

KEMMER TV'S DIGITAL DIGEST

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July 2009

WELCOME !

Welcome to the fourth edition of the **DIGITAL DIGEST!** Survived June and July! Sony seminar, WESA's 50th Summer convention, (**Wisconsin Electronic Service Association**), and my daughter's wedding in Green Bay!

Anyone, at any time can E-mail me any questions. I will also add any of your friends or relatives to this mailing list.

Just shoot me an E-mail with their addresses or if you have any questions. kemmertv@wi.rr.com Or call **262-246-6495**

LARRY

MILWAUKEE CHANNEL CHANGES

Channel 4: Newly added is channel 4.3 which is called "Cool TV". Rock music and videos. Visit www.thecooltv.com for more information. Channel 4 reports that they have no money in their budget to do any tower work. Their old analog transmitter is on top of their tower and the digital transmitter is about two-thirds of the way up. Moving their digital transmitter to the top of the tower would only gain them a few miles in area coverage.

Channel 6: Channel 6.2 will soon air the Retro Television network. More oldies like ME TV. Way back to the Rifleman, Cisco Kid, and the Wagon Train. Popular shows like Kojak, I Spy, Quincy, and The Rockford Files. Visit www.myretrotv.com Channel 6 will be moving their digital transmitter to the top of their tower before football season starts.

Channel 10: Channel 10 continues to be the toughest to pick up on a set of rabbit ears. If you have any friends that are fighting with "Ears", often they work better on channel 10 if they are positioned horizontally rather than sticking straight up.

Channel 18: On June 12th, channel 18 changed their digital frequency from 61 back to 18. Whether you have a new TV or Digital Converter you will have to "re-scan" or run a new "auto-program" to get it to return in your listings.

Channel 36: Channels 10 & 36 will continue to broadcast their programming at the same power levels they have been. Channel 55 also transmits from their new tower.

Channels 41, 49 & 63 These three channels are owned by channel 58. Channel 58 also continues to broadcast analog signals on 41 and 63. Jim Hall, station owner, says "These analog stations are the last life line for those who have not yet purchased new TVs or Converters"

Channels 41 & 63 are only part of the way up 58's tower and broadcast at low power. Channel 49 continues to be a problem for those north of the tower. 58 did some tower work on the last two Sundays (between midnight and 4:00 am). Future changes to the tower will increase area coverage. No one seems to know about all those -5, -6, & -7 "future" channels. Channel 58.3 is "ThisTV and show all movies from MGM.

SINCLAIR BROADCASTING

Sinclair Broadcast Group spelled out Tuesday, July 14, just how close it is to bankruptcy.

It faces debt covenant violations, sagging revenues and cash flow that may make it impossible to service that debt, and what could be contentious negotiations with ABC over its affiliation agreement, which expires at year end.

But the key and most immediate threat is the potential credit default of Cunningham Broadcasting Corp., with which Sinclair has local market agreements (LMAs) encompassing six stations.

That could push Sinclair over the edge as soon as the end of July. Sinclair provides for CW18 & MY24 in Milwaukee.

TVNEWSDAILY

CELL PHONES

Lightspeed Research has released the results of a multi-nation study about cell phone use--and some of them are strange.

For example, 13 percent of U.S. subscribers don't make calls, while 52 percent make at least one call per day. 35 percent never send text messages, but that's at least somewhat understandable.

You have to wonder what those 13 percent are doing with their cell phones. Do they use them as paperweights? Maybe just play Snake on them? I assume *some* of that group have cell phones as emergency-only devices, but that's a pretty large percentage.

The study also reported that women send more text messages than men, with 29 percent compared to 25 percent sending at least one text per day, whereas men and women make the same percentage of voice calls each day. In addition, mobile Web browsing is the most popular daily activity (at 14 percent), while taking photos is the most popular weekly mobile pastime (at 37 percent).

Analog TV Dies: Good Riddance

By Mark Fleischmann June 12, 2009 — The nation's analog broadcast television standard, known as NTSC, died today after a long illness. It was 68 years old and should have died years ago.

NTSC, which stood for National Television System Committee, had been depressed in recent years. It was originally designed for the 5- to 12-inch black & white portholes that passed for television sets in 1941. Despite having undergone a life-saving operation to add color in 1953, and further surgery to add analog stereo sound in 1984, NTSC was looking a bit peaked.

NTSC was known to be breathing hard in a world of flat-panel HDTVs with large screens that magnified its considerable flaws. Friends say this only exacerbated NTSC's inferiority complex. "It really was kind of embarrassing that people were watching TV using a standard designed in the 1940s," one noted.

