

Obituary

Joseph Roizen

Joseph Roizen, an SMPTE Fellow, died March 1, 1989, while attending a meeting of the International Electro-technical Commission in Paris. The 65-year old Roizen suffered a heart attack. His wife, Foster, was attending the IEC conference with him.

Joe Roizen gave generously to the Society for the 20 years he was a member. Most recently he served as a panel discussion moderator at the 23rd Annual SMPTE Television Conference and sat on the current Board of Editors for the *SMPTE Journal*. He was Program Chairman for the 21st Television Conference, completed two terms as Governor of the Society, served as National Publicity Chairman and Secretary for the San Francisco Section, and was SMPTE Liaison Member to the EIA Teletext Committee. Roizen was also a frequent speaker at SMPTE national and regional functions.

Joe Roizen was a prolific writer whose articles — more than 400 — have been published in many trade publications, including the *SMPTE Journal*. He also contributed chapters to technical books such as the McGraw-Hill *Television Engineering Handbook* and the *Grolier Encyclopedia Americana*.

In 1971, he founded Telegen, a consulting firm that provides technical and market research on international television to clients around the world. As Telegen's president, he visited television facilities in 90 countries and provided services to most of the major television networks.

Before establishing Telegen, Roizen spent 12 years with Ampex Corp. While there, he made significant contributions to the development of broadcast videotape recorders for monochrome and color applications. In 1957, he conceived and developed the first VTR editing system to use electronic edit pulses recorded on the edge of the tape. A year later, he was the project leader for the first commercially successful color VTR made by Ampex. Both of these accomplishments led to patents in his name. In 1959, Roizen supervised an Ampex color television installation at the first



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U.S. trade fair in the Soviet Union. The videotape recording made there of the Nixon/Khrushchev Kitchen Debate earned an Emmy citation in which Roizen was named. He was invited to participate in the 25th anniversary reunion of the debate, which was attended by Nixon and other U.S. government officials.

Roizen began his career in the television division of Paramount Pictures, where he designed and supervised the construction of some of the first NTSC studio equipment.

Beginning with the Summer Olympics in Rome in 1960, Roizen served as the technical consultant for most of the Olympics, plus the Asian Olympic Games in Tehran in 1974 and at the Pan American Games in Mexico City in 1975.

Most recently, Roizen was involved with the emerging fields of Teletext and Viewdata. He studied systems around the world and wrote extensively about them.

Throughout his career, Roizen received many awards and honors. In 1984 he was named the International Tape Association/*Time* magazine "Man-of-the Year" for his contributions to the engineering and design of television broadcast systems. In 1975, Roizen presented the Royal Television Society's Shoenberg Memorial Lecture on the history of videotape recording. In 1976, he was elected a fellow of the Royal Television Society for his contributions to videotape editing and color television recording. He was the third American to be so honored. The RTS also awarded Roizen

the Wireless World Premium (1961) and the EMI Premium (1974) for technical papers delivered to RTS conferences. The British Kinematograph, Sound and Television Society awarded Roizen honorary fellowship in 1985 for his commitment to education and the imparting of knowledge to others.

Joseph Roizen was born September 9, 1923, in Romania. He received an Associate Degree in Science from Sir George Williams College in Montreal and took extension courses at McGill University and UCLA.

He is survived by his wife and business partner, Foster, of Portola Valley; sons Ron of Berkeley and Peter of Los Gatos; daughter Heidi Roizen of Mountain View; grandchildren Zoe, Ezra, Alexis, and Alexandra Roizen, and Sebastian Rupley, all of the San Francisco area; and sister Molly Tiss of Tucson, Ariz.

Eulogy

Excerpts from the eulogy written by SMPTE President Maurice L. French on behalf of the Society and delivered at a memorial service for Joseph Roizen.

The Society was shocked and saddened to receive the news from Paris of the sudden death of Joe Roizen. The officers, Board of Governors, and members wish to express their sympathy and sincere condolences to his wife, Foster, and to the Roizen family at this time of their bereavement.

Joe traveled extensively throughout the world and as such the Society has lost a most respected and welcomed ambassador. Many members have lost a lifelong friend, and the industry has lost the talents and vitality of a dynamic man committed to television technology.

In these stressful times it was Joe's sense of humor that often reminded us not to take life too seriously, and when friends and associates gathered Joe could often be seen telling his latest story.

The Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers and the television industry will sadly miss Joe Roizen. Our sympathy and thoughts at this time are with his family.