5-2002

ACUTA eNews May 2002, Vol 31, No. 5

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ACUTA Ruth A. Michalecki Leadership Awards

The Awards Committee is accepting nominations for the ACUTA Ruth A. Michalecki Leadership Awards, a program to recognize outstanding leadership among our members. Focusing on leadership is an acknowledgement of the fact that leadership skills are increasingly vital to the telecom professional.

The person (or persons) selected:

- Actively participates in and promotes the education, professional development, and mentoring of other professionals
- Has demonstrated innovation in the establishing, changing, or otherwise materially affecting the existing practices, usage, and/or concepts applied to the telecommunications profession within higher education, i.e. identifying and advancing telecommunications and/or information technology directions for the benefit of higher education
- Has engaged in activities that have produced firm and formal results directly benefitting the ACUTA organization and/or the broader higher education community.

"This year, with the Leadership Awards being named in honor of Ruth Michalecki," said Anthony Tanzi, Chair of the Awards Committee, "the committee will focus on applicants who demonstrate the same commitment to the high standards of professionalism and vision that she exemplified."

The Leadership Award(s) will be presented at the awards luncheon at the annual conference.

If you would like to nominate someone whom you feel meets the criteria, complete the nomination form online at www.acuta.org/forms/la.cfm or contact Lisa Cheshire at 859/278-3338 for a fax version.

Deadline for nominations is May 10. Nominees must be ACUTA institutional members, associate members, or corporate affiliates.

ACUTA Newsletter Goes Online

If you are reading this newsletter in its familiar printed and mailed version, this is

In these days of looking for cost reductions, the $17,000 a year it costs ACUTA screen or print it off on your local printer. It will be a handsome version
time to say farewell. Well, not "farewell" so much as "welcome" to the new world of newsletter publishing. As of the June 2002 edition of the ACUTA News, ACUTA will be fully joining the world of electronic publishing.

The ACUTA News has been a feature of the ACUTA Web site for several years now. The full edition of each newsletter has been published on the Web at the same time that it went to the printers. Many ACUTA members have chosen to read this online version, either first or as a supplement to the printed version which came in the mail some weeks after written and printed.

While those of us on the "left" coast will say really nice things about living out West, the delay in getting even first-class mail from the East is not among them. And, for items like the ACUTA newsletter, which is mailed as printed matter bulk mail, well, "news" is hardly what it is by the time it arrives on our desks. I rarely get my printed copy of the ACUTA newsletter before the month of its edition is over.

Timeliness in delivery is a good reason to move to an electronic format, but so is cost.

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That you can be proud to pass along to your staff, post on a bulletin board, or even hand to your President.

This latest change for the ACUTA News is the logical progression in its history, which began when Luther Robb typed up the first one-page edition, dated April 3, 1972. Content has changed over the years as late-breaking news and important association-related news has pretty much been moved over to e-mail and the ACUTA listserv. As Pat Scott says, "The newsletter still brings important information to our members, but one of its primary functions seems to me to be as a unifying vehicle. Once a month, everyone sees what's going on with ACUTA. In a sense, it kind of brings us together even though we're apart."

And so, reaching out to keep in touch every month will be done over the technology which we ACUTA members provide to our campuses. There is a symmetry to that which is very satisfying. And ACUTA continues to grow, change, and meet today's needs as it has for the past 30 years.
New at Reno Conference Exhibition:

Wireless Pavilion

Kevin Adkins
ACUTA Mgr, Corp. Relations & Marketing

I’m sure you’ve all been wondering what will be the highlight of the Exhibition at this year’s Annual Conference. Wonder no more—we are proud to announce the Wireless Pavilion.

The Wireless Pavilion will be a dedicated section of the hall where the air will be thick with flying bits and bytes from close to a dozen different vendors of wireless equipment and services for voice, data, and video. Check the online exhibit floor plan at ACUTA.org as participating vendors are added. They’re all grouped together to save you steps, make easier comparisons, and perhaps even see how they interact or work together.

The Pavilion will have its own special opening at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday in advance of the general exhibition, and will feature product presentations in an adjoining meeting room throughout the afternoon. Pre-registered attendees will receive advance notification of participating companies and presentation times.

This special Pavilion time will provide an excellent supplement for those attending the Sunday morning preconference seminar on Wireless Technologies and Tools. All conference attendees are welcome and encouraged to visit the Pavilion and take advantage of this uniquely focused opportunity to evaluate and compare numerous wireless technologies.

ACUTA LEGISLATIVE & REGULATORY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

DC Update

Cities Becoming LECs?

