News

RTS Award to Philips Digital Video Systems

Philips recently received the Royal Television Society's 1999 Award for Technical Innovation in the category Innovative Applications, for the benefits provided to digital film post-production by its Specter Virtual DataCine.

Charles Jablonski opened the prestigious awards ceremony, held on November 8, 1999 at the BAFTA Theatre in London, with his presentation of the Annual Shoenberg Memorial Lecture, "A Digital Letter From America." Jablonski is Vice-President, Geocast, and President of SMPTE.

Presenting the award, Peter Owen, Quantel Ltd., said, "The significance of this innovative technology is that Specter aids creative freedom within a digital post-production environment whilst allowing the Spirit DataCine to operate efficiently with continuous transfers."

Arthur Johnsen, Philips Film Imaging, received the award from RTS Chairman Tony Hall. Johnsen thanked the organization and added, "In addition I would like to thank the jury on behalf of the very deserving and talented development team in Weiterstadt, Germany, where development and manufacturing for both the Specter and Spirit is located."

Philips has also landed a landmark contract to launch digital satellite television and radio services in the Turkish-speaking world.

DVB-MHP Steering Board Meeting, Geneva

At a recent meeting in Geneva, the Digital Video Broadcasting (DVP) steering board unanimously approved the principles for the incorporation of existing software technologies into the DVB-MHP specification.

The decision paves the way for the finalization of the specification, and ensures the possibility of multiple independent sources for MHP-compatible software. The group slated the first quarter of 2000 for the adoption of the core MHP specification, which will incorporate Java technology.

The DVB Project is a consortium of over 200 broadcasters, manufacturers, network operators, and regulatory bodies in more than 30 countries worldwide, committed to designing a global standard for the delivery of digital television. The Multimedia Home Platform (MHP) API consists of a software specification, which will connect the broadcast and Internet, television and computer and telecommunication environments, and their associated peripherals.

SMPTE To Host Seminar at NAB 2000

Session Will Examine DTV One Year into Transition

The SMPTE seminar "Digital Broadcasting, What are We Doing? Where are We Going?" will take place at Pavilion 9 of the Las Vegas Hilton during NAB 2000, April 8-13. SMPTE will host the all-day event that will address the status, issues, and emerging technologies in the television broadcast industry during the first year of DTV transition.

Seminar Chair Robert Seidel, CBS, has planned a program that will investigate the digital production experiences of the major studios, networks, and post-production houses. The seminar will examine the local stations now producing regularly scheduled HDTV news broadcasts.

Also planned as part of the program will be discussions on the following:

- Field test data relating to recent improvements in 8-VSB receiver technology by representatives from Motorola, NxtWave, and LG Electronics.
- Standards and production systems that have been adopted to meet government mandated requirements for broadcasting of DTV captioning.
- Recent developments in data casting.

Once again, SMPTE will have a booth, No. L9623, at the Las Vegas Convention Center South Hall. Further information is available on the SMPTE web site at www.smpte.org.

Rorke Data Announces SAN Partnership with FAST Multimedia

Rorke Data, Inc., announced a partnership agreement with FAST Multimedia U.S. that will allow multiple users of the 601 nonlinear editing system and Rorke's StudioNet-FC to concurrently share the same footage from a storage area network (SAN) system.

Bob Herzan, director of worldwide sales A/V Division, noted the significance of such a system that delivers one of the major "wish list" items in modern post-production: the capability to share media and projects between edit bays. "This has been a long-time wish of post-production facilities," said Herzan, "to get more than one person onto a project. The idea is that collaboration among users on a single project will mean added creativity and speed."

Harris Corp. in the News

Harris Corp. has introduced CD EYE the first integrated digital television (DTV) transmitter test system. The software-based product provides measurements for spectrum, out-of-channel mask, eye diagram, constellation, signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) and error vector magnitude (EVM) pilot level, nonlinear analysis, and RTAC metrics. The information is displayed graphically and numerically and can be logged for trend analysis and troubleshooting. The system also provides control and status monitoring of RTAC and the CD 1A exciter.

Harris Corp. has also entered into an agreement to acquire Louth Automation, the leading supplier of advanced automation solutions for DTV, over-the-air broadcast, cable, and industrial applications. These products automate over 3,000 channels at broadcast and cable stations worldwide.

Harris will maintain Louth Automation operations in the Palo Alto area, naming Don Naab, vice-president, automation and management products, to head the business unit. Ken Louth, who founded the company in 1988, will serve as chief technology officer.

JVC Professional News

PBS affiliate WTCI-TV of Tennessee has chosen JVC's D-9 line of high-performance equipment for use in studio and field production.

The Outdoor Channel, a 24-hour network based in Temecula, CA which is distributed by satellite and cable throughout North America, recently chose D-9 equipment for acquisition and post-production. Because the outdoors is their visual palate, equipment has to be rugged and reliable enough for use in inclement weather and under difficult conditions.