

## Telecom Notes

ATIS began an American National Standards Institute Standard on wood pole specifications and dimensions. Developed by the ATIS-administered Accredited Standards Committee O5, the standard is designed for telcos, utility companies and municipalities, ATIS said. It clarified ambiguities and amends past inaccuracies. It also incorporated a provision outlining specific Pantone Matching System color-coded identification tags for each pole class, and includes a more complete explanation of the maximum stress points of utility poles. The committee also added an annex with information on design issues to help users apply wood poles correctly in line designs.

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Verizon Business started a global program to help its corporate and government customers more easily build networks by managing buying and deploying customer premises equipment (CPE), the company said. It expects Alcatel-Lucent, Nortel, Polycom and Siemens to join the program this year. The first set of partners includes Avaya, Cisco, Fluke Networks, Juniper Networks and Tandberg. Verizon will handle the differing regulations for acquiring and moving equipment from multiple vendors into multiple countries, Thomas Vitale, vice president of CPE, customer enablement and product support, said in an interview. Customers seek single-source providers to do everything from offering the network through the equipment that supports the network, he said. Verizon Business can leverage its economies of scale to get better prices for customers on CPE, he said. The company will offer purchase options to customers, including offering leasing or purchasing options and providing managed services, where Verizon owns the equipment and provides a service, he said. The Global CPE Service will be available in 120 countries with more to come, he said. -- YW

## Broadcast

Consumers Union and others who criticize sporadic shortages of DTV converter boxes are reminiscent of "the 1969 moon landing being criticized because the pictures were fuzzy," CEA CEO Gary Shapiro told us in an e-mail. "Some shortages and surpluses among retailers are natural, and in the age of the telephone and the Internet, we have not heard of one consumer who after a couple of phone calls or web searches could not get a box," Shapiro said. "This has been the biggest technology transition in the history of broadcasting, and is by every indication has been and will be a phenomenal success! The cooperation among industries, government and public interest groups has been unprecedented."

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A spike in DTV queries to 888-CALL-FCC didn't seem to materialize. There were fewer calls during the day and early evening Thursday than during the same period Wednesday, which never saw a jump in volume from the previous day (CD Feb 20 p1), said NCTA Senior Vice President Rob Stoddard and others. Calls to the commission and the 421 stations that stopped analog broadcasting Tuesday "paled in comparison to the 12.4 million over-the-air only households that were in affected markets," said an NAB spokesman late Thursday. FCC figures released then said that only 2.2 percent of callers Wednesday and 4.5 percent of those on Tuesday were unaware of the digital transition.

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Key legislators will discuss on Tuesday the importance of a performance royalty for terrestrial radio, subject of House and Senate bills (CD Feb 13 p11) and opposed by broadcasters. Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., his House counterpart, John Conyers of Michigan, and Republican Reps. Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee and Darrell Issa of California will speak. "Artists and musicians" also will be on hand, said the MusicFirst coalition, without providing details.

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WHMB-TV Indianapolis can broadcast in digital on channel 20 instead of the previously-assigned 16 and has gotten concurrence from Canada, said an FCC Media Bureau order approving the change. Separately,