

Hong Kong November 2020

On 30 November 2020 (11.59 p.m.), Hong Kong decided to proceed with switching off analog television services. Thus, on 1 December 2020 (00.00), Hong Kong entered an era of full digital TV broadcasting. Before the analog switch off (ASO), the Hong Kong Section organized a webinar on 27 November, titled “ASO – Full digital TV Broadcasting in Hong Kong.”

Peter Chu, consultant from DTT Network Consulting, provided a presentation titled, “Transition from analog to digital broadcasting in Hong Kong,” and Yuen Man, chief engineer (transmission) from Television Broadcasts Limited, presented, “ASO – Challenges and Opportunities.”

The webinar concluded with a Q&A session. Total attendees and registrants were 91 and 136, respectively. The attendees/registrants included SMPTE Hong Kong Section members, free-to-air (FTA) broadcasters, regulators, system integrators, and stakeholders in the motion imaging industry. The webinar video recording and PowerPoint are available on-demand on the Hong Kong Section website, <https://www.smpthe-hk.org/>—
Peter Chu, Secretary/Treasurer

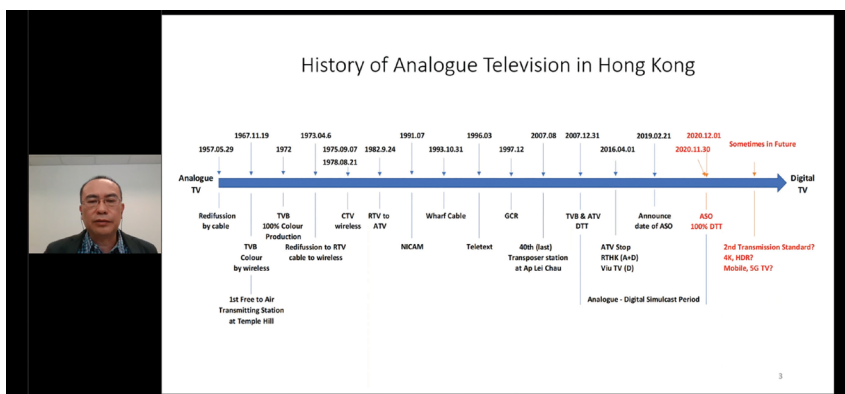
Ohio October 2020

The Ohio Section meeting on 22 October 2020 was combined with Chapter 52 of the Society of Broadcast Engineers. It was the Section’s first virtual meeting held exclusively online via Zoom. The guest presenters were Jacob Daniluk, vice president of the CODEC firm, Tieline, and Doug

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Top to bottom: Presenters Peter Chu, Yuen Man and Hong Kong Section Chair Kevin Chu.



Yuen Man presented “ASO – Challenges and Opportunities.”

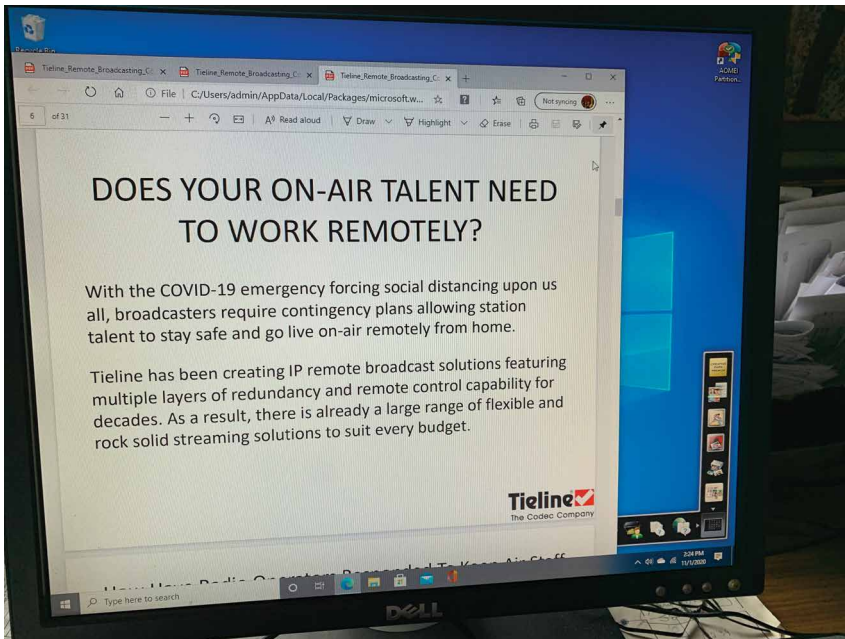
Ferber, technical sales expert, Americas, also with Tieline.

