

Meeting Notice**Thursday, November 11, Zarda Barbecue**11931 W. 87th St.; Lenexa, KS; 913-492-2330

Gather at 11:30 a.m.; meeting at 12 noon



Wireless Technology and Remotes. Chris Crump, director of sales and marketing of Comrex, will discuss wireless technology for remote broadcast. Advances in wireless communications technology coupled with very sophisticated coding algorithms have made it possible to transmit remote broadcasts with up to 7kHz of audio bandwidth, even when no POTS or ISDN lines are available. Crump will provide an overview of the elements of GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications), PCS (Personal Communications Services) and other systems that make this new way to broadcast remotely both cost-effective and relatively hassle-free. He will have a Comrex Matrix GSM audio codec available for a demonstration.

The meeting will be held in the banquet room at the back of the restaurant. Comrex will provide lunch. 

Certification Exam Dates		
Exam Date	Location	App. Deadline
Feb 4-14, 2005	Local Chapter	Dec 27, 2004
Apr 19, 2005	NAB	Mar 1, 2005
Jun 3-13, 2005	Local Chapter	Apr 22, 2005

Last Month's Meeting

The November meeting was hosted by Ed and Barbara Treese, who allowed us the use of their house on Lake Lotawana. There was no formal business meeting. This was the chapter's annual picnic. The chapter provided the burgers, brats, hot dogs and chips.

Some newsletter sponsors provided door prizes. Thanks to RF Specialties for providing seven sets of Hosa headphones, Sundance Digital for providing two t-shirts, Belden for providing two golf shirts, and Northland Electrical Services for providing two gift certificates to Chili's and one gift certificate to Outback Steakhouse. The prizes were awarded by random drawing and a bingo-style game.

Thanks to Matt Kinnan for arranging the food, Patty Weiss for the salad and dessert, the Treeses for hosting, and Ed Tresse for being this year's grillmaster.

KAB Meets in Overland Park

The Kansas Association of Broadcasters held its annual convention on Oct. 10 to 12 at the Overland Park Sheraton. A full day of engineering sessions were held on Oct. 11.

The first morning session covered EAS with a roundtable discussion from Kirk Chestnut, Kansas City EAS coordinator and assistant chief engineer at Entercom Kansas City, Ed O'Donnell, operation manager of WIBW, and Mike Hudson, warning coordinator meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Pleasant Hill. The next session

featured John Heckesmillier of Generac Power Systems, who discussed the available options for backup generators. Heckesmillier's presentation was arranged by Rick Jennings of Comet Industrial Products.

The afternoon sessions were split into radio and TV tracks. The radio tracks featured Ted Lantz of Broadcast Electronics, who provided an IBOC implementation overview, Bill Harland of ERI, who covered antenna considerations for FM IBOC, and Frank Foti of Omnia Audio, who discussed surround sound for IBOC and provided a demonstration of the Fraunhofer system being developed for use with HD Radio.

The TV track featured Mark Henry of Harris, who discussed PSIP in distributed environments, and Howard Barouxis of Thales Broadcast and Multimedia, who provided a presentation on TS solutions and advances.

The day concluded with a screening of the 1943 movie *Patrolling the Ether*, a film that told the story of the FCC's Radio Intelligence Division and its work in finding spies with the help of radio amateurs during WWII.

Chairman's Chat

By Steve Epstein, CPBE CBNT

Where's your value?

Over the last few weeks I have been reminded several times about the exodus of good engineers from the broadcast ranks. Reflecting on this it is no surprise. Long hours, being on call 24/7, seemingly endless new technology to learn and shrinking station budgets are just a few of the reasons, not to mention the lack of glamour that supposedly existed in years gone by.

As one who has worked in several different professions, I have to admit that being a broadcast engineer is different than most jobs out there. Few jobs allow and expect you

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to know a little bit about everything. Within the walls of corporate America, specialists rule the day. As the type of specialist needed changes, so do the faces. Unlike a salesperson, an engineer's revenue goals cannot be raised. The better we do our jobs, the fewer problems there are. Unfortunately, as the problems go away, the bean counters wonder what we are doing, and some even wonder if we are needed.

Automation may offer us a solution. Take a look and see how many automation events occur daily. Determine how many of those went wrong because of engineering-related problems. 1 out of 1,000 is 99.9 percent reliability. If you start tracking your numbers, you can demonstrate the results of your work. I suggest you start tracking at least four numbers: Total number of unscheduled off-air minutes per month, number of engineering-related problem events per 1,000 events, the total number of events per day, and the revenue impact of the above.

