

Radio World®

USER REPORT BUYER'S GUIDE

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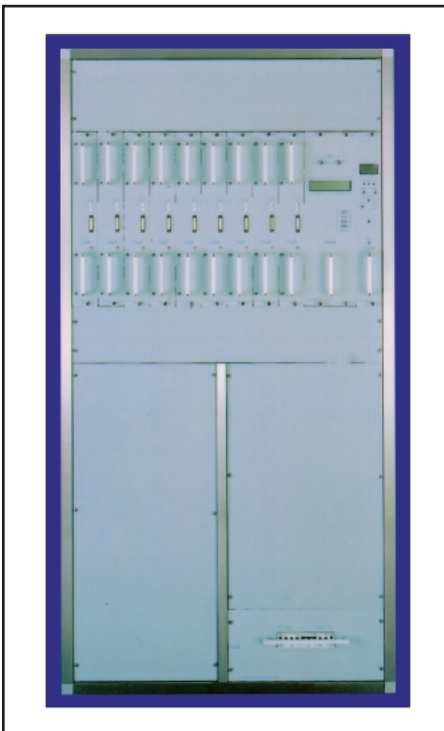
Bext Equipment Does It All

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LOS ANGELES In 1999 our group realized that we had several construction permits that were about to expire in California.

We needed to act quickly and Bext came through with quick delivery times. Everything we purchased was from the company, from stereo generators to STLs to excitors, transmitters and amplifiers of all power levels, some of them solid state and some tube type.

The installations were the most "plug and play" transmitters we have seen in many years of broadcasting. On the solid state models, with everything broadband and self contained, it literally came down to connecting the audio, the AC power line, the antenna and we were done.



Bext TFS Transmitter.

Exciting the tubes

For one of the stations, we bought a 10 kW tube system. The Bext 10 kW transmitter we chose employs a well known grounded grid 3CX15000A7 Eimac Tube, which is actually well oversized for 10,000 watts, ensuring a much longer tube life than usual.

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The exciter is directly programmable from the front panel and the whole transmitter can be easily moved to any frequency on site, if necessary. Installation and power-up were a very quick and simple procedure, requiring only a few minutes of fine-tuning the PA for our antenna. We later discovered that installation was as easy for each of the items we purchased from Bext.

The broadband design, in addition to being practical, is one reason why the Bext gear sounds so transparent.

Our little network of stations essentially was going to operate by repeating each other's programming by FM-to-FM retransmission. Therefore, quality reception was mandatory to preserve good audio through the many steps of the chain.

We were impressed with the performance of the FM receivers that are inside the translators that we installed. One of the stations, although licensed as a Class A, operates essentially as a giant translator.

This station had all the odds stacked against it—for example: the FM receive and transmit frequencies are only 1 MHz apart, the incoming FM receive signal comes in weak from quite a distance and,

to top it off, the transmit signal is 3,000 watts of FM power, right there in the same building and with receive and transmit antennas 40 feet apart.

That would be enough to totally overload the front end of most translators that we know. Not Bext's. The company has this neat one-box translator, called the

HPT, available in several power levels, that allows the user to dial in receive and transmit frequencies right there from the front panel, just like all the other Bext transmitters and STLs.

This HPT translator's front end was able to handle the highest-power translator-like installation—3,000 watts of raw FM transmitter power at 1 MHz apart with no problems. The folks at Bext told us that they had some customers who were able to re-broadcast even first-adjacent channel (200 kHz) signals, albeit with careful antenna positioning.

Clear sailing

Our 10 kW operates on a similar translator setup with more reasonable channel separation. It works perfectly. Good equipment alone wouldn't be enough if not backed by a company that is eager to help before. Working with Bext is a broadcaster's dream. The company is not too new or too small to make you apprehensive, but it's not too old or too big to be set in its ways or unwilling to do special arrangements if necessary.

Everyone was always willing to go the extra mile every time we needed anything out of the ordinary, and we could easily reach every one of them, from the salespeople to the engineers to the upper management at all hours if we needed to.

I honestly don't know of any other company that could have met all our requirements, some of which were out of the ordinary at times, as effortlessly as Bext did.