Skylla Special Events Using SmartTouch or Broadcast Tools' STI-II

Overview

This document covers four things:
- The concept of Special Events Programming in Skylla
- An example Special Event
- The instructions to set up a Special Event
- The instructions to operate that Special Event remotely

Most of these instructions are exactly the same for both SmartTouch and the Broadcast Tools' STI-II. Any instructions or descriptions specific to either device are marked accordingly.

Special Event programming in Skylla

When a board operator manually runs the control board during a remote, the operator usually:

- Sets aside the normally scheduled program log and programs the remote with sponsors specific to the remote.
- Makes decisions based on context. The operator likely works from several lists of carts. For example, one list of carts for the Main Breaks of a game, another for half-time programming, and maybe another for pregame interviews.
- Ends the game and resumes regularly-scheduled programming at the correct time of day.

Skylla operates using the same logic as a live operator. During a Special Event, Skylla:

- Sets aside the normal programming shown on Skylla's "Logs" tab[1], and makes the "Special Events" tab active.
- Allows the remote caller to make playback decisions from among several choices. A Special Event is not just a single log of playable items. It's several logs (we call them "sublogs") any of which can be triggered by the remote operator. One sublog contains the Main Breaks of the event---the list of expected commercials in the order they are to be played. Another list may be specific spots unique to half-time. Other lists might hold coach Interviews, half-time music, or even other lists of commercials used for unpredictable occasions like pitching changes in baseball.
- Allows the remote operator to end the Special Event. Once ended, Skylla determines normally scheduled programming, cues to the proper log position, and returns to normal operation.
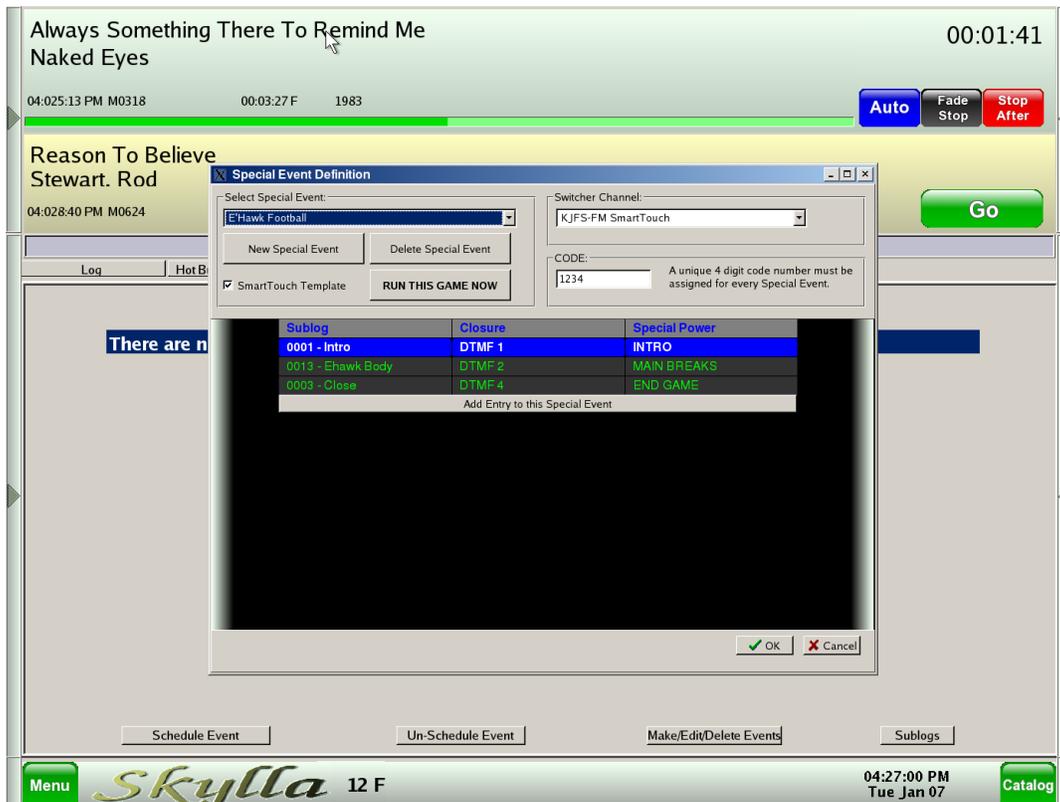
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[1] In older versions of the GUI software, "LOGS" is called "UPCOMING EVENTS". If your Skylla shows "UPCOMING EVENTS" in the tab header where your log is shown, please contact SMARTS for a software update.

