



Ham Radio Must Die

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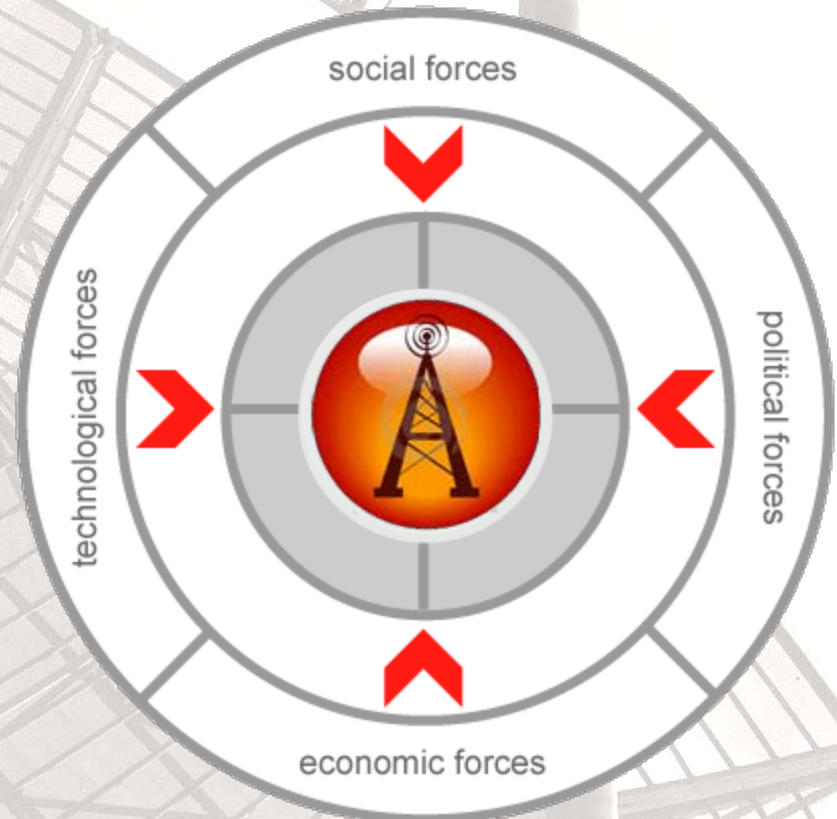
Pacificon 2010

Say What?

- Title works on several levels
- “Some self-defeating aspects of Ham Radio must die, so that the hobby can evolve and continue”
 - Too verbose, doesn't fit into the Pacificon Forum grid very well
- Some people in fact want our spectrum and would like us to go away

What this talk is

- **Strategic analysis**
 - **Culture/Social**
 - **Technological**
 - **Political**
 - **Economic**



Who am I?

- Majority of career in telecom
- President, Wireless Communications Alliance (non-profit)
- Consultant (occasional-profit)
 - Organizational development
 - Strategic planning
- Licensed 2006
 - Not exactly QCWA

Shift Happens (Video)

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cL9Wu2kWwSY>
- "So what does it all mean?"
- Original by Karl Fisch & Scott McLeod
- Redone for Sony/BMG conference
- Quiz: How can we guess the year?
 - Answer: MySpace was still relevant

Cultural Change

- **Then:**
 - The “good ole days”
 - Homebrew
 - Few choices



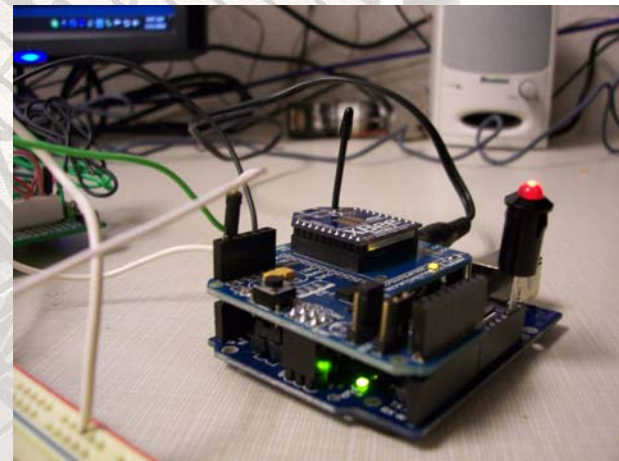
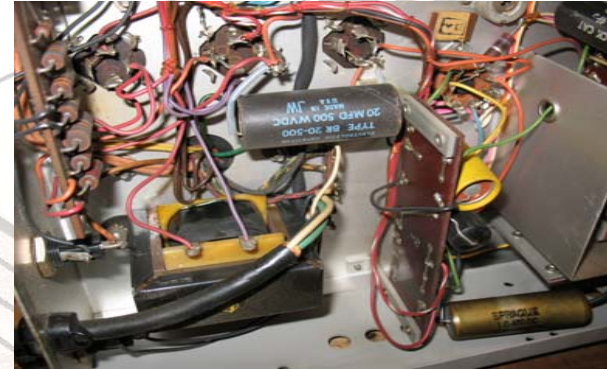
- **Now:**
 - 21st Century
 - Consumer
 - Myriad of choices



