

Brazil SET2002 Congress

Brazilian television and communications engineers, under the auspices of SET*, held their national convention in San Paulo, from July 31 to August 2, 2002. In response to a invitation from the SET, Dr. Takayuki Ito from STRL gave a speech introducing NHK's latest technologies, concentrating on the research exhibited at this year's STRL Open House.

At the opening of the convention, Brazil's Vice Minister of Communications, Mr. Mauricio Abreu, gave an address in which he stated that a broadcasting system, capable of HDTV, SDTV, and mobile terminal services, should be selected by the end of this year. A decision on a digital terrestrial broadcasting system for Brazil is imminent. An enthusiastic discussion took place, with reports on American, European, and Japanese broadcasting systems being given by representatives from their respective countries. The SET Business forum, which was attended by approximately 300 people, also saw a lively discussion take place regarding the business aspects of Brazilian digital broadcasting. On the last day of the convention, Dr. Ito presented a report on experimental digital terrestrial broadcasting in Japan, introducing the Japanese ISDB-T system as the most technically superior of the systems under consideration.



* : Sociedade Brasileira de Engenharia de Televisão e Telecomunicações (Brazilian Society of Television and Telecommunications Engineering)

ABU Researcher Arrives at STRL

With the aim of becoming a more internationally oriented laboratory, STRL has accepted researchers from ABU (Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union) participating institutions, since 2000. So far, five visiting researchers have completed their one-year research terms. As for the fiscal 2002 program, Mr. Yogendra Trihan from All India Radio arrived in July. His research is related to object-based multimedia processing.



I wish to express my sincere gratitude to NHK for giving me such a wonderful opportunity to work at STRL. As a visiting researcher, I am conducting research in the area of object-based multimedia processing in STRL's Advanced Audio and Video Coding (AAVC) division.

The project aims at extraction of semantic content from multimedia data. The technology has applications in future broadcast services, including data broadcasting and interaction on the Internet. Till now, I have learnt about the various media streaming technologies developed by NHK and have done software simulations related to extraction of important data from multimedia objects. This work will be quite useful for data broadcasting in India. In All India Radio (AIR), this technology can be used in interactive broadcasting for efficient bandwidth utilization.

I am thankful to my colleagues in the AAVC division for their constant support and encouragement, and to my advisor, in particular, with whom I have fruitful discussions.

The elegant formality of Japanese manners and the collective participation of workers in Japan Inc. inspire me.

Field Trip to STRL for Elementary and Middle School Students

Let's take a look! The world of the latest broadcasting technology -

STRL is committed to making its laboratories accessible to the community. To demonstrate this commitment, STRL, in cooperation with the Institute of Electronics, Information and Communications Engineers and the National Science Museum, hosted a field trip for elementary and middle school students from Setagaya ward and other areas on June 22. The goal of this trip was to heighten the children's interest in the latest broadcasting technology, by providing simple, interesting explanations of technologies such as digital broadcasting and the ultrahigh-definition system developed by STRL. Close to 80 people, including guardians and children, visited STRL during the field trip. Their day started with an explanation of "digital broadcasting." This was followed by a laboratory tour in which the children could listen to their own heartbeat using an "insect microphone" and could view computer graphic butterflies flying around them in a "virtual studio." It was a very enjoyable experience for both the children and the STRL researchers. The children raised questions and expressed the kind of impressions that are unique to children, such as "What does Hi-Vision mean?" and "I was really surprised when I heard the sound of a snail eating a carrot."



Summer Vacation Public Event: Investigating the Mechanism of Radio

On August 24, STRL held a special event entitled "Investigating the Mechanism of Radio," for elementary and secondary school students and their parents who reside in Setagaya ward. This event was designed to deepen the exchange between STRL and Setagaya-ward residents, while helping children learn about radio waves by making a radio themselves. A total of 24 persons participated in the event, including children ranging from 10 to 14 years old and their parents.



The event featured a lecture by an STRL researcher who talked about the history and mechanism of radio broadcasting. It was followed by an electronics workshop in which the students actually made a radio, comprising an IC and other electronic parts, by themselves. Although for most of the children, this was their first experience to make a radio, they all succeeded in making radios that could receive broadcasts by the end of the workshop, with support from STRL researchers and their parents. Using the "home-made" radio, every child then conducted a quick experiment, to measure the receiving range of their radio with STRL's measuring equipment. After the workshop, they visited the radio anechoic room to see the kind of radio research that goes on at STRL.

They left with positive impressions, making comments such as "it was fun," and "I got to learn a little about radio waves."