

JVC CableCARD Field Issues

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James S. – our first bad omen

- James S. is a Supervisor at JVC's Service Center in Lawrenceville, GA near Atlanta. He subscribes to cable, gets premium channels, and regularly purchases PPV movies.
- As an avid cable TV viewer, he agreed to be the first participant in JVC's internal pre-retail launch field test of DCR (Digital Cable Ready) televisions. In late November 2004, received a 42" plasma - one of two JVC models which received certification at CableLabs in September, 2004.
- In early December, 2004, he contacted his cable operator - Charter Cable in Smyrna, GA.. The Charter CSR said that no CableCARDS were available. The explanation was that Charter had received a batch of CableCARDS which were defective, and had been returned. The CSR said Charter was awaiting a new supply, but could not tell him when they would arrive.
- In late December, and again in early January, 2005, James called Charter, but got no new information, and was finally assigned case number 2419369.
- February 1, 2005, he called Charter again and was told that CableCards might arrive in April, and he might be able to get one then. He called me to ask for help.
- February 2, 2005, I called Don Watson and Dave Houseman – top executives at Charter HQ in St. Louis that I had met during the Cable Plug and Play negotiations – and they agreed to look into the situation.
- February 4, 2005, a Charter technician arrived at James's house to install the CableCARD that had suddenly appeared. Unfortunately, the CableCARD could not authorize any premium channels. Another set in his house has a cable box, and continued to receive all premium channels.
- In May, 2005, after 7 visits from cable technicians totaling over 20 hours in his home, he still could not receive premium channels on a set that had received CableLabs certification, Frustrated, and questioning the value of the CableLabs' certification, and still without premium channels, he asked to be removed from the field test and returned the set to JVC HQ.

Time-Warner Cable in Columbus, OH

- Case #1 – Jeremy T. purchased JVC HD52G786 which was installed 8/1/05.
- Initial CableCARD installation unsuccessful. Channels dropping out at random. Rebooting the set solves the problem, but the next day, channels continue to drop out.
- By mid October, and several service calls later, the customer still had the same problem.
- 12/12/05, JVC's top factory software engineer and a JVC field service engineer both visited TW Columbus, but were unable to find a problem with the JVC software.
- 12/21/05 the same team revisited TW Columbus, and were still unable to solve the problem.
- Customer accepted a TW cable box, and no problems since.

Time-Warner Cable in Columbus, OH

- Case #2 – Jim M. purchased JVC HD61Z786 which was installed September, 2005.
- Initial CableCARD installation unsuccessful. Channels dropping out at random. Rebooting the set solves the problem, but the next day, channels continue to drop out.
- Several service calls later, the customer still had the same problem.
- 10/4/05 JVC sends SD card with new firmware upgrade 163, installed, but no resolution to problem.
- 11/17/05 JVC sends SD card with another firmware upgrade 16b, installed, but no resolution to problem.
- 12/12/05 JVC's top factory software engineer and a JVC field service engineer both visited TW Columbus, but were unable to find a problem with the JVC software.
- 12/21/05 The same team revisited TW Columbus, and were still unable to solve the problem.
- 3/7/06 JVC sends SD card with firmware upgrade 16e, installed, but no resolution to problem.
- 3/8/06 JVC replaced TV with new model higher resolution HD61FH96.

JVC Bottom Line

- Last year, 2005, JVC launched 16 CableCARD ready models.
- For JVC, it was a disaster –
 - Thousands of customer calls to our JVC call center about CableCARD problems.
 - JVC Service Centers overwhelmed with complaints and requests for service on sets that are unable to interoperate with cable headends.
 - Dealers upset by customer returns of CableCARD sets.
 - JVC Sales staff so frustrated and angry about CableCARD problems that many are reluctant to push these sets into retailers stores.
- As announced at CES in January 2006, JVC will have only 9 CableCARD ready models. All are models that were planned for a biennial chassis development cycle.

Common Reliance is the Only Cure

- CableCARD ready sets have to be certified, initially at CableLabs, and then self-certified by the manufacturer.
- Cable headends have no certification. Not by CableLabs, not by anyone. Cable leased STB have no CableCARDs, and they always seem to work with their headend.
- The CableCARD problems are interoperability issues, which are difficult to solve when one side of the equation is certified, and the other side is not.
- But, **IF** Cable leased STB were required to depend on CableCARDs, we are totally confident that all CableCARD issues would be quickly and efficiently resolved by the Cable Operators.
- Only under a Common Reliance regime will all consumers reap the benefits of the CableCARD.

FCC Meeting with Toshiba

3/22/2006

Introduction

- UDCP Issues
- Common Reliance
- Proprietary Systems

UDCP Issues from Toshiba

- Scientific Atlanta Cable Card Reboot
- UDCP List
- Billing Systems
- Host ID/ Authorization Problems
- Escalation Procedure
- Cable Card Access Restrictions

Conclusions

- Cannot guarantee operation universally
- Common Reliance is key for complete support
- Training and Education for Troubleshooting