



New horizon emerges from the mist

During December the future for programme making spectrum became much clearer. Firstly, a much brighter outlook for wireless microphone users as Ofcom has now decided against an auction. Instead spectrum will be awarded to a band manager by means of a beauty contest. Programme makers will enjoy protected use of the areas in-between digital TV transmitters (the so called "white spaces") for 10 years and will likely have continued use beyond 2018 too. Crucially, channel 69 has been secured for professional use and will not be subject to the smog of baby alarms and other gadgets from the High Street.

Snow fields: In January, we got our first glimpse of how the landscape of white space spectrum will look in 2012. We have launched online access to the geographic data (see panel) to complement Ofcom's maps. There is much more work to do before we fully understand the capacity and any constraints but we have set-out to present our initial analysis to manufacturers, hirers and users at a workshop in February.

Shepherds warning: The morning skies do have a slight red hue in that wireless microphones will have to share the white spaces with wireless broadband devices. These "smart radios" seek-out white spaces by detecting other transmissions and avoiding them. Ofcom has given assurances that they will only be permitted if they do not cause harmful interference to wireless microphones. Also, the decision to auction white space in Ch61 and Ch62 was not expected by many. This further reduces the capacity available for wireless microphones.

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If you have any comments about JFMG News please email: amanda.houchen@jfm.co.uk

Storm clouds gather: Wireless camera users are facing a rather unsettled spell. With the auction of the 2.5GHz band approaching fast, programme makers are preparing to take refuge in the shelter of the 2GHz bands. But with limited space under cover it seems not everyone can be accommodated. The newly established industry forum has been working hard to keep its feet dry (see page 2).

High pressure building: We are already making preparations for our entry into the beauty contest towards the end of 2008. But first we have another busy season of events to support (see page 3). Let's hope for fine weather out there!

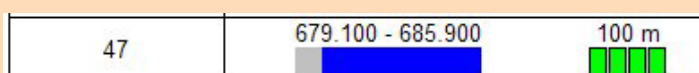


Paul Gill
Managing Director

Wireless Microphone Spectrum - 2012

Our online tool enables you to look-up the spectrum available for wireless microphones after switchover to digital TV has completed in 2012. See link from www.jfm.co.uk. No login is required.

The blue bar indicates which part of each TV channel can be used without causing interference to digital TV reception. Here, 679.100 MHz is the lowest wireless microphone frequency that can be used. The range figure and green quality meter indicate if operations are likely to be limited by interference from digital TV.



Technology...

Spotlight now on Wireless Cameras

Whilst the issues surrounding spectrum access for wireless microphones have been stealing the limelight in recent times, a new matter has gradually been coming to the fore. Wireless cameras use higher frequencies, typically around 2 to 3GHz, and it is this spectrum that is often utilised and prized by mobile and broadband operators. As a result, some of Ofcom's initiatives to facilitate liberalisation and market mechanisms could affect the very spectrum OB providers and News operators value the most.

Back in May last year, as a direct result of industry requests we held a Wireless Camera Forum to highlight the many issues concerning the future use of wireless cameras. From that meeting the attendees, made up of OB providers, broadcasters and manufacturers created the Spectrum for Programme Makers Forum (SPMF). The purpose of the group is two-fold; to engage with Ofcom to highlight the projects that could impact their use of spectrum in the future; and to discuss and resolve technical and operational problems.



Courtesy of Broadcast RF

The group have provided measurements and anecdotal evidence regarding their current use of 2025 - 2110MHz which currently suffers from this kind of interference at the band edges. This is also the reason why the amendment to UK Broadband's 3.5GHz licence has also caused concern. Unfortunately the SPMF's findings appear counter to the technical work undertaken by Ofcom's consultants and a mutually acceptable outcome has not yet been found.

As well as keeping a watch for interference from outside our bands, the group is also working to ensure PMSE users can successfully operate along-side each other at busy events. And it is in this area where JFMG are most heavily involved. We hope that re-organisation of the remaining 2GHz bands and the creation of a draft code of practice covering transmitter and receiver performance will help the News and OB operators better cope with the reduction in available channels.



