## ▶ Lynch

LYNCH. The name invokes—to me—telephone carrier equipment. I've used various models of Lynch carrier first built in the 1950s. Twenty-two years finds me still using 50 volt on the plates B630 FM carrier. The B630 is impervious to lightning and high voltage. Paired with companders the performance is first quality on runs up to 45 miles of open wire.

Lynch. Up to two years ago I even had an old B28 system from Lucin to Grouse Creek. One circuit operating sideband on 7.5 kc was toll and the other was configured for subscriber use. Those units were ac operated and had four or five 6SN7 dual triodes which literally would run up to 10 years before the tubes needed replacement. For you younger guys, this triode had to 8 to 10 units capable of being used as an oscillator, mixer or amplifier—take your pick. Brute force filters and solid construction.

Lynch. The name tags said, "San Francisco" or "Reno." No longer. They've been bought out like scores of other familiar names we all identify with. That's business. Gone. I personally think it's a mistake to lose the "good will" that comes with honorable and well-established names. I'm gonna cry.

The new owner is Alcatel, Lynch's minority partner for some years. The French General Electric. They also bought the ITT product line. They are nice people, and are working hard to merge a varied product line and introduce new products.

So they were faced with a decision. Which name wins out when you have three of something to merge?

I don't get too emotional about losing the ITT name—it had too many connotations for me.

I mean, till Ralston bought Continental Bakery, the fine old telephone company called ITT also made your bread. Now Wonder Bread comes from a dog food company.

Progress.

Until 1989, Alcatel's advertising has been largely to provide name recognition, a normal practice when entering a new market. GE gets more mileage from its institutional advertising because it has been around since it was founded by Thomas Edison. We pretty well know what GE makes . . .

. . . everything but telephone equipment—although GE did take a fling at PCM carrier equipment back when it was first developed. Wescom took over the line when GE did not sell enough to justify its continued involvement. But it was good stuff, and had some of the best manuals ever published about telephone equipment.

But back to Alcatel, one of the largest global suppliers of telephone gear, still establishing identity in the U.S. I am told they have things well enough under control to now be specific and we are beginning to see some detailed technical advertising, with more ahead.

I'd really like to see that. Maybe they make some fiber optic terminals at a good price?

Then we little guys won't have to think we lost a good and valuable friend in Lynch.

Maybe we will find Alcatel will resume production of the excellent small PCM repeater housing built by Lynch. I say this as Range Telephone tells how the only skinny route repeater housing now available is the little ITT unit Alcatel offers, and theirs leaks in Montana blizzards.

Now that Alcatel knows this, I am sure this will get fixed.

## ▶ Fiber stuff

Danny Spencer told me he plowed in some 20 miles of four fiber cable awhile back. Cost of the cable was under 59 cents per meter. How come I didn't know that?

That is cheaper than copper. So the question is, what are "they" doing for us little guys?

Not much.

So I started to figure. Lessee . . . 59 cents per meter. What's that per foot. Well, say 18 cents per foot. OK—what's it cost to get the square waves stuffed into the laser at one end and back out of the glass at the other?

When did you last see an ad that told you how much something that did this cost?

I called around. Telco Systems (Norwood, Mass.) suggests the cost is about twelve grand per goesinta, or goesouta same price.

That's $24,000 to get the PCM into—and back out of—the pipe. Then you still have to buy the goodies to get it down to individual channels if it's subscriber carrier. Or the costs to get the PCM into your switch, or to individual trunks.

And since few of us have the luxury of being able to run toll with no subscriber circuits, we have to figure we are going to plow at least a 12 pair cable in the same trench as the fiber.

That copper cable will handle the local loops along the toll route—and subscriber carrier out as far as it can to get the circuits out there for local distribution.

Single cable plow costs run what? Say 20 cents a foot. Add another nickel for the second cable for subscriber use. And the cost of the cable.

From the pure cable standpoint, a mix of skinny route fiber with skinny route copper is viable only when the cost of the laser conversion from PCM to light is below $3000 per DS1/DS4. With hundred-dollar lasers, I see little reason why the prices are not 75% less than they are now, other than production quantities have not permitted it. Get costs down and they sell more. But they have to sell more to get the costs down. Catch-22.

When the first manufacturer decides to stimulate the market by chopping their prices—let me know. But move fast. I am plowing in 150 miles of cable soon, and it's looking like 25 pair by 22 gauge screened cable all the way with PCM repeaters every 7000 feet.

For the cost of that cable, it appears we could put in three or four fibers in one cable and parallel 12 pair for local distribution. But if the prices I've mentioned are typical for lasers, the use of fiber for skinny route stuff is not feasible.

Step right up folks, it's only a nickel, halffa dime. Five thin pennies. Right this way. Who's first? There are a lot of us with the desire and the money. You can compete but aren't.

Reason, I suspect, is nobody is giving much thought to the skinny route market.

So don't say I didn't tell ya. ■