

Section Meetings

Atlanta, March 15, 1994 — The March meeting, held at Crawford Communications and attended by more than 50 members and guests, began with a pre-NAB white paper and a live demonstration of the IBM Power Visualization System. Then Randy Koons, IBM/Watson Research Center, New York, described the 32-processor RISC system and its history in his division, beginning with military and aerospace projects and moving into HDTV and other similar applications.

Butch Fadley, IBM/Watson, joined Koons to explain that the 32 processors inside the computer can be split up into different sizes to accommodate many different tasks. He added that the system, which will run in real time, can be assembled in pieces, adding only the features or power needed by a facility at that particular time. — James F. McKechnie, (Secretary/Treasurer), CNN/Headline News

Houston, February 16, 1994 — "A Beginner's Guide to Digital Television, or How Not to Get Lost on the Pathway to the Future," was the topic for the February meeting, which was held at KUHT-TV and attended by approximately 20 people.

Jay Adrick, Harris Corp., converted the various video standards presently in use to a digital format, and then examined the implications of each bit rate in wiring the serial digital plant. He explained the "cliff effect," the length of coax at which the bit error rate increases very rapidly. Also discussed were some new digital techniques, including embedded audio and use of the eye pattern to diagnose digital health. — Andy Anderson, (Secretary/Treasurer), KUHT-TV

Houston, March 16, 1994 — KUHT-TV served as the location for the March meeting, where Ray Baldock, Odetics, gave the 30 attendees a preview of the paper he presented at the NAB Conference, "The Impact of Hard Disk-Based Storage Systems on Television Automation." Suggesting that compression will impact broadcasting like microprocessors have impacted computers, Baldock graphically demonstrated the possible cost reduction that could result from using compression techniques for disk storage. Despite his belief that disk-based storage would not be practical without compression, he urged broadcasters to weigh the risk of using the new techniques for commercials, as they represent the bulk of a broadcaster's revenue.

Baldock continued to stress a conservative approach to disk-based storage by discussing additional areas in which the hierar-

chy of tape and disk can be used to maximize access while minimizing cost and risk. Among the areas mentioned were video servers and video-on-demand applications.

After the meeting, guests were treated to a tour through Houston's newest broadcast facility, KNWS Channel 51, which boasts an all-news format. The design and installation of the station were explained by chief engineer Al Saltzman. — Andy Anderson, (Secretary/Treasurer), KUHT-TV

Montreal/Quebec, March 8, 1994 — The March meeting was held at the National Film Board of Canada. Over 40 members and guests were on hand to watch Stephane Savard, Planon Telexpertise, demonstrate the Feedbuilder software. Capable of supporting simultaneous syndication recording, satellite antenna control, multichannel broadcasting, and resource allocation, the Feedbuilder was used for interactive television programming at TVA Network, Quebec. The software was also presented at the 135th SMPTE Technical Conference in Los Angeles.

Yanyk Crepeau, Planon Telexpertise, then described NextStep, the object-programming technology which led to the creation of Feedbuilder. — Jacques Lachapelle, (Chairman), Centre de Montage Electronique

Philadelphia, February 15, 1994 — Some 30 people were on hand for a discussion of video compression applications at the February meeting, held in conjunction with the Philadelphia Chapter of the International Teleconferencing Association (ITCA). Karen Mills, White Light Video, described real-time applications for video compression, including desktop teleconferencing, video-on-demand, video servers, and multiseat nonlinear editing. Her presentation included a discussion of the complex challenges facing end users, vendors, and systems engineers as they build solutions to such problems as interface design, gateway interconnection, custom software drivers, and video compression and communications algorithm transcoding cascading through various transmission types.

Gini Volini, NB Engineering, spoke about the recent compression applications her company has developed, including the interactive video displays for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. She demonstrated applications for Indeo and PLV compression schemes using the Action Media Board and software-based codecs. — Kenneth A. Herr, (Secretary/Treasurer), Air Products & Chemicals, Inc.



Jay Adrick explaining the "cliff effect" to the members of the Houston Section at the February meeting.