

How Large is the Broadcast & Professional TV Market?

By Douglas I. Sheer

Ever since television was invented in the 1920s, market analysts have struggled to keep tabs on how large it would grow. And, more recently to attempt to describe just how big it has become. In this endeavor, however, definition is everything. Just what do we include in our counting? And, not include? Are recording media or pro audio to be counted. And, how about Outside Broadcast vehicles and trucks? Or cabling? What about accessories like lenses and batteries? The analysts at DIS, my firm, tend to be more inclusive, rather than less inclusive, when describing the full addressable market. So, we think the answer is yes, 'all of the above.'

Clearly, broadcast TV is a core component of the professional market, but it is by no means the whole story. The International Association of Broadcast Manufacturers* (IABM), headquartered in the UK, and associated with IBC and with Screen Digest, last year, 2006, made their first attempt at describing the size and value of the global broadcast and professional marketplace. Their net finding was that the market for what they deem as the main products is \$11.6 billion USD. But, their estimates are far lower than other leading trade associations, in that they hold to a narrower view of the market. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), for example, in its outpolling of attendees, shows their annual spending plans, as of 2007, to be more than \$50 billion** a year. The National Cable Television Association*** (NCTA) that tracks domestic and international cable TV 'infrastructure and hardware' counts another 12.4 billion dollars annually, and their numbers do not overlap much of those of NAB. Simple math suggests that, once adding the 12.4 billion of NCTA to the 50 billion of NAB and you see a total of 64.4 billion. But, as they say, that's not all. That said, neither the NAB or the NCTA count as much of the event video market or necessarily the full institutional space (government, medical, educational, corporate and religious) or event video shooters. That leads DIS to see the full market as throwing off more like 75 billion USD a year. And, that indeed may be conservative.

Sizing the market is no easy chore. There is no one reliable industry source to which to go, so – depending on the definitions – one must gather a variety of data points and do some handicapping to get a full picture. One method is to consider the readership of all the world's trade and professional magazines that cater to this marketplace and the same products. There are hundreds of them. Simultaneously, one may consider the attendees reported to attend the largest trade shows, such as IBC (around 58,000 in 2007), the NAB (108,000 in 2007), IBC (around 58,000 in 2007) as well as InterBEE, Broadcast Asia, Koba, Caper/SET, The Broadcast Show and The Production Show in the UK, Satis in France, ACM/SIGGRAPH, Photokina and so on. The net of all these shows – and magazines – probably represents a good amount of – if not all – of the universe for professional products. Among them the engineers, producers, editors, camerapersons and so on. In all, DIS estimates that there are more than 140,000 separate work sites, globally, in the

broadcast and professional market and some 1.5 million individuals (or as some would put it, seats) employed in the industry, worldwide.

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Footnotes: * IABM Report 2006/2007, ** NAB website 2007, *** NCTA website and Kagan Publishing 2007