

Bext Cruising on Route 66

A User Report on the Bext XL 3500 Transmitter by Tom Erickson - KJZK-FM in Kingman, AZ.

My name is Tom Erickson. I am the Director of Engineering for the K-JAZZ Radio Network and Station Manager of KJZK-FM, a new Non-Commercial Educational station in Kingman, Arizona, located on Route 66 about an hour from Las Vegas. KJZK-FM covers three counties, three states, two time zones (in season) and numerous prairie-dog colonies in Western Arizona.

The K-JAZZ Radio Network serves central and western Arizona with stations in Kingman, Williams, Flagstaff and Prescott broadcasting in partnership with PRI Member Station KAWC at Arizona Western College in Yuma, Arizona. The mission of the station group is to serve the needs of the residents of rural Arizona with a focus on Community College education and programming. The stations broadcast public radio programming, local and regional news and information, along with an extensive lineup of locally-produced, community-based programs.

In 2009 we found ourselves in the market for a new transmitter for the KJZK-FM project. We selected a BEXT XL-3500 FM Transmitter (3500 W) which we installed at a transmitter site that is co-located with a Frontier Communications/Mohave Wireless Cellular site 18 miles east of Kingman in a remote area atop Blake Ranch Mountain. When we received the transmitter we were surprised by how easy it was to install. From uncrating to on-air it took less than 10 minutes. The extremely compact 4 rack space size integrated nicely into the small area available inside the cell-site building.

KJZK-FM's antennas are at the top of the Mohave Cellular 200 foot tower. We use a 2-bay PSI directional array at a licensed power of 4.5 kW. Like most remote sites it's a long, dusty trail to the top. Sometimes we can get there, often times we cannot. Weather often makes it impossible to even attempt the trip, so we are pleased with the performance of the BEXT XL-3500 transmitter inasmuch as it needs no recurring maintenance whatsoever.

The XL-3500 is sterling engineering. The best way to describe the unit is to compare it to my wife's favorite Prego Pasta Sauce, "It's All In There!" - the exciter, the stereo generator, the audio processor, the power amp....and potentially a couple of field mice at this location, all in an enclosure small enough to take up only 4 rack spaces. AND, in this installation it works nicely on 220V single phase drawing less than 20 amps per leg. No messy external power requirements....so easy you can go down to Wal-Mart and buy it by the can.

We evaluated dozens of potential transmitters for this location and know of no other unit capable of doing what the BEXT XL-3500 Transmitter does. It's practical, extremely compact, user friendly and value-priced. We also noticed that it has excellent electrical efficiency.

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Some notable quotes from important people we know:

KJZK's contract maintenance engineer is **Mark Parthe** at Arizona Broadcast Service in Prescott, Arizona. Parthe began installing BEXT products on a referral from **Dennis Gilliam**, owner of **SIGNALS RADIO, LLC** in Phoenix and Director of Engineering at KJZZ/KBAQ. Gilliam is recognized as one of the premier broadcast C.E.'s in the Western states having used the BEXT line in many applications over the years. Gilliam has built two pioneering HD projects in the Phoenix market and is an authority on BARIX VOIP products which are also in use at the K-JAZZ Network stations. On Gilliam's advice Parthe installed BEXT gear at three of the K-JAZZ Network studio and transmitter sites.

According to Parthe, "BEXT design is cutting-edge, the product quality is astounding and it's amazingly reliable and maintenance-free. My clients are pleased because BEXT is easy on the power meter, and the best part is it's truly affordable" (and that leaves more money for the engineer). "BEXT tech-support has been available anytime we've had a question".

But, Parthe quips, "I'm not making many trips to the transmitter sites these days and that's cutting into my billable hours big time!"

All in all, we are overwhelmingly pleased with the BEXT XL 3500 and recommend the line for broadcast budgets of any size and requirement. For our upcoming projects we are preparing purchase orders for more BEXT products, including new transmitters at several other power levels available from BEXT inventory.

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K-JAZZ Radio Network

More information on the K-JAZZ Radio Network can be found at www.kjza.org.
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More information on the BEXT line of Transmitters can be found at www.bext.com.
Or, call toll free **888-B-E-X-T-I-N-C**