy HDTV sets. Somewhere, somehow, somebody at sometime is going to have to back off the high ground and invest in the lucrative and quality-driven new product that ultimately will become the new standard for TV in America. (Poor guy, he could not pass any other view past his editors. What about the Superbowl coming up and MNF!? This is minor league? What about most of prime time? This is insignificant? All this is *addition*, not subtraction. I don't know about the rest of you out there in my audience but all of my SDTV is better viewing on my HDTV monitor, and so any real HDTV programming is an addition to everything I have that is already improved.)

Some Like It Lots

The operator, consumer electronics (CE) and programmer industries see the HDTV and digital realm as an opportunity to make money. Especially for the CE hardware side of the industry, that means selling more HDTV monitors, set-top boxes and tuners. These will be the folks that will push for the critical mass of HDTV hardware-related sales, which, if successful, will mean lower prices for consumers and, in the end, lots of HDTV set sales. The first tube sets went on sale in Japan for \$28,000 each! They were 28 to 34." You can buy the same set, only better, for under \$1400.)

Many consumers today are purchasing HDTV hardware, especially monitors, with the promise of more HDTV content from their satellite and cable providers. They also may view it as a way to watch their DVDs. This use alone will be a strong driver of HDTV growth.(Cool)

Another boost to sales will be word-of-mouth recommendations. (Hey, HDTV Magazine subscribers, don't forget your duty to God and man!) But HDTV growth will take time (sigh). In the months ahead, if HDTV is only purchased to view DVDs, the majority of consumers today are not yet opting to also purchase tuners and set-top boxes. For now, several large CE manufacturers are focused on the sales of HDTV monitors, and not HDTV set-tops or tuners.

Specialized Interests

Correspondingly, today's content providers face this same kind of "what will drive what?" dilemma. HDTV does not provide enough revenues, while the cost of the infrastructure used to create and deliver HDTV content remains prohibitive. Again, as more and more HDTV monitors, set-tops and tuners are sold, more HDTV viewers are created, and broadcasters have more and more incentive to enhance content. It is interesting to note that, in general, the current batch of programmers developing HDTV

programming, such as the NFL, HBO and Showtime, are doing so largely to stay ahead of the competition, and not yet as a means of developing revenues. They also see the medium becoming the new norm, and each wants to be seen as the leader. how else do we get anything new?)

Perhaps as a measure of this reality, Liberty Media's StarzEncore is opting to focus its resources on developing video on demand (VOD). StarzEncore's CEO John Sie has made it clear that he is closely watching HDTV for the time when the curve begins showing substantial year-over-year growth. Then he probably will begin shifting resources to the new medium, HDTV. (John Sie has never championed HDTV. I have known him 11 years and the first time I met him was when he gave a paper at the Annenberg Conference in Washington at the Willard Hotel in 1990 or 91, where he said HDTV should be 4:3.)

Legislative

Leverage

Additionally, another important factor in the growth of HDTV will be legislation. Despite the pronouncements of Federal Communications Commission Chairman Michael Powell and FCC rules to the contrary, the plan to have broadcasters switch from analog to digital is far from becoming a reality. (This must really discourage the 500 or more stations who have dished out several million each to be delivering digital programs to your home. OK, it isn't everywhere yet and no one expected it to be everywhere at once. You can't even get enough tower workers to make the transition as originally planned . You don't train tower walkers in a weekend class on how to fall 800 feet without getting hurt! This comes slowly and no market demand changes that.)

The

Good

News

The Carmel Group's HDTV study indicated that there is light at the end of the HDTV tunnel (they *see* the HDTV Magazine and all the wonderful readers). In additionaction to industry and governmental support, key influences that will lead to HDTV growth include: 1) more content, 2) lower prices for hardware, 3) word-of-mouth, and 4) improved consumer education. (O.K Magazine readers, we have two assignments out of this list.)

Summing

Up

Our analysis leads back to the premise that at least for a year or so, the rollout of HDTV will be limited. Content increasingly is produced in a high definition format, but cost and quality factors are causing most of it to be converted and transmitted as SDTV signals, which take up about one-fourth to one-sixth of the bandwidth of HDTV signals. (Can't you feel Fox's fingerprints on this report? Might have something to do with their jockeying to buy DirecTV.)

For now, HDTV channels will be reserved for the more captivating content, such as sports and movies and special events. Other "regular" programming, such as news, game

shows and daily fare, will be transmitted via SDTV signals. (So, who's complaining about leaving the trash in the trash can?)

With this premise in mind, The Carmel Group predicts that SDTV will co-exist with HDTV for the delivery of digital signals to Americans for the time being. (What a brilliant crystal ball! With a gallon of Windex you could see clear into tomorrow with that one.) As long as consumers are unable to tell the difference between SDTV and HDTV (WHAT!!!?), given all the other factors standing in the way of HDTV adoption, years will be needed for the HDTV market to fully blossom. (**leadership**, folks, give it a chance, and give it some money so it can work its magic. If the real sales force of this nation cannot accelerate the transition by years, they should turn in their salesman's badges. This is, as Tom Piskura said yesterday in his interview, selling candy to a baby. But articles like this are an impediment to the market, especially considering it is a trade publication where many pop-press reporters get their information. This industry must get ready to speak with one voice.)

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What do you think about all of this? Have a very **Happy Thanksgiving!**



Now, Let's go to press!

Larry

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