

## Pioneering Efforts Continue In Digital Television

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Recently, Triveni Digital provided support for the group with their SkyScraper system providing master control with a server environment for collecting, carouselling and scheduling data for transmission. It also includes appropriate ATSC reception devices that can play HDTV, separate data from the transmission stream and play additional file types such as MP3 or MPEG-4.

To develop some demonstrable content, Ryerson's Interactive Broadcast Learning Lab is mentoring the development of an interactive content group. The group includes private sector participants Pangaea New Media, MarbleMedia, Stonehenge, 4th Wall Media and CTV, along with faculty from the School of Radio and Television Arts and staff from the Rogers Communications Centre. Many of these companies and individuals participated with Ryerson in developing iTV content in past research efforts. The group is currently concentrating its authoring efforts on MPEG-4 software loaned to the project by Envivio Inc. MPEG-4 is a new interactive streaming technology that can stream interactive video to cell phones, PDA's, networked computers and digital set-top boxes. It seems a logical choice given increased interest in MPEG-4 from broadcast technology companies and the fact that it maintains its interactivity across a variety of information appliances, including set-top boxes.

## Ryerson Plays Host To Innovations In Digital Television

In mid October Ryerson played host to the "Innovations In Digital Television" portion of the CDTV-ATSC seminars on digital television broadcasting. The seminars organized by the Toronto CDTV test transmitter group (see story page 3) brought together Toronto's broadcasting community who's interest in digital television had grown with recent CRTC announcements that provide a framework for the advancement of digital television in Canada.

The three-day event, which was attended by numerous Ryerson faculty and staff, was centered at the downtown Holiday Inn with simultaneous sessions held on the last day at the hotel and Oakham House at Ryerson. A broad range of topics was covered ranging between engineering principles of digital television, through high definition production techniques to datacasting and interactive television.

Brad Fortner of the Rogers Communications Centre organized the daylong event at Ryerson. He also chaired the afternoon session titled "Authoring Content For Interactive Services". "The conference organizers wanted this particular session to be held at Ryerson for a couple of reasons," commented Fortner. "The committee was keen to have student participation in the switch to digital television and they recognized the knowledge base that has been built up around interactive television content with our Interactive Broadcasting Learning Lab."



*Brad Fortner chaired session on Authoring Content For Interactive Television Services*

**"Students add a level of energy to these kind of sessions making them very worthwhile to do."**

The afternoon session featured presentations on authoring iTV content for set top boxes, iTV authoring within the television production workflow and opportunities to deliver other forms of media via digital television transmission. Presenters for the session came from far away as Korea and the afternoon featured the first North American demonstration of a DASE iTV authoring system developed for terrestrial use.

Approximately forty students attended from the school of Radio and Television Arts Communicating Using New Media Class, a class that studies the emerging field of interactive television. "We really hit the mark in this session," Fortner added. "It was great to see interaction between our students and some of the leaders in the iTV field. Having these kind of events on campus makes it easy for our busy students to attend. The students add a level of energy to these kind of sessions making them very worthwhile to do." he concluded.