Technological Change

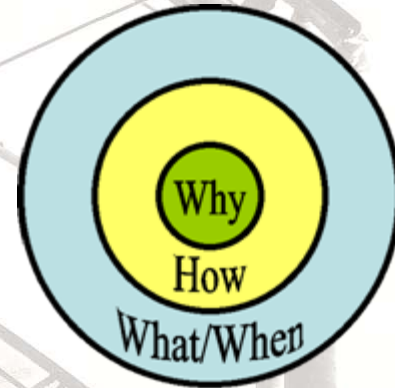
- Ham vs Commercial Technology (then)
- Maker, circa 1960
 - Licensed bands

- Ham vs Commercial Technology (now)
- Maker, circa 2010
 - Unlicensed bands



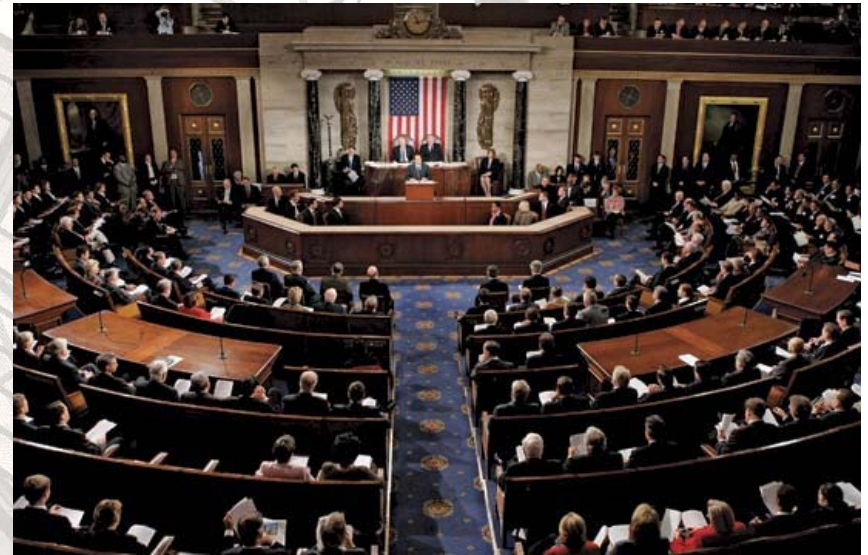
Reality

- Why amateur radio?
 - Emergency communications? Yes, but....
 - FCC says we're not an emergency service..?
- We're never going back, and thus...
- Ham Radio must adapt -- or die...



Political landscape

- Huge debt load
- Can't print more money
- Need to shore up money already printed with resources
- Land, water, oil, minerals
 - Doh! Can't drill for oil
- Aha! Spectrum is a resource...



Spectrum policy

- **FCC**
 - Focused on National Broadband Plan & RebootFCC.gov
- **CTIA, late 2009, asks for 800 MHz of spectrum for mobile**
- **Just prior to CES iPhone sales stopped in NYC, hipsters freak out**
- **Genachowsky warns of a spectrum crisis**

Freakanomics

- US Population = 307MM
- Total amateur allocation btwn 300 Mhz and 10 GHz = 635 MHz
- US Licensed Amateurs = 694,346 (Jun-2010)

