

# Radio World

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USER REPORT

## Burk ARC-16, Interface Link Sites

*The Author Enjoys the Ability to 'Shift Gears' Among Nassau Broadcasting's New Hampshire Stations*

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**HOOKSETT, N.H.** Nassau Broadcasting recently acquired three separate groups of radio stations here in central and southern New Hampshire. As with any mass consolidation, it became necessary to standardize the various platforms to operate the new group: FM stations WNNH, WHOB, WJYY, WNHI, WOTX, WLNH, WLKZ, and WBHG, as well as AM WEMJ;

When it came to transmitter remote control systems, after reviewing the landscape of the existing stations and conferring with Nassau's senior vice president of engineering, **Burk Technology's** straightforward ARC-16 was an easy choice. It is capable of performing all the tasks that Nassau requires.

The ARC-16 is a transmitter control system that allows for unattended and walk-away control. It can be configured as a full-time, dial-up or multi-site system, and offers 16 channels of status, metering and control. Units may be cascaded for more channels.

Operators at live stations prefer a full-time transmitter control system because it gives them the ability to respond quickly. A full-time system includes a studio unit and a transmitter unit, with internal ink modems for connecting with a variety of

link types. Metering and status at the transmitter are available at the control point, and corrective action involves pressing a button.

The ability to monitor and control studio equipment such as program automation, EAS and security through the SIO option is a notable benefit of the ARC-16.

### 'Smart' system

Our demands included a full studio and transmitter interface, capable of easily managing control and display of parameters for each of Nassau's nine New

rogate from anywhere I happen to be; one that would call my engineering staff or me to alert us in the event of out-of-tolerance conditions or dead air on the left channel.

Many of the existing remote control systems at the nine stations were already Burk. The company's Good as New program enabled us to "upgrade" these existing systems to the current version of hardware and software, as the option to upgrade older existing units to the current standard saved money. It's nice knowing that the device you purchase today won't be obsolete tomorrow.

Being in the Northeast, I simply had one of our staff drive the units to Burk,



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Hampshire transmitter sites. In this digital day and age, we also insisted the remote controls be "smart" enough to alert our engineering staff of conditions that operators may not immediately notice or know how to deal resolve.

Specifically, we wanted a single package to perform tasks at the studio and transmitter — and from the field. I wanted a unit that I could call and inter-

located outside Boston. Their staff upgraded the units while we waited, and within hours the system was back in service. The stations that didn't already have Burk systems were outfitted with the identical platform and we were in business.

Now I can "shift gears" between any of our stations anywhere in the state, as all the sites have the same hardware and talk

the same language. This equipment consistency is the key strategy in successfully managing the mass amount of information reported to Nassau's engineering staff.

With the assistance of Burk's AutoLoad program, I can upload language changes to the Enhanced Speech Interface, so the ARC-16 will "talk" to our staff in plain English to report events and conditions so they're easily understood. I can then save these settings on my laptop and copy the function from station to station and back up the files in case of data loss. If necessary, I can take control of a site while sitting on the beach, which I've done on many occasions.

Burk's AutoPilot 2 transmitter remote control software enables me to program events when I want them to happen. I

see all 16 status and analog inputs at a glance. We like the feature that tracks and records readings, status and other incidents. AutoPilot 2 also executes time-based activities to carry out power changes, program switching or tower light operation.

The received signal strength of one of our STL systems at a tower site recently dropped to about half its normal level. The signal loss was not immediately significant, but because the Burk ARC-16 logs the parameter, we were immediately aware of the condition and had it documented.

Knowing exactly when the parameter changed enabled us to determine that a tower crew had "bumped" the dish while performing maintenance on another one

of the tower's tenants. Knowing about this occurrence as it happened allowed us to fix the problem before it deteriorated further and interrupted the stations program. A remote control system that is flexible and capable means I can go off and work on the next challenge.

Additionally, new firmware for the ARC-16 system was recently made available. The company says firmware v5.6 offers faster baud rates for digital communication links, providing more responsive site-to-site communication, particularly with multiple remote sites.

*For more information, including pricing, contact Burk Technology in Massachusetts at (800) 255-8090 or visit [www.burk.com](http://www.burk.com).* 