Zeitschrift: Technische Mitteilungen / Schweizerische Post-, Telefon- und Telegrafenbetriebe = Bulletin technique / Entreprise des postes, téléphones et télégraphes suisses = Bollettino tecnico / Azienda delle poste, dei telefoni e dei telegrafi svizzeri

Herausgeber: Schweizerische Post-, Telefon- und Telegrafenbetriebe

Band: 53 (1975)

Heft: 2

Rubrik: Summaries and notices

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Summaries and Notices

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Problems of Pattern Recognition in Automatic Letter Sorting

G. Meyer-Broetz and J. Schuermann, Ulm/Donau

In large post offices semi-automatic letter sorting installations are used where the operator adds the postcode on outgoing mail and the coded street name on incoming items. Having outlined the requirements for automatic coding positions, the authors describe a functional pattern developed by AEG Telefunken for the German Federal Post Office. It enables currently used types of print to be read, which are found on about 70% of all letter post items. Details are given of pattern recognition problems and their solution. Individual characters are classified by prognostication procedure; for address interpretation and comparison an index of place and street names is used, differentiation in case of ambiguity being achieved by means of the postcode.

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Evaluation Criteria for Switching Systems

W. Grundbacher, Berne

The author attempts to list the criteria enabling telecomms organizations to assess the quality and suitability of new switching systems and the features they offer.

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Swiss PTT Data Communication Facilities

H.-P. Lutz, Berne

The article describes the PTT facilities currently available for data communication and outlines future developments in this fast-growing service.

News Items

Telephone

In December an order was placed with IBM for the **implementation of stage I of Swiss PTT's TERCO project** (TElephone Rationalization by COmputer).

On 2/3 December **trunk call metering** in the about 1000 Swiss exchanges was adapted to **new, increased charges.**

Between Wengen and Zurich a **temporary 7 GHz PCM microwave link** with 30 speech channels and an active spare channel over the Jungfrau/Albis relay stations was made available for the **Lauberhorn international skiing event** from 11–12 January.

In December Switzerland opened **additional satellite circuits** with Australia (1), USA (6), Japan (3) and Iran (2).

Telegraph, Telex

Gentex service has been opened between **Bucharest and Zurich** (ATECO). Switzerland now operates Gentex links to 25 countries in Europe and the Mediterranean Basin.

The world's first local **video distribution network for stock exchange intelligence** has come into operation at Berne. The system, which has been built for Telekurs AG, provides for continuous transmission of data from the Berne stock exchange to seven different banks over an analog-to-digital converter and special coaxial cable carrying standard video signals in the 50 Hz–10 MHz range. Similar systems are to be opened in Zurich, Geneva, Lausanne, Lugano and Chiasso later this year.

Radio, Television

On 19 December 13 **TV translators** came into operation in various parts of Switzerland. At the end of 1974 the network comprised **324 stations with 583 transmitters and translators** attached to chain I (328) II (141) and III (114).

A third **presentation suite** has been provided for the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation's **Zurich-Seebach television studio.** It is equipped with announcer's camera, two VTR units, colour slide scanner and vision control desk.

Miscellaneous

Swiss PTT has prepared a new **specification for telecommunication buildings** with a view to achieving a uniform standard of construction throughout the country.

Plans have been worked out for conversion and extension of the **Basle pneumatic tube system.** A network of larger tubes of 100 mm diameter is to be laid whose length will ultimately total about 60 km. The system will be used jointly by banks, post offices, telegraph and the giro office.

A further 3 banks have been connected to **Zurich's automatically controlled pneumatic tube system,** increasing the number of stations to 29.

Swiss PTT has been asked by the Iraki Post Office to examine the postal engineering solutions proposed in tenders for the erection of a **mechanized mail distribution centre at Bagdad,** which were entered in an international competition.