Remarkably, according to Nielsen, there are approximately 2.8 million American households, or 2.5 percent of the total TV audience, who think NTSC is still alive, despite relentless reports of its failing health. In fact, it fell into a coma and nearly died on February 17, but was revived by a team of doctors sent from the White House.

However, all 1760 TV stations in the U.S. finally agreed to shut off life support today. NTSC is now as dead as the 78 rpm record. Open yourself a bottle of champagne and settle down with the new Conan tonight, unless of course you prefer Dave. They're both in HD.

NTSC is survived by ATSC, or Advanced Television Systems Committee, a younger broadcast standard outfitted with a high-definition picture and surround sound. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you buy a DTV.

101Mbps INTERNET

Want the so-called fastest broadband in the U.S.?

Cablevision will charge you a **\$300 up-front "activation fee"** to get its new 101-Mbps downstream DOCSIS 3.0 service, which officially went on sale today. (See Cablevision To Blast Out 101-Mbps Internet Service.)

Actually the total setup fee is \$334.95, which would include the \$34.95 one-time "professional installation fee" in addition to the \$300 activation fee, according to the details on Cablevision's Optimum Online Ultra service on the operator's Web site. Cablevision is offering the service for \$99.95 per month, targeting high-end residential customers as well as small and midsize businesses.

And I know this is just boilerplate language, but Cablevision's fine print about the 101-Mbps tier also says: "Many factors affect speed. Actual speeds may vary and are not guaranteed."

OLED TV

I know you're fond of your nice, new LCD HDTV, I know--it's much better than the big CRT brute you had before. But, and trust me on this, you're going to want to buy a whole new TV next year. It's going to be OLED you see, and it may come from Panasonic.

That's because Panasonic just announced a partnership with Sumitomo Chemical company to develop advanced display panels using OLED technology. The partnership will turn into a joint venture to develop and manufacture screens that are 40 inches and over by 2010.

Why all the excitement about this? It's pretty simple, OLED is about as much of a technological leap in display technology over current LCDs as the LCD was over your old cathode-ray-tube telly. In an LCD, each pixel consists of bunches of tiny packets of liquid crystal that change their structure when a voltage is applied--they don't actually radiate any light themselves, and that's why LCD screens need a cold-cathode or LED backlight.

But in an OLED screen each pixel is an array of tiny, colored light-emitting diodes--each one actually glows with the corresponding color from the TV signal. As a result, the brightness, contrast and sharpness of an OLED screen is whole streets ahead of LCD. You can view them from any angle, they can show a wider range of colors than LCD and black areas show up as truly black. Oh, and because they don't need a backlight they consume far less electricity, and can be much, much thinner. Down to millimeters deep, in fact. Do you want a new TV yet?

Panasonic's clearly hoping to steal the march on this new tech--the only OLED TV on the market thus far is Sony's XEL1 which is 3mm deep, but just 11-inches across and comes at a whopping \$2000+ price point.

Kit Eaton[via Reuters]

TIVO / BEST BUY

TiVo, the Silicon Valley company that popularized the digital video recorder, and Best Buy, the national electronics chain, are forging a broad partnership.

The companies plan to announce that Best Buy will heavily promote TiVo products in its 1,100 stores in the United States. TiVo will develop a version of its set-top box, to be sold in Best Buy stores, that will let the retailer advertise its products and services to TiVo subscribers on their home televisions.

The companies did not disclose financial details other than to say that Best Buy was making a multiyear commitment to advertise TiVo devices. Tom Rogers, TiVo's chief executive, said it was "a huge step above any kind of marketing that has ever been done for TiVo before."

As part of the deal, the companies also said that Best Buy would finance an effort to bring TiVo's software and search tools to Best Buy's own brand of consumer electronics, like its Insignia high-definition TVs.

(Continued on page three)

Facing fierce competition from Amazon.com and Wal-Mart, the Minneapolis-based Best Buy wants to extend its relationship with its customers outside of its stores. It has steadily expanded its Geek Squad customer service operation and last fall acquired the music subscription service Napster for \$121 million. TiVo said it planned to make the Napster music service available to TiVo subscribers on their televisions.

As part of the deal, Best Buy also plans to use TiVo to offer advice and guidance on products like HDTVs and digital cameras and provide ways to buy these products via the television remote control.

