

BACKGROUND

Local television stations in the US are either Owned and Operated by major networks, such as ABC, CBS or NBC, or they are independently owned, but Affiliated by contract to a network. The networks supply local stations with content. Local television stations typically produce local news and weather.

ROLE OF RTS

RTS supplies the intercom system, typically a Zeus III or a Cronus, as well as keypanels, partyline equipment and IFBs. Figure 1 shows an example of a local television station.

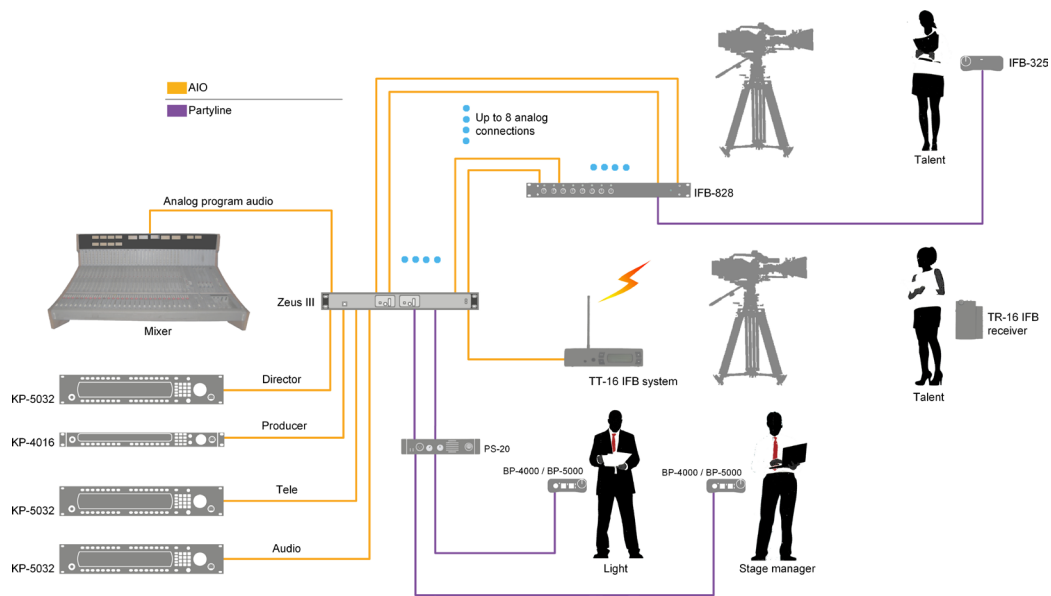


Figure 1. Small television station, overall view

DESCRIPTION

The Zeus III at the center of Figure 1 is the central audio router. Analog program audio comes in from a mixer. Four keypanels are shown here for Director, Producer, Teleprompter, and Audio. A light technician and a stage manager each use wired partyline. In this example, there are two “talents” – one is using a wired IFB, the IFB-325, and one is using a wireless IFB, the TR-16. An IFB is a listen-only device. On-air talents typically have an ear-piece, in which they hear the program audio, also referred to as non-interrupt audio. However, when the on-air talent needs to hear an important message – the interrupt audio – the non-interrupt audio is dimmed or muted, to allow the important message to be heard. The message may be ‘going to commercial break in ten seconds’ or ‘wrap up your interview within 30 seconds’. Figure 2 shows how the IFB works.

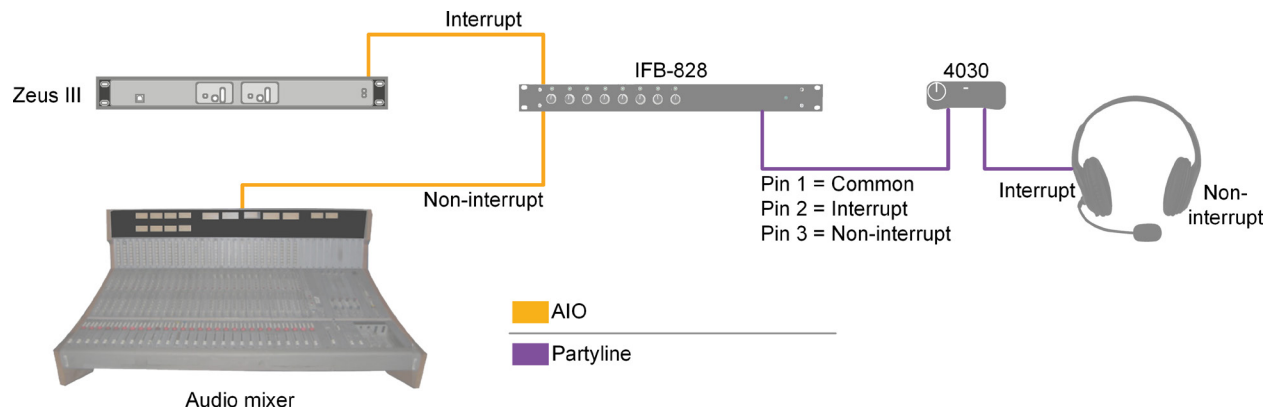


Figure 2. IFB - overview of principle of operation

In this example, non-interrupt audio comes from the audio mixer. The interrupt audio – which may be coming from the producer or director, is coming from the Zeus III. The two audio sources converge in the IFB-828. In the RTS two-wire format, three wires are available. Interrupt and non-interrupt audio are transmitted on different pins. The IFB-325 is a passive device that allows the user to control the headset volume. Interrupt audio is fed to the headset on one ear, and the non-interrupt on the other. A wireless IFB system is also available. The transmitter is called TT-16 and the receiver is TR-16. The principle is the same but there is no wire to worry about. TT-16 / TR-16 operate in the VHF spectrum.