

I was contacted by the FCC and asked for any ideas I might have about accelerating the transition from analog to digital TV. Since anything I write to the FCC is on the public record anyway, I thought I would share it here.... I haven't talked much about HDTV in this blog, and it's about time I started!

I do have a solution for the FCC for the transition to HD and getting back the TV broadcast spectrum that is cheaper, far simpler, and would accelerate the give back faster than anything so far proposed, and I'm sure no one has thought of it.

More than 70% of homes already have Digital TV monitors. They are called PC monitors. All have RGB input, and 100% of them work with HD programming as well as digital programming and with conversion analog programs. CRT based models sell for under 200 bucks now, and can be had for 99 bucks in some cases. Companies are dumping them to make room for LCD.

The only challenge would be getting ATSC tuners to attach to them.

ATSC, stand-alone tuners can be purchased for \$399 full retail today. That's unit 1. You can get the price down quickly under 100 bucks no sweat. Or you can play off cable vs. satellite and offer RGB converters for 100 bucks or less to connect to the back of Set Top Boxes that don't already have them.

So you can have the spectrum auction, borrow against the money to buy down the cost of the tuners, place the tuners and adapters in the marketplace, and away we go. More importantly, you also have the political capital that allows this effort to dovetail with placing computers and conquering the digital divide

Of course the NAB will freak out, saying that people will hate losing their analog TVs, however that can be dealt with. Put an SVHS output in the new tuner and you could watch the digital programming through a 49 dollar VCR, DVD or on a TV that supported SVHS, and with a little bit of work, you could do the same with composite output.

Make sense?