

Summaries and notices

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Presentation of Characters and Pictures by Videotex

B. Zürcher, Berne

At present several methods are tested to utilize the small channel bandwidth of the telephone circuits for videotex. These are: traditional method of character coding, the geometrical presentation which draws each picture on the screen or the photographic presentation which profited by the development of the facsimile technique. The next generation of subscriber sets will finally demonstrate how much the freely changeable characters improve the presentation of pictures.

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Gas-operated Coach RH 580-25 for Postal Passenger Service

U. Bretscher, Berne

Although the Swiss postal coaches use turbo-diesel engines that are optimum in view of environmental protection and fuel economy there are still alternative fuels of better controlled air pollution. To determine the related technology and the economic feasibility thereof the latest Saurer coach model was outfitted with a liquid gas engine and was subjected to strict operating tests.

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A Packet Post Demonstration Plant at the Swiss Transport Museum

A. Grunder, Berne

A plant demonstrates the transport and the separation system of the packet post at the postal exhibition hall of the Swiss Transport Museum at Lucerne. It looks as if the packets were separated on the basis of their colour but there is a bar code written on their addresses which is converted to electrical pulses by the optical reader. A process controller guides the packet into the proper slide by the correct guard post. The trolley conveyor simply demonstrates the transport of the packets and the letter bags. The manual fastening of the bags and the separation by the automatic release cannot be shown. The packet separating plant and the bag conveyor are operating automatically. The required high quality standard asks for a precise coordination of the mechanics, the control system, the packets and the bags.

News Items

Telephone

Since May 1982 the PTT has been supplying the customers with compact single-piece telephone sets, model **Atlanta**, in brown, black and white. These sets are equipped with a completely electronic push-button dialling and a last number redial feature which allows the user to press a single button for automatic redialling of the last number called.

A large part of the equipment at the transit exchange **Lucerne-Floraweg** was converted from two-wire to four-wire connections in mid-May.

A **remote control** channel switch-over equipment was installed at the digital radio-link for telephone traffic between **St. Moritz and Valchava**. This is based on the operational management concept of the radiocommunications service.

In order to handle the **telephone traffic with Cyprus** the PTT acquired the irrevocable right to use 12 telephone circuits in the **underseas cable links Apollon** between Greece and Cyprus.

The **9th Transatlantic Cable (TAT-7)** connecting Europe with North America is being laid out from Cornwall (GB). The cable will have a capacity of 4200 telephone circuits and the cost will run to about 350 million francs. The service will come into operation in 1983.

Teleinformatics

The PTT increased the choice of colour and picture greating cards for **goodwill te-**

legrams by a special **birthday motif** from beginning of May.

On 26 April the **Radio-Suisse Ltd** opened the **telex traffic with Panama** via ITC Rome over satellite.

16 customers with 40 terminals are participating at present in the phase 1 of the experimental operation of the Swiss packet switching network **Telepac**. Phase 2 of the experimental operation is foreseen for August with a complete range of services.

A list of all the **Diane data banks** has been published for the **Euronet** customers. It provides information on all the accessible Diane data banks and their services.

Miscellaneous

The PTT's 1981 account closed with a cost coverage index of 105 pc overall. This index is a comparative measure of the profitability representing 100 as the net cost covered. For the individual services: telecommunication services 119 pc (1980: 122 pc) and for the postal services 89 pc (1980: 92 pc).

Agreements have been reached between **Switzerland** and the **Federal Republic of Germany** to establish several new links such as a 34 Mbit/s digital radio-relay (1984), a further coaxial cable Basle-Lorrach (1986) and an additional digital link (1990) with fibre optics or radio-relay from Donaueschingen to Zurich/Herdern.