

## **FCC Approves First TV White Spaces Database Manager - Wireless Devices in TV Band to Start Operations in January**

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The FCC [approved the first database manager for TV white spaces devices](#) - those wireless communications devices that will operate in the spectrum currently used by broadcast television, operating on channels not in use in a given area and supposedly avoiding interference to the reception of over-the-air television stations. Spectrum Bridge is the first company to be approved to act as a database manager, though there are several other companies who have applied and whose systems are in various stages of development and testing. The database manager is to keep a list of all of the services that a white spaces device needs to protect from interference, and be able to transmit that information to devices to tell them what channels they can use in a given geographical area. Protection must be accorded not only to TV stations and TV translators and LPTV stations, but also to the receive sites of Multichannel Video Programming Distributors (cable and satellite TV), certain broadcast auxiliary operations, off-shore telephone services and radio astronomy users, some land mobile operators, and certain wireless microphone users. Today's [Public Notice](#) specifically addresses how wireless microphone users need to register with the FCC to be protected from interference.

The Spectrum Bridge database was tested a few months ago, and the [FCC's letter](#) outlines a number of concerns expressed about its operations. These include several problems encountered by the NAB in registering sites that were supposed to be protected by white spaces devices. While licensed facilities of TV stations and land mobile users are available from the FCC's own database, receive sites for MVPDs and translators need to be registered, as do the location of certain mobile broadcast auxiliary stations. The FCC ordered Spectrum Bridge to re-open its database for the registration of additional sites to be protected, and said that this would provide registrants the ability to test the modifications to the system in the coming weeks before the system becomes operational.

However, the FCC's database that is supposed to be established to register the locations at which multiple wireless microphones are being used has not yet been established, so Spectrum Bridge cannot call on that database, nor on the databases of other database managers (who are supposed to set up a system for sharing the registrations of sites that need to be protected). Thus, the current authorization for Spectrum Bridge is for the Wilmington, North Carolina area only, where a white-spaces

system is apparently ready to be rolled out (interesting that Wilmington was also the first market to go all digital during the DTV transition). Service can begin as early as January 26 - so look for white spaces devices to be a reality very soon - providing a real-world opportunity to test the impact of these services on TV reception.

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