

Lentequip has upgraded their Canatrans video transmitter with new firmware. I sent mine in for the upgrade as soon as I heard about it and my transmitter was shipped back after one day in the shop, making good on Emery's promise to provide expedient service. The cost is only \$100.00 US to upgrade from the older firmware and this includes a new antenna (not available yet, but promised soon) which makes it an exceptional value. New units come with the new firmware and antenna, at the same price as before, about \$4000.00 US

As good as the original was, Emery Soos has responded to every complaint I had about it. The available frequency range has been dramatically expanded and now covers Channels 20-50 and the output is now carefully adjusted so that all channels transmit with equal power. (With the first version, I found it necessary to range check each channel as some were transmitting with less power than others, so just finding a clear frequency was not enough to ensure maximum distance. Now all channels appear to have the same range as long as the frequency is relatively open.) Emery says the new antenna in development will transmit over the entire new bandwidth more efficiently than the current one (which is biased towards the top end of the band that the older version was restricted to). I found the current antenna very useable with lower frequencies, however, so if you upgrade or buy a new unit before that antenna is available you can still use the old antenna on the new lower frequencies with only a small reduction in range.

The menu system is far friendlier now – Previously I sometimes got confused about which line of the display was the active one, it is now clearly indicated. I also got impatient waiting for the startup message to clear so I could adjust transmit power or frequency or video gain after turning the unit on – now simply pressing the right button after powering on takes you immediately to the first operating menu. Emery has reorganized the menu structure as well so that the most commonly adjusted features (the three I just mentioned) are right at the top AND all three are displayed in the first menu at all times, so a glance at the unit at anytime will tell you everything you need to know.

When I received my upgraded unit (one of the very first to leave the factory) I encountered a problem after about 3 days of use. I shipped it back and Emery immediately shipped me a loaner which I got the next day. Before shipping the loaner, however, he checked the transmitters he had in stock and located the trouble - "a cold solder joint on a BGA (ball grid array) part" which meant a small adjustment in the assembly process eliminated the problem in all the units. Emery told me that each unit is burned in for 24 hours before leaving the factory, but this problem only showed up after several days of use. My repaired transmitter was back in my hands a day later.

Little glitches like this are almost unavoidable for a new product, but how they are handled makes all the difference. The only unknown about the Canatrans had been how Lentequip would handle service, because my transmitter never even hiccupped. That question has now been answered and I give highest marks possible to Lentequip.

I highly recommend the firmware upgrade, and I really don't have any more complaints!!!

Larry McConkey
March 8, 2006