If you have been at the station for a while and have most things under control, it may be hard to show much improvement. However, if problems are occurring, the numbers above will give you information you can take to management about the cost vs. benefit of fixing them. It is very likely that as time goes on, the number of events/day will increase. When that happens, if you can keep the number of errors constant you can show improvement. In other words, in January we were running 2,500 events/day with an error rate of 5 events/1000; six months later we are running 2,750 events/day and the error rate is still 5 events/1000, or an improvement of 10 percent.

Whether you share your numbers with management is up to you, but I was once told you can't improve something unless you can measure it. As engineers, we constantly measure things and work with numbers. It is time that we apply some of that to the numbers associated with business. That is one of the best ways to ensure our future in this unique profession, and ensure the paycheck truly reflects our value.

FCC's Powell Attacked for Hawking DTV

From Broadcast Engineering, Beyond the Headlines
 FCC Chairman Michael Powell is taking heat for using taxpayer's money to promote digital television in a new public campaign called "DTV—Get It." The FCC's new consumer education program features a website, www.dtv.gov, that gives shopping and programming tips along with advice for setting up digital television sets at home.

Commercial Alert, a nonprofit organization working against the commercial exploitation of children, sent a letter ear-

lier last month to 160 members of Congress, urging them to withdraw financing for the FCC's DTV campaign.

According to Powell, the digital transition harkens back to another time when the country was at crossroads: "The transformation from black-and-white to color," he said.

Among those opposing Commercial Alert is former FCC Chairman Nicholas Johnson; Victor Strasburger, MD, professor of pediatrics, chief, Division of Adolescent Medicine, University of New Mexico School of Medicine; Alvin F. Poussaint, MD, professor of psychiatry, Harvard Medical School, director, Media Center of the Judge Baker Children's Center; and Peggy O'Mara, editor and publisher, *Mothering Magazine*.

FCC Auction 37 Bidders Confirmed

In a Public Notice dated Oct. 18, the FCC identified 456 applicants found to be qualified to bid in the upcoming auction for 288 FM broadcast construction permits, referred to as Auction 37. The auction is scheduled to begin on Nov. 3, 2004. In addition, the public notice contains bidding instructions and other important information regarding Auction No. 37.

Complete details of the qualified stations and the steps they must take are available on the FCC website at wireless.fcc.gov/auctions/37. DA 04-3252.

FBI Investigates Houston Transmitter Break-ins

Transmitter sites in Houston have been the target of several break-ins. The sites include 13 radio stations, two TV stations, cell and pager sites. The situation was discussed a recent Houston SBE meeting that was attended by local police and the FBI.

In most cases, the trespassers did nothing more than throw circuit breakers and steal the log book. Some believe that these acts are part of a larger scheme that could involve Homeland Security, but there is nothing to substantiate this belief yet.

Any information on the crimes should be reported to the Houston FBI through www.ctighouston.org.

ASCAP and RMLC Reach Licensing Agreement

The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), which represents more than 190,000

Next EAS Required Monthly Test: November 30
 The RMT is sent on the last Tuesday of the month


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members, and the Radio Music License Committee (RMLC), which represents most of the nearly 12,000 commercial radio stations in the United States, announced an agreement totaling more than \$1.7 billion. This is the largest single licensing deal in the history of American radio.

The settlement, which was approved by Federal District Court Judge William C. Conner on Oct. 15, 2004, provides stations with the right to perform ASCAP music over the air and also as part of a simultaneous stream of their over-the-air signals on their Internet websites. It also provides fee certainty to the radio industry and ASCAP's members. ASCAP's repertoire contains more than 7.5 million copyrighted musical works in addition to works in the repertoires of more than 60 affiliated foreign performing rights organizations.

The agreement finalizes license fees for the period 2001-2003 and establishes new ASCAP licenses for the period 2004-2009. The negotiated settlement replaces revenue-based license fees with a set payment schedule for the stations that will provide significant guaranteed income to ASCAP composers, songwriters and music publishers. Both sides will also benefit from a simplified and streamlined administration process.

"Separating royalty fees payable from radio station revenues has been a goal of the RMLC," said Keith Meehan, executive director of the RMLC. "With this agreement we have now accomplished that with both of the major performing rights organizations."