Farewell to 2500 – 2690MHz

2500 – 2690MHz is part of the package that is due to be auctioned Spring/Summer 2008.

PMSE will continue to have access until the new users require it. However applications for use of the band for trials of new technologies have increased and we are required to accommodate these requests. This will result in a diminishing priority for PMSE.

We continue to work to minimise the impact of this change wherever possible, but users should start to consider what alternative spectrum they may access when the band is completely removed.

Initiatives of particular concern to the SPMF are the 2.6GHz (2500 – 2690MHz and 2010 – 2025 MHz) award scheduled for Spring/Summer 2008 and the recent amendment to UK Broadband's licence conditions in 3.5GHz. Whilst licensees have been well aware of the impending loss of 2500 – 2690MHz for release to the market, it is the risk of adjacent channel interference caused by the auctioning of these bands to mobile users that is of real concern to the group.

Hello to 2290 – 2300MHz



At the end of 2007, Ofcom announced the release of 2295MHz for use by Wireless Cameras on a temporary basis. The 10MHz channel had initially been identified as part of the 2.6GHz award package, but consultation provided little evidence of interest for the time-being.

As a result the channel is now available for short-term use and can be booked online (or apply via the office).

Out & About...



we Won't Get Fooled Again!

It's easy to become detached from what JFMG is all about when sitting behind a desk everyday looking at applications. Frequencies can turn into meaningless numbers unless we make a concerted effort to keep ourselves in touch with what our job truly means.

We firmly believe that providing the team with real-life experience of live events creates a greater understanding of our customers' needs and generates increased motivation to provide a quality service. So whenever we gain new members of JFMG we try to facilitate an on-site visit. Whilst many of the team get the opportunity to go out and meet customers through our management of major events like the Formula One British Grand Prix and Glastonbury, some members get fewer chances.

So in the summer it was Beverley's (Operations Assistant - Finance) turn to go out and see how her every day work contributes to the production of an entertainment extravaganza! This time we were lucky enough to gain backstage access to one of "The Who's" gigs at Wembley Arena.

2008 Major Events Season

Each event season we nominate lead/support coordinators for the most difficult events to spectrum manage. Take a look at who will be dealing with your event this year.



Keith Brogden

Keith will be acting as lead coordinator for the **Cheltenham National Hunt; Grand National; Wimbledon; V festivals** and **Salon International**.



Simon Eley

Simon will be the lead coordinator for **The Open Championship**, **Royal Birkdale**; and the support for the **Glastonbury festival**.

Backstage we met with Simon Higgs a freelancer who Beverley had spoken to regarding the licensing for the event just days earlier. Simon had his PMSE licence as proof at the ready! The majority of use for the gig was for personal monitors and Simon provided Beverley with a full tour of the equipment; "It's really good to gain a better understanding of the environment our customers work in, and even better to be able to put a face to a name...". We were then lucky enough to hang around for the sound check and even managed to catch the show from the sound desk area.



Beverley & Amanda from JFMG with Simon Higgs



Brent James

Brent will be the lead coordinator for **Crufts; The London Marathon; and the Glastonbury festival**. Whilst he will act as support for the **F1 Grand Prix** and the **FA Cup Final**.



Philip Harris

Philip will be acting as lead coordinator for **T in the Park**, Kinross.



Prue Menmuir

Prue will act as support coordinator to **Crufts; Cheltenham National Hunt; Grand National; MOTO GP; Wimbledon** and the **Open Championship**.



Jaydev Patel

Jay will be acting as lead coordinator for the **Oxford/Cambridge Boat Race; F1 Grand Prix; World Series by Renault**, Donington and the **Le Mans Series**, Silverstone.



Craig Puddephatt

Craig will be the lead coordinator for the **FIA World Touring Car Championship**, Brands Hatch and act as support on the **Oxford/Cambridge Boat Race**



Des Vitalis

Des will act as lead coordinator for the **FA Cup Final; MOTO GP** and the **Leeds** and **Reading festivals**, and as support for **T in the Park**.

Next Steps...

