

Fall 2008



CABLE NJ CONNECTION

The Newsletter of the New Jersey Cable Telecommunications Association



Contents

Message From the Chairwoman	Pg. 2
Cablevision Surpasses 2 Million Optimum Voice Lines	Pg. 2
Comcast <i>Leaders and Achievers</i> Program Benefits NJ Students	Pg. 2
Transition vs. Migration: What's the Difference?	Pg. 3
Learn More About the Broadcast Digital Transition	Pg. 3
Gallery: NJCTA-Sponsored Events in 2008	Pg. 4

New Jersey Television Viewers Prepare for a New Digital Era

[NJCTA member companies are helping customers and legislators better understand the broadcast digital transition](#)

By now you may have heard: On February 17, 2009, by Congressional mandate, television broadcasters will stop delivering their signals in an analog format and start delivering them exclusively in a digital format. Television signals have been transmitted in an analog since the days of *The Honeyymooners* and Ed Sullivan, so transitioning to an all-digital format is no small feat.

In order to help New Jersey residents and the legislators who represent them better understand how the broadcast digital transition works, the member companies of the New Jersey Cable Telecommunications Association (NJCTA) are working to ensure a smooth transition by providing information and support. For example, the NJCTA recently hosted four policy briefings for legislative staff at different sites around the state.

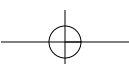
Here are a few important facts you should know about the broadcast digital transition:

Why Go All Digital?

The federal government is mandating the switch to all-digital.

Analog signals have been the broadcasting standard since the very beginning of television, but it's not a particularly efficient format. It uses up a great deal more of the finite broadcast spectrum, which means there's less room for other services.

MORE ON PG. 3



Cable NJ News Briefs

Cablevision Surpasses 2 Million Optimum Voice Lines

Cablevision recently announced that its award-winning Optimum Voice digital voice-over-cable service surpassed 2 million phone lines in service - the latest milestone for a product that has attracted more than a third of the homes passed by Cablevision's fiber optic network.

In addition, Optimum Voice was recently named the top voice over IP service for the fourth year in a row in PC Magazine's annual Readers' Survey. Optimum Voice also received the highest rating in residential telephone customer satisfaction in the Mid-Atlantic region for 2007 in a study by J.D. Power and Associates.

"The response by residential and small business customers alike to the value, reliability and advanced features of Optimum Voice has been extraordinary," said Joe Varello, Cablevision's vice president of digital voice product management. "We want to thank our customers for helping us achieve this latest milestone."

Comcast Leaders and Achievers Program Benefits NJ Students

What's the best way to maintain New Jersey's educational edge when it comes to leadership? Invest in its students.

That's why so far this year the Comcast *Leaders and Achievers* program has provided more than 100 scholarships worth \$1000 each to college-bound New Jersey high school students. Nationally, the program has recognized more than 9,500 students around the country and has given away more than \$9.5 million in scholarship grants.

The Comcast *Leaders and Achievers* Scholarship Program, one of the Comcast Foundation's signature community investment programs, recognizes students who have demonstrated leadership skills, academic achievement, and a commitment to community service.

Since its inception nearly eight years ago, the *Leaders and Achievers* program has provided more than \$1 million worth of scholarships to New Jersey students.



Message From the Chairwoman

The companies that make up the New Jersey Cable Telecommunications Association (NJCTA) share a commitment to three guiding principles: be innovative, invest in your community, and connect the people of New Jersey in new and creative ways.

So we were very pleased recently to have been a part of several events that really reflect our shared commitment to innovating, investing, and connecting.

The **Governor's Conference for Women** brought together women from all over New Jersey to discuss careers, political and legislative agendas, financial planning, and much more. The NJCTA was one of the premier sponsors of the event and women from our companies served on panels, on the planning committee for the conference, and as moderators for discussions. (See Page 4 for some photo highlights from the conference.)

The NJCTA, along with member companies Comcast and Cablevision, was also recently a major sponsor of the **New Jersey Hall of Fame** gala. The NJ Hall of Fame celebrates people from the New Jersey community who have made significant contributions to the state and the world in which we live by presenting a positive message of accomplishment and inspiration for New Jersey children.

In addition, the NJCTA was pleased to join representatives from leading technology companies and representatives from state and municipal government to participate in the **Governor's Broadband Summit**. We had a powerful perspective to provide, after all NJCTA member companies have built more than 37,000 miles of broadband infrastructure in the state - enough cable and fiber optics to circle the earth one and a half times.

As you can see, we use "Innovating Investing Connecting" to guide our activities beyond the services we provide.

It's the way we operate as part of the New Jersey community, and it's why you'll continue to see us at events like these for years to come.