The RMLC is an organization comprised of broadcaster volunteers that represents the interests of the radio industry in their dealings with the major U.S. performing rights organizations and on other music licensing matters. The principal objectives of the RMLC are to achieve fair and reasonable music performance licenses for radio stations that reflect the realities of the current and changing state of the radio business and to enable radio stations to control their music costs.

FCC Adopts Rules for BPL

As part of its own stated goal to "promote access to broadband services for all Americans and to encourage new facilities-based broadband platforms," the Federal Communications Commission made changes to Part 15 of the Rules to allow the development of access broadband over power line (Access BPL) systems while safeguarding existing licensed services against harmful interference. Access BPL is a new technology that provides access to high-speed broadband services using the largely untapped communications capabilities of the nation's power grid.

The FCC views its move as "an important step toward increasing the availability of broadband to wider areas of the country because power lines reach virtually every home and community." The FCC also looks to BPL as a way to promote competition in the broadband marketplace.

In the Report and Order adopting these changes, the Commission recognized the significant concerns of some licensed radio service users regarding the potential of Access BPL systems to cause interference to their operations. The Commission stated that its intention in adopting the Part 15 rule changes was to ensure that Access BPL operations do not become a source of harmful interference to licensed radio services. Based on extensive research and analyses as well as experience, it concluded that the interference concerns of licensed radio users can be adequately addressed and that Access BPL systems will be able to operate successfully on an unlicensed, non-interference basis under the Part 15 model. The rule changes in the Order establish specific technical and administrative requirements for Access BPL equipment and operators to ensure that interference does not occur and, should it occur, to provide for a timely resolution of that harmful interference without disruption of service to Access BPL subscribers. The Order also sets forth proce-

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dures to measure the radio frequency (RF) energy emitted by Access BPL equipment.

The Commission's Orders outlines the following:

- It sets forth rules imposing new technical requirements on BPL devices, such as the capability to avoid using any specific frequency and to remotely adjust or shut down any unit;
- It establishes excluded frequency bands within which BPL must avoid operating entirely to protect aeronautical and aircraft receivers communications; and establishes exclusion zones in locations close to sensitive operations, such as coast guard or radio astronomy stations, within which BPL must avoid operating on certain frequencies;
- It establishes consultation requirements with public safety agencies, federal government sensitive stations, and aeronautical stations;
- It establishes a publicly available Access BPL notification database to facilitate an organized approach to identification and resolution of harmful interference;
- It changes the equipment authorization for Access BPL systems from verification to certification; and
- It improves measurement procedures for all equipment that use RF energy to communicate over power lines.

Commissioner Copps dissented in part and approved in part. A joint statement was issued by Chairman Powell and Commissioner Abernathy. Separate statements were issued by Commissioners Martin and Adelstein.

Copps noted that the United States ranks 11th in broadband penetration in the World, which is why he supports elements of the BPL Order. However, he is cognizant of the potential for interference to existing radio services. If interference complaints arise, he notes that they must be resolved by the FCC immediately and not allowed to take years.

Finally, Copps noted that there are several key items that are not addressed in the Order, specifically, he noted that there will be costs involved in creating the service that should not be distributed to electricity users across the board. Likewise, there will be situations of subsidy between regulated and non-regulated entities, which could be problematic. ET Docket No. 04-37.

FCC Lifts 301, 314 and 315 Filing Freeze

The following revised forms have been approved for use by the FCC's Office of Management and Budget (OMB): FCC 301, Application for Construction Permit for Commercial Broadcast Station (September 2004 Edition), FCC 314, Application for Consent to Assignment of Broadcast Station Construction Permit or License (September 2004

Edition), FCC 315, Application for Consent to Transfer Control of Entity Holding Broadcast Station Construction Permit or License (September 2004 Edition).

Pending commercial radio applications filed on the June 2002 versions of these forms must be amended to demonstrate compliance with the new local radio ownership rules or to request a waiver. Pending commercial TV applications also must be amended to demonstrate compliance with the joint radio-television ownership rule. Joint sales agreements now count toward ownership caps within a market. DA 04-3204. ☺



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Upcoming Meetings and Events

November 11 - Wireless Remotes
Comrex

December 9 - Media Asset Management
EMC

January 13 - Topic TBA
Call Mike or Matt today

February 10 - Topic TBA
Call Mike or Matt today

March 10 - Topic TBA
Call Mike or Matt today

Do you have a suggestion for a program topic?
Please share it with Matt Kinnan or Mike Rogers.

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The SBE introduced newly designed certification sample-test software at NAB2004. The new software runs on Windows and replaces the previous DOS-based software.



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