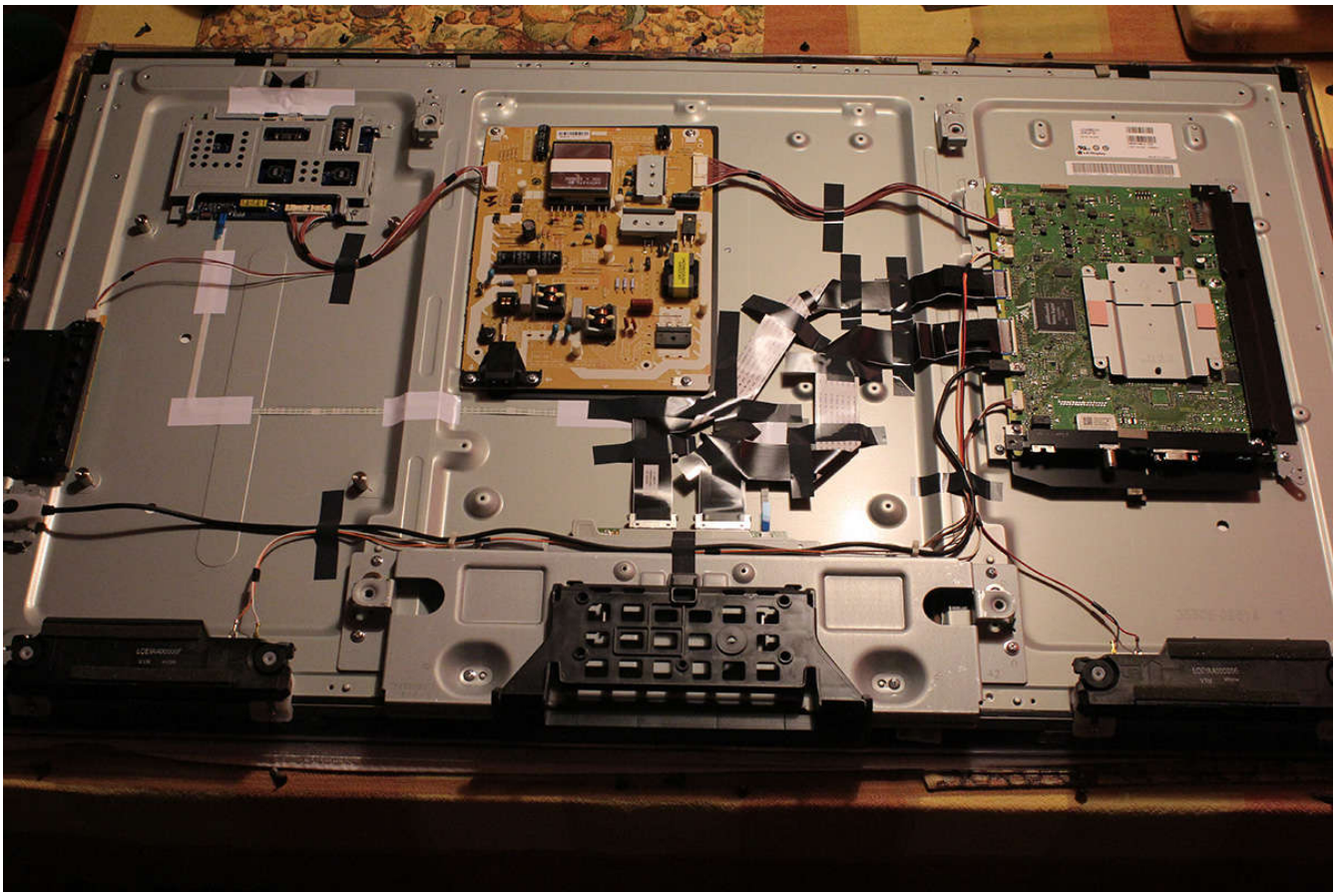
RAKO STUDIOS

An analog HDTV proposal from 1988

In 1988 EETimes printed an article, a politician calling for a 5-dollar tax on every new TV in order to fund HDTV research.



A I wrote EETimes this letter.

5 dollar tax on TVs to go to HDTV research? Yeah. Great idea. While we're at it let's levy a 5 dollar tax on cars to favor peddle in Detroit. How about a 5 dollar tax on phones to pump up our post-monopoly telecommunications industry? Don't forget a five dollar tax on shoes to help give our cobblers a head start on the latest technology.

We really should institute a 5 dollar tax on the shirts on our backs to bring our ailing textile industry up to world class standards. What about that study done at Stanford last month? It shows students prefer the look and feel of Japanese condoms. A 5 dollar tax is definitely in order to keep abreast of this elastic market.

I can see it now. We'll pattern the HDTV project after our latest government "BIG DESIGN" the B-1 bomber. It won't matter if it works. As long as it has 435 components.

One for each congressional district. We can finally utilize SEMITECH, an earlier example of government subsidized electronics. We can have them design a chip for the new TV. It will be a 74AHLP897. Yep, an Advanced High Level Pork barrel shifter. Its a good thing the Japanese don't have a free market or they'd really be kicking our butts.

There may be an alternative. The TV channel utilization is not saturated in any U.S. city. Let a broadcaster purchase one of the available UHF channels. They could then broadcast the same program on both channels. One channel would be the odd rasters of the existing 1000+ line resolution studio quality image. The other channel would display the even rasters. Both would be NTSC signals able to be displayed on any TV. The double exposure would be beneficial in itself as our education system cannot seem to produce graduates capable of comprehending a TV GUIDE. An HDTV would have two receivers which could be user programmed to associate the two common channel numbers or this information could be encoded in the vertical blanking interval. The TV would then interlace the rasters from the two channels to recreate the studio quality image.

Send a little of that billion dollars to Silicon Valley. Big John Massa (my mentor) and myself will call up Jim Williams, Bob Pease and a few other ringers and we'll ship product in six months. Then the aristocrats in Washington can argue about the best way to implement 2000 raster photo quality TV with our tax money. I could watch Addams Family reruns in studio quality by Christmas. Never mind. I just checked my 1988 receipts. Seems I didn't buy any Congressmen, so don't expect this plan to be implemented.