Early this year Bristol, a rural community in western Virginia, applied to the State Corporation Commission (SCC) for authority to operate as a local exchange carrier. On April 5 the city requested that the SCC dismiss the request. On the same day the governor of Virginia signed SB245 which allows “municipalities to provide telecom services after acquiring a certificate from the SCC.” Bristol was expected rulemaking in February parties were asked to comment on steps that could be taken to ensure that carriers recover the cost of their contributions fairly, accurately, and equitably from their customers. Comments were due April 12 and replies are due April 29. (TR 4/1)

There is also an FCC request for comments on proposed changes to the USF mechanism. In this case they asked whether schools and libraries should have to attest forecast to grow 46.6 percent in 2002, 20.7 percent in 2003, 18.3 percent in 2004, and 13.5 percent in 2005. They expect that $13.8 billion will be spent for this service by 2005. (TR 3/25)

A Telecommunications Reports survey indicates that the CLECs are continuing to grow. The access line growth in the fourth quarter of 2001 was 6.6 percent. The 23 CLECs included in the survey had an overall growth of 4.2 percent.
FCC and Internet Fraud

The FCC is cooperating with law enforcement agencies in at least six western states and two western Canadian provinces (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Kentucky) in prosecuting cases of Internet fraud and deceptive unsolicited commercial e-mail, also known as "spam." At a news conference in Seattle on April 5 they unveiled the first effort of the FTC with partners like this anywhere in the country.

The initiative targets scams that play on the fears of consumers, particularly claims of miracle cures for cancer or other potentially fatal diseases. The FTC is already seeking a permanent injunction against one company. (TR 4/8)

Universal Service Fund

Federal e-rate funds for the fourth year of this program amount to slightly more than $2.25 billion according to a report from the schools and library division (SLD) of the USF Administrative Co. "The SLD funded requests for discounts on internal connections for schools and libraries whose demographic status—poverty and rural location—entitled them to discounts of 86 percent or more." Requests were denied from applicants with lower and more prosperous areas that were not entitled to discounts as high as 86 percent in the FCC-established matrix. (TR 4/1)

The FCC also has a proposal under consideration to establish a flat-rate method for calculating the amount that the carriers have to pay into the USF. At a
What Do You Need to Get Into the Cable Business?

By Ron Walczak, RCDD
Walczak Technology Consultants, Inc.

A recent listserv inquiry about options for replacing traditional cable TV services prompted me to throw out some issues to be considered. I have expanded on the list and added our recommendations for your consideration.

What do you need to get into the cable business?
The most noticeable change will be the need for space and potentially, physical plant improvements. Our work with colleges and universities has demonstrated time and time again that physical space allocation is one of the most sensitive battles fought on-campus. No one needs less space.

You will need to start with an environmentally controlled room (air, power, security) for the head end. The receivers (one per channel) are about the size of a VCR and sit in racks. Figure 8-10 channels per rack. Lots of channels = lots of racks. A dedicated space of 12′ x 12′ is typical. If you are fortunate enough to have room in your data center or PBX room you are ahead of the game.

Antenna locations: The dishes and any required local VHF/UHF antennae need to be mounted somewhere acceptable and some dishes have electric heaters (AC Power). Many of the UHF/VHF channels are now available via the satellite dish, so very few off-air antennae are needed, if any. Some are starting to use a 1.2 meter dish with a slick coating that prevents ice/snow buildup.

There is a heater available for those campuses located in the harshest areas of the Northeast or Mid-West. We have seen severe weather with rapid snow fall or ice storm exceed the dish heater’s ability to prevent loss of signal. The heater will eventually recover, but of course during storms, the students are inside trying to watch TV. Any loss of service due to excessive and rapid snow fall is temporary and will subside as the snow fall diminishes. Please note that

Are you going to create your own channels (like the community service scrolling info channel)? You need equipment and training to do this. Most vendors will sell and install this equipment and training should be included.

Now you are in the cable business, but how involved in the daily operation is entirely up to you and your choice of vendors.

How do you charge for services? Some include the service in student room fees, others offer it as an optional service. Our experience has shown that if you can bundle it in the room fee, life is a lot less complicated.

How do you turn accounts on/off? (Don’t laugh, this can be an expensive set of alternatives), installing the types of electronic on/off capabilities used by cable companies can run you more than $150 per subscriber. An alternative is a $10 (roughly) manual trap to connect/disconnect in the wiring closets (technician time and wear and tear on CATV connections become cost factors). We recommend a bulk service to all outlets, always on and included in room fee. If you choose manual connect/disconnect, invest in good coax patch panels that are clearly marked to speed technician efforts. Actually, do that anyway.