FREAKONOMICS

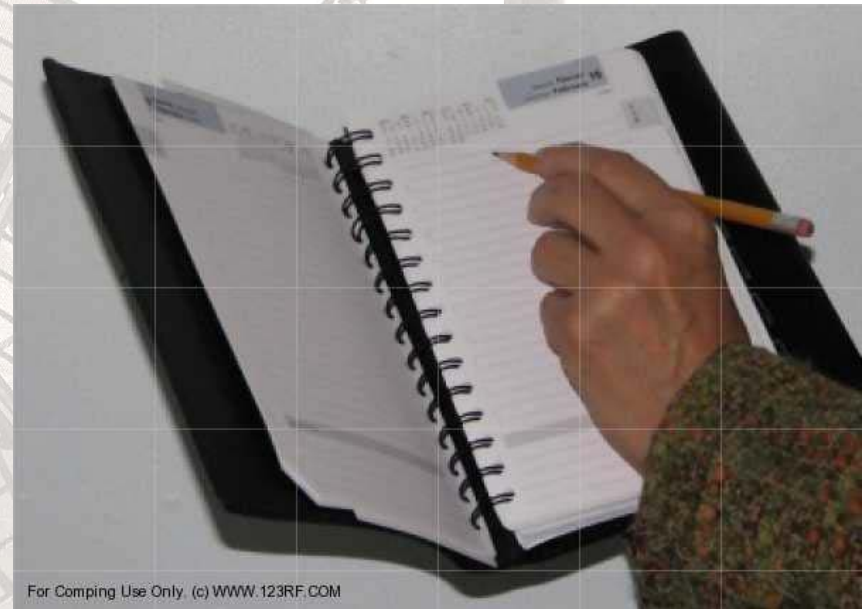


Freakanomics

- US Public Debt = \$9 Trillion
- Value of allocation at \$1/MHz-POPs = \$194.9BB, 2.2% of P.Debt, \$281K per ham
- Value of allocation at \$2/MHz-POPs = \$389.9BB, 4.3% of P.Debt, \$562K per ham
 - Are you returning at least a quarter-million dollars in value for your spectrum?

Enemies List

- Kerry (S.649), Waxman (HR.3125) - Spectrum Inventory Acts (Passed House, no vote in Senate)
- CTIA & membership
- Any lawmaker looking for resources to shore up or reduce debt
- Ourselves
 - Say what...?



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How are (some) hams killing ham radio?

- Rigid insistence that older technology will always be better
- Public image of the “typical” ham
- Failure (in many cases) to provide a place for youth culture to thrive



Bright spots

- **Kudos to ARRL**
 - Understanding and supporting local efforts by Mike NE6RD to link Maker Faire with Amateurs
 - Getting Diana Eng onto PR Committee
 - New website
- **Silicon Valley hams innovating**
 - Chris K6DBG Linksys iGate
 - Greg NV6G OpenAPRS for iPhone

How are (some) hams killing ham radio?

- Culture of resistance to new technologies
 - Guys in HRO vociferously degrading modern rigs compared to a Drake TR-7A
 - Never-ending comments by contesters in logs about how much they hate Phone – after working 36 hours in a Phone contest
 - My favorite: Guys who yamble on for hours on 75m Phone about how the demise of CW testing is killing the hobby

How are (some) hams killing ham radio?

- **Culture of exclusion**
 - **Contest pecking order**
 - **Contest bandplan: CW > RTTY > everything else**
 - **QRO uber alles, QRP and weak-signal modes need not apply**
 - **CW ops who refuse to slow down**
 - **Ops who refuse to work "No-Coders"**
 - **Defining amateur radio as the core to which new technology must confirm, vs the reverse**

What does the future hold?

During the course of this presentation...



67 babies were born in the **US**

- Compare: 36,540 (proj) new hams in 2010
- ONE new ham every 15 minutes (Ratio of 201:1)
- How do we decrease this gap?

What does the future hold?

The amount of new
technical information
is doubling every 2 years...

- Contrast w/ NARCC decision to freeze 2m bandplan for 3 years
 - Message: New technology need not apply

OK, now what?

- Continue efforts to tie to Maker movement as a tactic to bridge into youth
- Figure out an answer to “Why Ham Radio?” that aligns with FCC and youth culture
- Do a better job at telling our success stories at the local level
- Look for ways to apply ham radio
- Be prepared for change – it’s coming!