

# News

## WBU Commends CIF Standard

For the past two years, the World Broadcasting Union's Technical Committee (WBU-TC) has endorsed the unique high-definition Common Image Format (CIF) standard of 1080 lines by 1920 samples-per-line interlace, progressively scanned with a widescreen aspect ratio of 16:9 at both 59 and 60-Hz field and frame rates for high-definition program production and exchange.

The Committee emphasized the importance of this unique CIF standard as a worldwide standard for high-definition television program production and exchange. It now applauds the International Telecommunications Union Study Group 11 and its Working Party 11A for the decision to set the total line number of the CIF HDTV Rec. BT-709-3, Part II, to 1125 lines for both 50 and 60-Hz systems, and for its further action to add the 24, 25, and 30-frame progressive scanning formats to the recommendation, thereby completing the full CIF family of formats including those intended for film program production.

Prof. Mark Krivocheev, Chairman of ITU-R Study Group 11, said, "This action to modify the ITU-R Rec. BT-709-3 represents a major achievement for world television! For the first time in 50 years, the world has a common program production and exchange standard, thereby improving television communications around the globe and setting the stage for the merging of digital television technologies with computing and communications technologies."

The WBU-TC recognizes that while several digital SDTV and HDTV transmission systems are planned for satellite, cable, and terrestrial transmission in various regions of the world, this unique HDTV production and program exchange standard will lead to easier and better HDTV program exchange, higher technical quality, lower HD equipment costs, and greater flexibility in the use of HD equipment. Moreover, this CIF standard will accelerate the move to high-definition television program production and exchange worldwide.

## Panasonic Announces 1080p/24-Frame Film Production System

Panasonic Broadcast has announced its intention to introduce a film production system based on 1080p at a rate of 24-

frames per sec. The system will include a master 1080p/24-frame D-5 HD-based VTR, which will have the capability of recording eight independent, uncompressed soundtracks. A new range of 1080p/24-frame HDTV cameras and a new generation of monitors will also be launched. Panasonic's Universal Format Converter will accompany this product to allow HD film masters to be made available on HDTV and SDTV standards. This will allow 1080p/24 masters to be converted to 575i/50, 1080i/50, 480i/60, 480p/60, 720p/60, and 1080p/60. It is anticipated that the system will be introduced before the end of 2001.

## Thomson's Latest MPEG-2 Technology Crosses the Atlantic

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) has chosen Thomson Broadcast Systems to upgrade the Eurovision Transatlantic Service to the latest MPEG-2 technology. Eurovision offers broadcasters fully digital, high-quality channels between North America and Europe, thus ensuring optimum transmission quality for both sports and news program material.

Thomson will provide two fully redundant multiplexes to be installed in New York and Washington, DC. The connection between the multiplex site and uplink will use Thomson's SNA 4600 telecom network adapters. Thomson will also supply IRDs for reception sites in Europe.

## Telecast Demonstrates Standard Fiber Cable Solution for HDTV Cameras

Telecast Fiber Systems, Inc. successfully demonstrated that high-definition television cameras may now be operated over standard fiber cables, pointing to camera distances far in excess of limits imposed by the hybrid fiber and wire cables approved by SMPTE. The use of standard fiber dramatically simplifies and reduces operating and infrastructure costs, and allows multiple camera and broadcast signals on one lightweight tactical cable.

The company successfully tested a prototype of its new HDTV Cobra system through a mile of existing, non-metallic fiber cable on a golf course. A Sony HDC-750 camera was set up at the truck compound and run through the single-mode fiber to the Club House. Hybrid SMPTE camera cable was used as the last 900 ft between the CCU and the base station end

Cobra, as well as between the camera and its Cobra unit. The 120/240 VAC powered HDTV Cobra re-inserts operating power for the camera through the SMPTE cable. Maximum lengths of both fiber and SMPTE camera cable have not yet been determined. A vigorous program of lab field testing is underway.

## Teleglobe Expands its Fiber Optic Video Network

Teleglobe Communications Corp. is continuing the deployment of its next generation GlobeSystem network by extending its high-speed, fiber optic video capabilities to Toronto, Vancouver, and Washington, DC., three of the world's leading cities for video production and newsgathering. The new sites will complement Teleglobe's existing broadcast network service, which transmits video formatted in the studio-quality MPEG-2 4:2:2 digital standard for high-definition and digital television over a fiber optic, bandwidth-efficient ATM backbone network. Combining digital format, fiber optic cables, and ATM protocol, customers experience lower transmission delays than satellite broadcast transmission. The British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC) will be among the company's first customers to transmit news feeds from Washington, DC.

The company's GlobeSystem network currently includes ATM video switches in London, Los Angeles, New York, and Montreal.

## IEEE Edison Medal Presented to Kees Schouhamer Immink

Kees A. Schouhamer Immink, a SMPTE Fellow, has received the IEEE Edison Medal, given for a career of creative contributions to the technologies of digital video and audio recording.