How do you respond to outages? A preventative and emergency maintenance service agreement is typically included in the lease arrangement and is recommended for any purchase arrangement. Depending upon your location, 4-8 hour emergency response, and 24-hour non-emergency response are typical. If you have in-house expertise in CATV matters, you may want to negotiate custom terms.

How do you prevent cable theft? If it’s a bulk service and all students are getting the same cable channels, there is

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Board Report

April

The ACUTA Board of Directors met via conference call on Thursday, April 4, 2002. Following are highlights of that meeting.

There was a brief discussion of adopting a new tag line. There will be more discussion at the next Board meeting.

Dave Barta reported that planning for seminars and conferences is progressing well.

Secretary/Treasurer John Bradley reported that year-to-date expenses are on track. However, revenues are slightly behind the plan.

Bill Brichta stated that the Publications Committee is developing a recommendation to convert the newsletter to an electronic-only publication.

Tony Tanzi reported that the slate of candidates for the upcoming election is developing well.

In addition, several other reports from committee chairs were discussed.

Respectfully submitted,
John Bradley
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
ACUTA Secretary/Treasurer

Dues Invoices Mailed

Invoices for annual dues are mailed on May 1 each year to the person listed as the voting member for each school or the primary representative for corporate affiliates. For 2002–2003 there is no increase in dues. Contact
loss of service due to snow fall is a rare occurrence and will last only as long as the heavy snow fall.

Cable distribution (fiber/coax) from the head end to the buildings being served. Then within the buildings themselves. Cabling will probably be the biggest cost factor and the most vital detail of the system. Most vendors will attempt to utilize any existing cabling if feasible. Otherwise, all cabling is run underground in trenched conduit, fish through walls and ceilings, or concealed in molding. The cable distribution design and implementation is a long-term investment, and the installation of inside cabling is often scheduled around residential occupancy. Plan carefully with Residence Life involved. They will know when dorms are occupied or not, and will also provide escorts for the cabling contractors when working within buildings and rooms.

Channel selection: There are "packages" of channels available that have monthly recurring costs. Make sure you know what you want. Solicit input from your customers! Fortunately, changing subscriptions is a programming change so it's not disruptive to the service. When WWF wrestling moved to TNN (not in a client's original channel line up), they had to buy the 3-channel package which included TNN and two other channels. They pay the full programming fee for the package, but they only needed to purchase equipment for the channel they wanted.

Local channels need independent antennae if not available on the dish. Not everything is digital. The NOAAH local weather channel (with severe warning alerts, etc.) is analog and requires an 8'-10' dish. Good luck finding an aesthetically acceptable spot for that one! As a result, most campuses get their local weather on ABC, NBC, CBS, or FOX. If NOAAH is required, then vendors can either use an existing C-Band dish or roof/ground mount a new one. Foreign language channels from other satellites can be inserted into your own system as well. Again, you will be utilizing existing or new dishes that are approximately 3.7 meters in diameter.

no motive for theft. If you provide it as an option, you have to consider this issue. In our experience CATV is the single most requested service (Internet access will pass CATV when all students have PCs) and there is high motivation to have it in the room—legally or not.

Again, don't laugh, but who is going to go show students how to program their TV sets? Students should be given a pamphlet on the first day of move-in that instructs them on how to tune their TV sets to receive the service. It should even instruct them on how to configure the service through a VCR. If they still have trouble, there should be a number to call on campus for tier 1 support. If problems are tier 2, then the campus calls the vendor's toll free technical hotline to report the problem, and the vendor will then call the troubled user.

With all that said, we like the college-owned model. It can be a real money-maker (I want my MTV) and you control the content (you can't have your MTV). Content control makes CATV provision especially attractive to schools whose mission statements tie to religious beliefs. We have been involved in projects where the cable TV service funded the installation of new PBXs, data networks, and cabling. In times of tight capital, having your customers gleefully fund other technology initiatives is both creative and strategically sound.

Ron Walczak, RCDD is the Principal consultant and owner of Walczak Technology Consultants, Inc. Ron is a regular presenter at the ACUTA annual conference and will be speaking about changes in the cabling standards this year in Reno.

Scott Bruckel, Eastern Sales Director for Campus TeleVideo, assisted in the writing of this article. Campus TeleVideo is a long-time ACUTA Member that provides integrated video and data services.

Kellie Bowman with questions at 859/278-5336, ext. 22 or e-mail kbowman@acuta.org.

Oops! We Goofed!

For the final installment of the series on disaster planning contributed by Geoff Tritsch and Bob Kuhns of Compass Consulting International Inc., we inadvertently omitted the concluding paragraphs. We apologize to Geoff and Bob and to our readers, and direct you to the ACUTA Web site for the complete version. On the ACUTA home page at www.acuta.org, click on ACUTA News-April 2002 under What's New.

