



CHAPTER TWENTY NEWS

society of broadcast engineers
pittsburgh chapter

December 2004

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Last Meeting

The November meeting of Chapter 20 was held at Gaetano's on the 18th. A nominating committee was appointed, consisting of Roger Wilson of WPCB, Chad Stockdale of AZCAR, and Sam Zborowski, consulting engineer. They are to report to the December meeting.

Steve Sloan, Director of Broadcast Sales, of Triveni Digital, gave a talk on "PSIP, What, Why and How." Triveni focuses on data and meta data products for television. Steve started with PSIP background information, including an overview of the different types of meta data. He explained the recent FCC actions and the February deadline, including the minimum requirements for included data. Steve explained how the transition channel numbering will be handled by PSIP and the different PSIP tables, explaining about PSIP Servers and available PSIP services. He showed several charts of how the different systems in a TV station feed PSIP. (Additional photos on page 2.)



Steve

Next Meeting

The December meeting is always more of a Christmas party than anything. The only official business will be election of officers for the next year. Positions open this year are Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. The lunch at the December meeting is free.



Chairman's Corner

'Tis the Season!

Bob Jordan, CPBE
bjordan@wpxi.com

Shopping

I was out Christmas shopping with my wife this weekend. You know how that works. You get to push the cart and try to stay out of the way of those motorized shopping carts for the mobility challenged while your wife ponders a myriad of stuff you have no interest in. Well, at one point Mary's pondering brought us close enough to the electronics department at Wal-Mart that I was actually able to do a loop around the HDTV display under the umbrella of "research."

I wasn't so much interested in any particular brand or type of set as I was in the variety, price range, and how they were being presented. I was pleased. All 16:9 units had actual HD video on them, and there was a wide range of brands and sizes, in both flat panel and rear projection, and the prices ranged from \$696 to \$2994. In fact, the

Continued on page 2

Next Meeting

Thursday, December 16

12 noon

Come at 11:30 to shoot the breeze

**Annual Christmas Meeting
Election of Officers**

Free Lunch

Gaetano's

1617 Banksville Rd.

Use the Rt. 19 South (Banksville Rd) exit
when coming out of town.

Use the Greentree exit when coming in.

Chairman's Corner continued from page 1

majority was right around the \$700 mark, which seems to put HDTV in the affordable range for the average consumer.

But the best part was the signage. There were several large signs at the ends of the display that explained the differences and advantages of HDTV in simple consumer terms. They even explained terms like OTA and pointed out that you would need to check with your local cable company to see if they carry HD, but that OTA and DBS would be no problem. The signs also made it clear which sets had integrated receivers and which were merely display units requiring "set top" boxes.

There was one unit, I believe by Philco, which I found to represent a different approach. It was a high \$\$ fully integrated receiver capable of 1080i, but the actual display was a very large flat panel 4:3. So what's the difference? If you think of the HD viewing area within that screen as being an actual 1080 line display, then you're not losing anything when you display HD in what would otherwise seem like a letterbox. But what you gain is a larger viewing area when viewing SD programming on your very expensive HD set. Whereas, if you have a display of the same width that's only 16:9, then SD programming would be pushed into a smaller display with side panels. And worse, when you see the now popular production tool of a letterbox within a 480 line display, you get an even smaller letterbox within a letterbox. You might be thinking "So what?" But I look at it as a way of making the transition more pleasing to the consumer who just forked over big bucks for a technology he's not yet accustomed to.

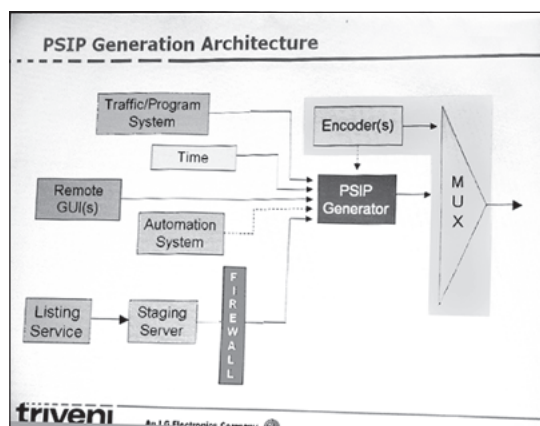
One thing I didn't see in the Wal-Mart display was any reference to or explanation of fifth generation receivers. Nor did I see any set top boxes. Perhaps those were a couple of aisles over, but my research was suddenly cut short when I was yanked away to the lingerie department. So much for technology.

Thank you

As the year draws to a close, I want to sincerely thank some folks who make my job easy. First, I want to say thank you to my fellow officers. As Vice Chairman, Blake Richert has always been right there when you needed him, and we never lacked for a good meeting program, even when presenters cancelled at the last minute. And as Treasurer, always in the background, Paul Mastorakis crunched the numbers, wrote the checks, and made sure the bills got paid. Next, there are two people with the same last name, without whom I'm not sure Chapter 20 would continue to exist. Gary edits the newsletter, Jean does the typesetting, and together they get it printed, addressed, and in the mail month after month. But more than that, Gary Stewart keeps us in line and focused. Forget a deadline, miss an opportunity, or overlook protocol? Just not even possible with Gary on the job. And last, but far from least, a big thank you to all of you, our members, readers, and supporters. May you have a most enjoyable holiday season and a healthy and prosperous new year.



Roger Wilson, WPCB-TV, checks out PSIP status on area local channels.



PSIP Architecture

Radio Pioneer dies at age 72

Robert H. Sauber, Western PA radio pioneer and SBE member, died on October 13 at the age of 72.

Bob owned WTIV (1230 Titusville) and put WFRA (1450 Franklin) and WVEN (99.3 Franklin, now WOXX) on the air. He sold the stations and retired in 2000.

Son Alan says that his father's love was the engineering side of the business. Bob died peacefully as the result of a long battle with Parkinson's disease. Further information may be obtained from ACSauber@rehabcare.com.



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