Online toolkit – takes-off

Since our last edition of the Newsletter we've added to our suite of online tools, with October 2007 seeing the release of online Talkback. So customers can now buy commonly used frequencies for camera's, mics and talkback without contacting the office.

What are people saying about our online tools:

"A great way of renewing, prompt response for password request, then a very easy process to renew. Thanks"

Nottingham Audio Visual Services

The implementation of our instant login in November also means that rather than request a password from us and wait for its delivery; you can go straight to the online services and purchase what you need there and then.

Coming soon...

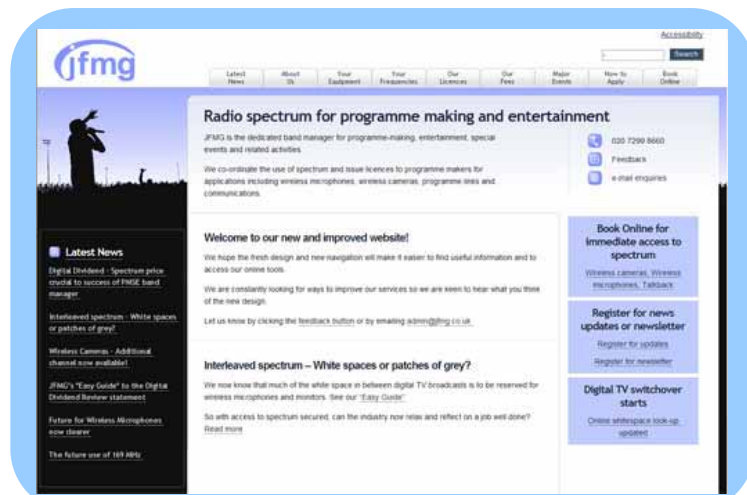
We are on track to launch a major enhancement in March. Our 'single basket' development will bring together the three separate shops for wireless cameras, wireless mics and talkback. It will enable mixed requirements to be booked in a single transaction.

Use of the online systems has gradually increased since the introduction of our first tools back in October 2006, and we have witnessed further growth in take-up at the end of last year. Online bookings are now helping us to support the increasing demand for PMSE spectrum (see panel).

"Delighted to find the Post Code and NGR search. Particularly useful to answer those questions we get outside of business hours! Brilliant - I have shown everyone"

Charter Broadcast Ltd

The reason more and more customers are moving towards our online services is that it provides an instant response, is available 24 hours a day and can, in many instances remove the need to contact our out of hours service. The next time you need frequencies, why not consider using the tools at www.ifmg.co.uk.



New & Improved JFMG Website

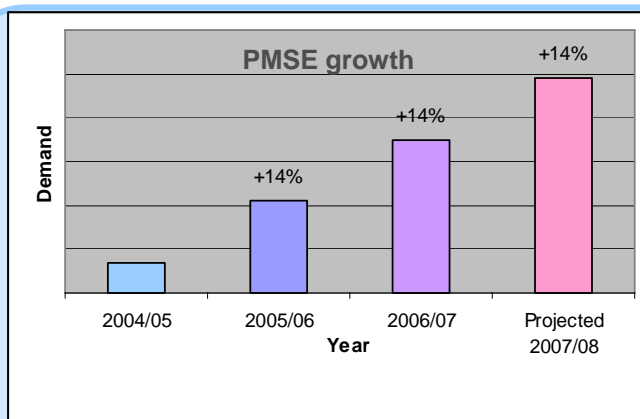
New JFMG Website

2008 marks the beginning of a new era for JFMG in many ways so we felt that a new website design would be the perfect way to reflect the new challenges ahead.

The new site went live on Tuesday 8 January and aims to achieve three things. Firstly, the overall accessibility of the information pages has been greatly improved to assist visually impaired customers. Secondly we hope that the new navigation will enable our customers to find the information they require more easily. Finally, we hope the new design projects a more professional company identity.

For now, our online tools design remains the same but we aim to roll-out the new look and feel to these pages as soon as we can.

If you have any comments regarding the new website design, or suggestions for improvement please email us at admin@ifmg.co.uk.



An analysis of our assignment database reveals that there continues to be a 14% year on year increase in PMSE spectrum demand since 2004/05