ACUTA Members

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From ACUTA Headquarters

Federal Trade Commission Considers Telemarketing Issues

We generally think of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and state Public Utility/Public Service Commissions when thinking of regulatory agencies that govern telecommunications, but there are other Federal agencies that have a direct impact on telecom issues affecting ACUTA members.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has jurisdiction over issues such as telemarketing, “pay per call” services (including “900” number calls), and unauthorized charges including non-common carrier charges that appear on telephone bills (entertainment services, club memberships such as psychic clubs, personal clubs, or travel clubs; and telecommunications products or service programs, such as voice mail, paging, and calling cards.)

Jurisdictional confusion can arise because the FTC does not have regulatory authority over common carriers. So, for example, although they regulate telemarketing, they don’t have any authority to regulate telemarketing by your LEC or IXC. That authority falls with the FCC. (There is some sentiment by lawmakers that the FTC should be given this authority, but this would require a change in Federal law.)

However, the FTC does perform valuable consumer protection functions for telecom consumers, and ACUTA monitors and participates in efforts to strengthen FTC rules when appropriate. For example, ACUTA has submitted comments and participated in an FTC workshop in Washington, designed to make recommendations to combat unauthorized charges. The FTC is expected to act on these proposals some time this year.

Most recently, the FTC opened a proceeding to study the creation of a national “do not call” registry. This registry would allow consumers to place their telephone numbers on a “do not call” list for telemarketers. ACUTA’s comments to the FTC on this matter urged the agency to expand the scope of the registry to include telephone numbers for campus housing, even if these numbers are considered “business lines.” ACUTA’s comments are available on the Web at http://www.acuta.org/relation/downloadfile.cfm?idocnum=593. The FTC’s background information on the proceeding is at http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/rulemaking/tsr/tsr-review.htm.

Another telecommunications agency that has an impact on telecommunications is the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). The NTIA is an agency of the Department of Commerce, and is responsible for domestic and international telecommunications and information policy issues. The NTIA manages the use of spectrum by the Federal government, and is therefore a key stakeholder in spectrum allocation issues. It also provides grants for information infrastructure development and performs telecommunications research and engineering. While the NTIA’s day-to-day impact on higher education telecom and IT operations is more indirect than the FCC or FTC, it is an important agency, and ACUTA monitors its actions so that we can inform members of key issues.

If you have questions regarding U.S. Federal policy on telecommunications and IT issues, ACUTA is available to assist. Feel free to contact me at (859) 278-3338, ext. 25, or jsem@acuta.org.

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Central Connecticut State Univ., New Britain, CT. Laurie Napierksi, 860/225-6599. T1 ........................................... www.ccsu.edu
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Interested persons should send a resume and cover letter to: Kenneth Carter, CITI, Columbia Business School, 3022 Broadway, Uris Hall, Suite 1A, New York, NY 10027. Fax: 212/854-1471; e-mail: krc17@columbia.edu. No phone calls please.

For complete descriptions of listings, we encourage you to access the ACUTA Web site at www.acuta.org. If you do not have Internet access, call Pat Scott, Communications Manager, 859/278-3338 x21 for more details.

Editor's Note

Thirty years ago when Luther Robb mailed out the first ACUTA newsletter, he couldn't have envisioned a day when information would be sent to thousands of people simultaneously and instantaneously. But we are there. And as we prepare to convert the printed-and-mailed newsletter to an electronic publication, we are made aware of how technology has changed many aspects of our life, including the way we disseminate information.

We have some very good reasons for this decision: timeliness, efficiency, and costs, to name a few. Broadcast e-mails now deliver important information immediately, and the lisserve adds interactivity for those who post questions and get instant answers. Both of these were functions of the printed newsletter in the past, but e-mail allows us to do both better. It is logical to take advantage of what is now familiar technology.

As I see it, my challenge is to understand the changing role of the newsletter and to make it even more useful to you than it has been. When you receive the June E-News, you will be able to choose whether you want to read it in the body of the e-mail or print out a formatted copy. You can forward your e-mail to others on your campus, or share your printed copy with colleagues. If you need a copy faxed or mailed to you for any reason, we will be happy to accommodate that request. The newsletter is also archived on the ACUTA Web site, so back issues are available anytime—and they are also searchable, by the way.

Check out the June issue in a few weeks, and if you have any suggestions or comments, please let me hear from you. As the editor, I want the newsletter to be useful and valuable to you, and I welcome your input at any time. pscott@acuta.org.