Immink is an adjunct professor at the Institute for Experimental Mathematics, Essen University, Germany, and an innovator in the field of digital recording. His coding methods have had a great impact on data storage, and the success of the compact disk digital audio system and other digital recording systems owes much to his work. The coding systems he developed are used in virtually all equipment for recording digital video, audio, or data. Besides the CD that includes the CD-ROM, CD-I, miniDisc, CD-video, digital versatile disk, digital compact cassette, digital video recorder, and optical digital video recorder, Immink has been granted 35 U.S. patents.

A native of Rotterdam, the Netherlands, he obtained M.S. and Ph.D. degrees at the Eindhoven University of Technology. He worked in the industry from 1968 to 1998 and has been at Essen University since 1995.

### MPA Appoints C. B. Hunt New Chief Technology Officer

The Motion Picture Association (MPA) has announced the appointment of SMPTE

Fellow, C. Bradley Hunt, to the post of senior vice-president and chief technology officer. Hunt will work closely with MPA's Anti-piracy, Research and Information, and U.S. Government Affairs departments. He will serve as the primary operational and informational resource regarding all technological issues facing MPA member companies. As chief technology officer, he will be responsible for formulating and promoting MPA positions on such issues as creating technical standards for the digital transmission and distribution of films; analyzing

and evaluating new technologies; applying technologies in order to protect against piracy of any kind; and implementing legislative and regulatory measures affecting technology.

Hunt will also spearhead a new Strategic Technology Committee, comprised of the top technical experts from each of the MPA member companies. This committee will provide leadership and expertise in the shaping and defining of strategic priorities in the technological arena.

## Books, Booklets, Brochures

Focal Press has released **Digital Techniques in Broadcasting Transmission**, by Robin Blair. This book examines the principles underlying digital transmission and how they are being applied in the systems now emerging worldwide for digital broadcasting. It also provides guidelines on what will be necessary to convert existing systems to digital, and to continue satisfactory operation during the time that digital and analog services must coexist. Emphasis is on digital communication at the level of the practicing broadcasting engineer, and the application of digital principles to high-powered broadcast transmission.

Focal Press has also released **The Independent Video Producer**. This book by Bob Jacobs details the process of forming an independent business and provides

specific information about the considerations that must be kept in mind when setting up shop in the video world. It examines the basic business, management, and communications skills needed to become an independent video producer, and focuses on all types of productions, from small one-man-band operations to local regional and national corporate clients, television clients, television commercials, and national made-for-television movies.

To order books call (800) 366-2665, fax: (800) 446-6520 or contact customer service at [custserv@bh.com](mailto:custserv@bh.com).

**Physical Optics Corp.** has released a new brochure highlighting the features and benefits of the company's new digital fiber-optic communication product line. The full-color brochure outlines fiber-

optic communication solutions for data networks, broadcast video and multimedia video/audio/data. This product line features high performance and affordable solutions for analog-to-digital transmission. Product applications include: distance learning, video conferencing, security surveillance, traffic management, broadcast quality video/audio, studio serial digital video/audio, MPEG-2 and HDTV digital video, route protection, mission critical data network, mode conversion, network fault tolerance, and network extension. For information, contact Physical Optics Corporation, Sales Dept., 2545 West 237th St., Torrance, CA 90505; tel: (800) 214-0222, fax: (310) 530-5958; e-mail: [pocfiber@poc.com](mailto:pocfiber@poc.com); website: [www.poc.com](http://www.poc.com).

## Calendar

### SMPTE ACTIVITIES

LOS ANGELES, CA—SMPTE Fall Film Conference, *September 25, 1999.*

MILAN, ITALY—SMPTE 1999 International Conference, *October 14-15, 1999.*

NEW YORK, NY—141st SMPTE Technical Conference and Exhibition, *November 19-22, 1999.*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—34th SMPTE Advanced Motion Imaging Conference, *February 3-5, 2000.*

### SEPTEMBER

IBC99, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Info: Aldwych House, 81 Aldwych, London WC2B 4EL; tel: +44 (0)171 611 7500; fax: +44 (0)171 611 7530; e-mail: [show@ibc.org](mailto:show@ibc.org); website: [www.ibc.org](http://www.ibc.org). *September 10-14, 1999.*

### OCTOBER

NAB, Eleventh Satellite Uplink Operators Training Seminar, Washington, DC. Info: NAB Science Technology; tel: (202) 429-5346; website: [www.nab.org/scitech/sat992.asp](http://www.nab.org/scitech/sat992.asp). *October 4-7, 1999.*

IBTS '99, Milan, Italy. Info: IBTS '99, 11, Via Domenchino, I20149 Milan, Italy; tel: 39(0)2-4815541; fax: 39(0)2-4980330; e-mail: [assoexpo@assoexpo.com](mailto:assoexpo@assoexpo.com). *October 14-18, 1999.*

### NOVEMBER

ASA, 138th Meeting, Columbus, OH. Info: Acoustical Society of America, 500 Sunnyside Blvd., Woodbury, NY 11797, tel: (516) 576-2360. *November 1-5, 1999.*