



CHAPTER TWENTY NEWS

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Last Meeting



Sony's Steve Sarafian presented

For our March meeting, Chapter 20 members were the special guests of Sony and Viewpoint Production Services. The occasion was the introduction of Sony's XD-Cam to the Pittsburgh market and to the Viewpoint lineup of rental equipment. XD-Cam uses "blue-violet laser" and a re-writable high density optical disc to break the traditional dollar-a-minute price barrier for removable recording media.

After a hot buffet lunch provided by our hosts, Sony's Sales Support Engineer for Broadcast Products Steve Sarafian gave us the technical scoop. Following our meeting, the festivities continued with a pre-NAB Las Vegas style open house, and we're told there was even a special appearance by a distinguished guest from Graceland. Also on hand from Sony were Tom Cubby - Sales Support Engineer, Steve Stubelt - Regional Sales Manager, and John Cerquone - Account Manager. Much thanks also to Jill Gill and Jim Artzberger of Viewpoint.

There will be no meeting this month (April) because of the conflict with NAB.

Pittsburgh Manufacturer Discusses ATSC Enhancements at NAB

Axcera, a primary developer of Distributed Transmission (DTx) technology, has announced that it will present an engineering paper discussing the new technology developments resulting from the field deployment of DTx and how these developments have enhanced ATSC Standard A/110 for DTx transmitter systems and may also improve single transmitter systems. Axcera's paper will discuss the symbiotic relationship between the development of DTx technology and the resulting improvements to the ATSC DTV system. Topics covered will include: elimination of the effects of STL timing variations for DTx

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Chairman's Corner

"Burn-in "

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Something very interesting has come up recently. Those of you who have been in the picture side of the business for more than a few months have no doubt seen the results of a monitor that displays the same image day after day. You turn it off and the image is still there. And in the last decade, there has been concern over whether or not that all too familiar logo or watermark in the lower right hand corner would burn into the consumer's sets at home. This doesn't seem to have become the problem that some thought it might have been, as long as the logos are kept at low intensity or in the case of most networks, just a transparent watermark.

But here's a new one - 4:3 burn-in on a 16:9 set. Now that the public has really started to sign on to HDTV, some broadcasters, especially local broadcasters doing mostly up-conversion, have started to get inquiries about what we'll call "window burn" on wide screen TV's. Some of these inquiries have been from consumers, and some have been from repair technicians sent to "fix" a consumer's set

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Next Meeting

*No Meeting in April
because of conflict with NAB*

Next meeting will be May 19

Chairman's Corner

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that's still under warranty. And some have been more than just inquiries; even hinting at legal action.

Is it our problem? What should we do? What can we do? Or should we do anything?

One recent caller to our station suggested we should move the 4:3 image around periodically instead of just keeping it centered. From the callers perspective, that seems perfectly logical. He's probably thinking it's so simple we should have thought of it on our own. But how do you do that? Off hand I can't think of an up-converter that offers that option.

I can see where some might be inclined to think "So what" or "It must be a cheap set," or "It'll get better when everything is widescreen."

But pretend for a moment you are a consumer. You're thinking, "This great new technological revolution in home viewing has been hyped for a long time, my traditional set is scheduled to become obsolete, and I gotta admit the stuff is starting to look really good." So you say, "Screw the kid's college education, I'm goin' for the new jumbo TV."

You bring it home in time for Christmas, and it's great. Then after all the holiday specials, everything pretty much goes back to 4:3 in the center, then long about June you get a new wide format DVD so you pop some popcorn, and sit down to watch.

But whoa, what's this! What are these shadows? Your set's under warranty, so you call for service and that's when you start to get the run around. The very last thing you want to hear is that you bought the wrong set.

What's the answer? Move the 4:3 around? Gradient side panels? I don't know; all I have is questions. But in a day when we have to struggle for every fractional share point, I'm thinking we can't just ignore it. With HDTV we've gotten the consumer's attention. Now what we do with it is up to us.

Maybe some of you who are heading off to NAB could talk to your favorite purveyor of up-converters and see what suggestions they might have. And please get back to me with your comments at "bjordan@wpxi.com".

Don't forget, no meeting this month. See you in May.

**No April meeting because of conflict with NAB.
See you on May 19!**



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ATSC Enhancements

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systems through synchronization of the SMPTE 310 bitstream to GPS; techniques for GPS locking; advantages of GPS locking in both DTx and non-DTx applications; field experience; and other topics, including enhanced VSB (E-VSB) and DTV Watermark.

The paper will be presented by Axcera Principal Engineer, David Hershberger, on Thursday, April 21st at 10:00 a.m. during the Distributed Transmission session of the NAB Broadcast Engineering Conference in Las Vegas, NV.



Elvis and his groupies prepare to leave the building during Viewpoint's open house.

Annual Membership Contest

The annual SBE membership contest runs until May 31 this year. Talk someone into joining the SBE and have them put you down as their sponsor and you will get \$5 off your next membership dues payment, plus be entered to win one of many prizes, including a trip to the SBE National Meeting in Dallas.

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