It's all part of being a good neighbor and contributing to the future of the Garden State.

Sincerely,



New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine speaks at the Governor's Conference for Women. The New Jersey Cable Telecommunications Association was one of the premier sponsors of the event. See Page 4 for more photos.

BROADCAST DIGITAL TRANSITION

CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

Digital television, on the other hand, transmits television signals as “bits” of data, just like your computer does. Digital signals are more compact and more efficient and, therefore, require less space on the spectrum. Digital signals are also more crisp and clear which creates better picture and sound quality. The difference between digital and analog television signals is like the difference between a compact disc and a cassette tape.

And because digital signals are more efficient, when broadcasters convert to all digital, it will free up space on the spectrum for additional uses such as emergency preparedness and communications for first responders.

What Do New Jersey Cable Customers Have to Do?

If you live in New Jersey and you're already a cable customer, you don't have to do anything.

If you are a cable customer but you have a TV in your house that still uses rabbit ears to receive television signals, you should connect that TV to cable.

What if You Don't Have Cable?

If you have an analog television and use a rooftop antenna or rabbit ears exclusively, you have several options. You can purchase a converter box, you can purchase a digital television, or you can subscribe to cable.

If you choose to purchase a converter box from a national electronics retailer, it will cost approximately \$50-\$70.

The federal government is issuing \$40 coupons for the purchase of these converters. People can go to www.dtv.org for more information.

“The broadcast digital transition is a significant event, but the good news for New Jersey is that the member companies of the NJCTA are working hard to make sure our customers enjoy a smooth experience,” said Elizabeth Murray, NJCTA Chairwoman and Comcast senior director of regulatory affairs. “We're working to make sure that cable customers are educated and informed so that they can get the most out of this new technology.” ■

Transition vs. Migration: What's the Difference?

There are two big digital changes happening right now that affect your television: the broadcast digital transition and the digital migration.

The **broadcast digital transition** is a congressionally mandated switch that impacts broadcast TV channels. It requires broadcasters to deliver their signals in a digital-only format. For New Jersey cable customers, this transition will be seamless since their cable provider will automatically convert the signals.

The **digital migration**, on the other hand, is an initiative undertaken by the cable companies that “migrates” cable channels from an analog format to a digital format. The digital migration is part of a worldwide movement toward a digital format that is taking place in the cable industry and beyond.

By migrating cable channels from analog to digital, cable can provide improved audio and video quality and reliability, create space for more HD offerings, and increase bandwidth to allow for faster upload and download speeds.

For customers the impact should be minimal. If customers already have a digital cable box, they don't need to do anything. They won't notice any change in service. If customers do not have a digital box, they will need to get one from their cable company.



This Comcast digital cable box is an example of the type of box customers can use to receive cable channels that are migrated from analog to digital.

Learn More About the Broadcast Digital Transition

There are a number of online resources that provide valuable information about the broadcast digital transition for customers and legislators. Here are some you may find useful:

Federal Communications Commission: www.dtv.gov

The FCC provides a glossary, an FAQ, and countdown timer to tell you exactly how many days, hours, and minutes until the February 2009 transition.

National Cable Telecommunications Association: www.getreadyfordigitaltv.com

The NCTA has gathered all of its broadcast digital transition resources in one place and put them online for easy access. Check out their television advertising campaign. Also available in Spanish at www.prepareparatvdigital.com.

DTV Transition Coalition: www.dtvtransition.org

A coalition made up of broadcasters, electronics retailers, consumer groups, and cable companies, this organization's website serves as a portal to a world of information about the broadcast digital transition.

Gallery: NJCTA-Sponsored Events in 2008



New Jersey Assembly Speaker Joe Roberts prepares to record a public service announcement during NJCTA's "Connect with Cable" Day.



Cablevision VP for Govt Affairs Lee Schroeder and Board of Public Utilities President Jeanne Fox participate in a panel discussion at the 2008 Governor's Conference for Women.



(L to R) Senator Loretta Weinberg, News 12's Laura Jones, and Asm Maj Leader Bonnie Watson Coleman talk politics during the 2008 Governor's Conference for Women.



Comcast Newsmakers host Joe Bisicchia on set with New Jersey State Senator Barbara Buono during "Connect with Cable" Day.

NJCTA Member Companies:

- Cablevision
- Comcast
- Service Electric Cable
- Time Warner Cable
- US Cable

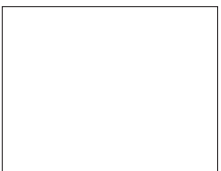
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- Secretary** Cherie LoPresti
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 Innovating. Investing. Connecting.