NEW YORK TIMES

INTERNET CONNECTED

LG launched two broadband-equipped HDTVs this week--the 47-inch 47LH50 and the 50-inch 50PS80. Both televisions boast NetCast Entertainment Access, which provides consumers with the entire Netflix streaming library of more than 12,000 movies and TV episodes.

LG isn't the only company bringing connected HDTVs to store shelves. Toshiba is well on its way to bringing its Regza line of HDTVs into the streaming realm. When the connected HDTVs launch later this year, Toshiba plans to give consumers access to a variety of content.

RE-TRANS FEES

According to projections from SNL Kagan, retransmission consent fees are expected to increase to **\$1.2 billion** by 2011.

That would be more than double the \$500 million for 2008, and up strongly from 2009's \$739 million in retrans revenue.

Kagan said that cable operators may also begin paying more than satellite providers in retrans fees starting next year.

Broadcasters have increasingly sought cash for their channels in an effort to solidify a second revenue stream in a tough ad market and a changing media landscape.

Not surprisingly, the majority of 2009 retrans fees (62%) came from the top 25 markets. According to Kagan analyst Justin Nelson, the 2009 breakdown for retrans fees will be \$352 million from DBS and \$315 million from cable, with telcos' share estimated at \$71 million.

The average is 25 cents per subscriber.

But Nelson expects cable retrans payments to jump to \$424 million in 2010, citing Univision carriage contracts and other major TV groups with escalator clauses kicking in.

Sinclair claimed the highest percent of revenue from retrans at 14%, according to Nelson, while the average over TV groups was between 5 and 10%.

Multichannel News

PLAY YOUR OWN

Consumers have spoken. They'd still rather pop a disc into a DVD player than download or watch a video online, according to a new survey.

Sales and rentals of DVDs and Blu-ray discs in the U.S. made up 88 percent of consumer home video spending over the past three months, according to the survey released Tuesday by market researcher NPD Group.

Your average U.S. consumer paid about \$25 per month on

video purchases and rentals, with 63 percent on DVD purchases, 7 percent on Blu-ray Disc purchases, 18 percent on rentals, 9 percent on video on demand, and only 3 percent on digital downloads.

Despite the continued popularity of DVD and Blu-ray, online viewing has gained a foothold. In the past three months, 9 percent of connected consumers said they watched movies online versus 5 percent last year. Eight percent rented a movie online, a jump of 4 percent since last year, NPD reported.

"Discs are still and by far the dominant way Americans enjoy home video, but there is an increasing appetite for digital options," said Russ Crupnick, entertainment industry analyst for NPD. "The good news is that the consumers engaging with digital video today also tend to be heavy consumers of DVDs and Blu-ray Disc, but it remains to be seen just how long physical discs and digital formats can co-exist."

The information was taken from an update to a recent NPD Group report entitled "Entertainment Trends In America," which measured home video usage for the previous three months. Conducted online, the survey was based on responses from more than 11,000 U.S. consumers.

Sales of Blu-ray players are themselves growing here in the U.S., with prices down and more consumers craving to watch their favorites in high-definition.

CNET

PERFECT DEMO'S

After you're lucky enough to pull together the moola to buy the components of a great home theater, you know you'll want to demonstrate its finer points to your buddies.

And let's face it--[Goodfellas](#) may be a great film, but it won't have people oohing and ahing about the fantastic picture and booming surround sound.

I've put together ten titles with spectacular scenery, great action, and aggressive, sub-woofer-heavy surround sound--the perfect movies for showing off your HDTV, sound system, and (if you have one) new Blu-ray player. I've also recommended one or two scenes in each film that will really wow the audience.

The first three--"Baraka," "2001: A Space Odyssey," and "The Dark Knight"--are all shot at least in part in large film formats and vividly show what Blu-ray can do. Consider these strictly BD-only demos.

The next four--"Casino Royale" (2006 version), "Live Free, Die Hard," "The Fifth Element," and "Wall-E"--will impress your friends even on DVD, although the Blu-ray versions will impress them considerably more.

The last three titles--"Chicken Run," "Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark," and "Richard III" (the 1995 version) aren't yet out in Blu-ray, but they show what a DVD can do on a widescreen TV and a good sound system.

Of course, you don't want to buy a disc for one great scene, so I've stuck to good movies--ones that have enjoyed either popular success or rave reviews. Several recent blockbusters are here, but also a cult favorite, a classic, a documentary, and even some Shakespeare. So after you've wowed them with a great scene, you can entertain them with the whole flick.

PCWORLD