The online meeting with approximately 20 members and guests began with the treasurers’ report and general announcements, followed by a brief introduction of both meeting speakers. Doug Ferber and Jacob Daniluk then began their presentations with an overview of various cutting-edge technologies and services that Tieline has been involved with telecommunications research and development, specializing in point-to-point audio codecs over IP, plain old television service (POTS), and integrated services digital network (ISDN), signal services for the Global Radio industry for more than 30 years. Their presentations included

outlines of how the concept of remote control of broadcast chains via cellular tower-based signal Codecs and a broadcasting facility could be successfully controlled remotely using a signal integration box, for example, by an engineer or exclusively by a



Screenshot slide at the Ohio Section’s virtual meeting.



Slide introducing the meeting topic at Ohio's virtual meeting.

radio disk jockey, at a home setting rather than originating directly from a studio master control plant. A similar type of command and control could also be applied to a remote location live video feed scenario.

Today, such signal origination needs could be necessitated by the current COVID-19 social distancing requirements and concerns requiring as few live social interactions as necessary to carry out the broadcast operations.

One concern is whether such a remote scenario could still deliver the same signal transport veracity and robustness needed for broadcast-quality audio and even video. He pointed out that Tieline has worked out a successful solution to meet those demands using the combination of a local cellular tower signal source and even public Wi-Fi sources if necessitated, rather than any of the usual hard-wired or satellite transport signal methods, as in the past. Daniluk also provided some very informative and illustrative slides further highlighting the solutions developed by the Tieline firm.

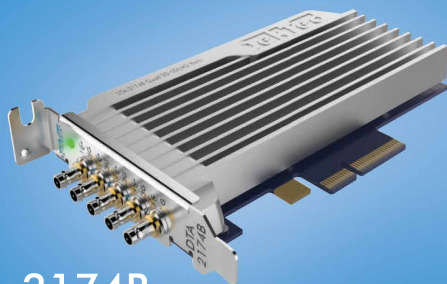
A lively Q & A session followed these well-received and very informative presentations.

—Gene Batey
Secretary/Treasurer

Toronto September 2020

The Toronto Section's September meeting was once again virtual

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because of COVID-19 restrictions. Bryan Nelson, the first presenter, discussed how media consumption has hit record levels as viewers are grounded at home with insatiable needs for news and entertainment content. Nelson reviewed how network device interface (NDI) and secure reliable transport (SRT)-based solutions solve critical at-home remote workflows and how this technology was used for the NFL Draft. Michael Nunan discussed Bell Media's remote workflows for video editorial (long-form, news, and sports) and post-production sound. He also talked about their "de-centralized PCR," which creates certain challenges for communications and monitoring. Sasha Zivanovic of Nextologies reviewed how they helped deal with the challenges faced in delivering various large-scale productions during COVID-19, such as the finale of "American Idol," the preshow and splash down for SpaceX, Top Rank

Boxing, and the Ultimate Fighting Championships.

A Q&A session followed the presentations.

—Andrew Thomas
Section Manager

Toronto November 2020

Switching to remote production during a pandemic is the greatest challenge for anyone involved with live production. This new reality, of course, is caused by the need to vacate facilities, making the creation of live programming suddenly an area of invention and survival. Productions have made use of skeleton-staffed control rooms, all available means of remote collaboration and contribution, various never-tried commercial and consumer internet tools, and anything they could think of to put it together. Month by month, it has worked—shows look "normal" again, viewers are used to the lesser production values and

variable quality of show elements, but it has all come together. In particular, and in many cases, for the first time, the internet and cloud-based services have played a critical role.

This begs the question, what about remote production using the same fully uncompressed systems as we do in the studio today? How can we leverage the cloud to accommodate high bitrate uncompressed and compressed signals with their critical ecosystem and timing requirements, or at least their exact equivalent, and make them work seamlessly with studio production workflows on the ground? This brings several issues to the discussion, and these are central to this event's presentations.

Peter Wharton touched on the advantages of cloud technology, the challenges of operating in the cloud, and the new approach to production including volumetric camera arrays and using latency to your advantage. Jean-Baptiste Lorent presented a new high-efficiency codec JPEG XS, which is lightweight and fast, and developed to answer the challenges of live production and exchange in the cloud. Evan Statton explained how cloud services such as Amazon Web Services (AWS) could fit in modern TV workflow, including scalable reliable datagram (SRD) protocol, cloud digital interface (CDI), scalability, and flexibility of the provided solutions. John Mailhot explained how new related standards, including SMPTE, Audio Engineering Society, Video Services Forum, and Advanced Media Workflow Association (AMWA), and others, help move things forward and how ground-to-cloud and cloud-to-ground uncompressed and compressed signal flow is organized.

After the presentation, Paul Briscoe opened the panel for a Q&A session.

—Tony Meerakker
Section Chair

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