A **Special Event** is a list of Sublogs.

A **Sublog** is a list of one or more carts.
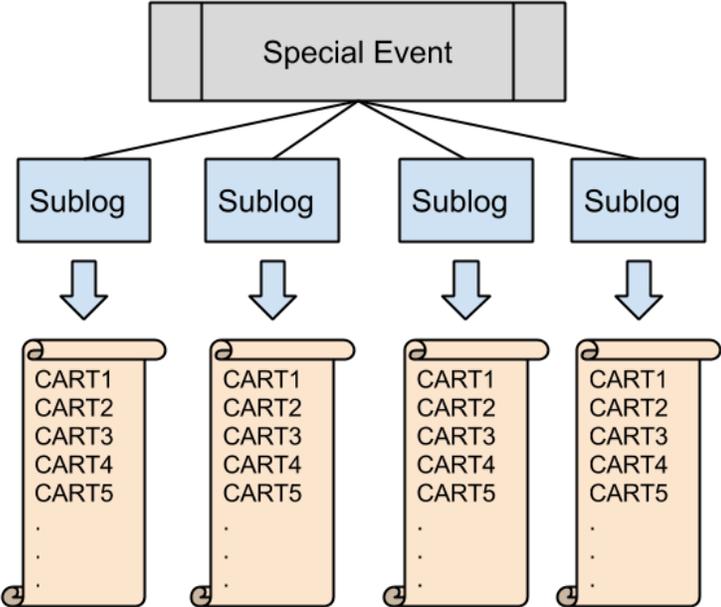
An example Special Event

The Special Event Definition window has several fields, a check-box, and buttons.

Select Special Event - This drop-down menu shows a list of all currently-defined Special Events from which to choose. Once chosen, a Special Event can be edited, deleted, or aired manually.

New Special Event - Creates a new blank Special Event to be defined.

Delete Special Event - *Permanently* removes the currently-selected Special Event from Skylla. Use this option with *extreme* caution, as this action *cannot* be undone.

SmartTouch Template Checkbox - Near the top-left portion of the Special Event Definition window, note that the "**SmartTouch**" checkbox is checked. This indicates that this Special Event is intended for use with SmartTouch or STI-II.[2]

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[2] A Special Event can be used to automate closure-driven events (usually ballgames or NASCAR). That use of Special Events is not documented in this section.

Switcher Channel - The Switcher channel is almost always set to the SmartTouch or STI-II audio channel on the audio switcher. (Exceptions to this are discussed in the "Running a Special Event from an Alternate Audio Source" section below.)

Code - The Code is a four digit number that is unique to this Special Event. This number is used by the remote caller to summon the Special Event.

The "EHawk Football" Special Event demonstrates a typical high school football game, to be run remotely by the announcer calling the game, using nothing more than a telephone. This basic Special Event contains three sublogs: Intro, EHawk Body, and Close. Note that each of these sublogs has a DTMF (telephone) tone associated with it.

> Pressing "1" plays the Intro.
> Pressing "2" plays (or stops playing) Ehawk Body.
> Pressing "4" Plays Close, then ends the Special Event.

Notice also, that each sublog entry in the Special Event has, in addition to a DTMF tone, a *Special Power* that enables the Special Event to do something extra (beyond audio playback) whenever the remote caller presses the associated phone key. Special Powers include: Intro, Main Breaks, End Game, Rain Delay, and Rain Delay Return.

INTRO - There is only one Intro in a Special Event. The sublog designated as Intro will play when the Special Event is started by the remote caller. The Intro can contain one or more audio cuts all of which will play when the remote caller starts the Special Event. Once the last audio cut of the Intro sublog is finished playing, the caller is put on the air.

MAIN BREAKS - In any Special Event there is only one sublog with MAIN BREAKS enabled. Whichever sublog has MAIN BREAKS enabled is the sublog that is visibly tracked on the Skylla screen during the Special Event. MAIN BREAKS has no other effect.

END GAME - When a remote caller triggers playback of a sublog that has been defined as "END GAME", all audio cuts in the END GAME sublog play. At the conclusion of the last item in the END GAME sublog, Skylla ends the Special Event, cues up the current log position, and resumes normally scheduled programming.

RAIN DELAY and **RAIN DELAY RETURN -** are NOT used in SmartTouch/STI-II remotes. These are only used with Special Events that automate professional sports (mostly Baseball and NASCAR).
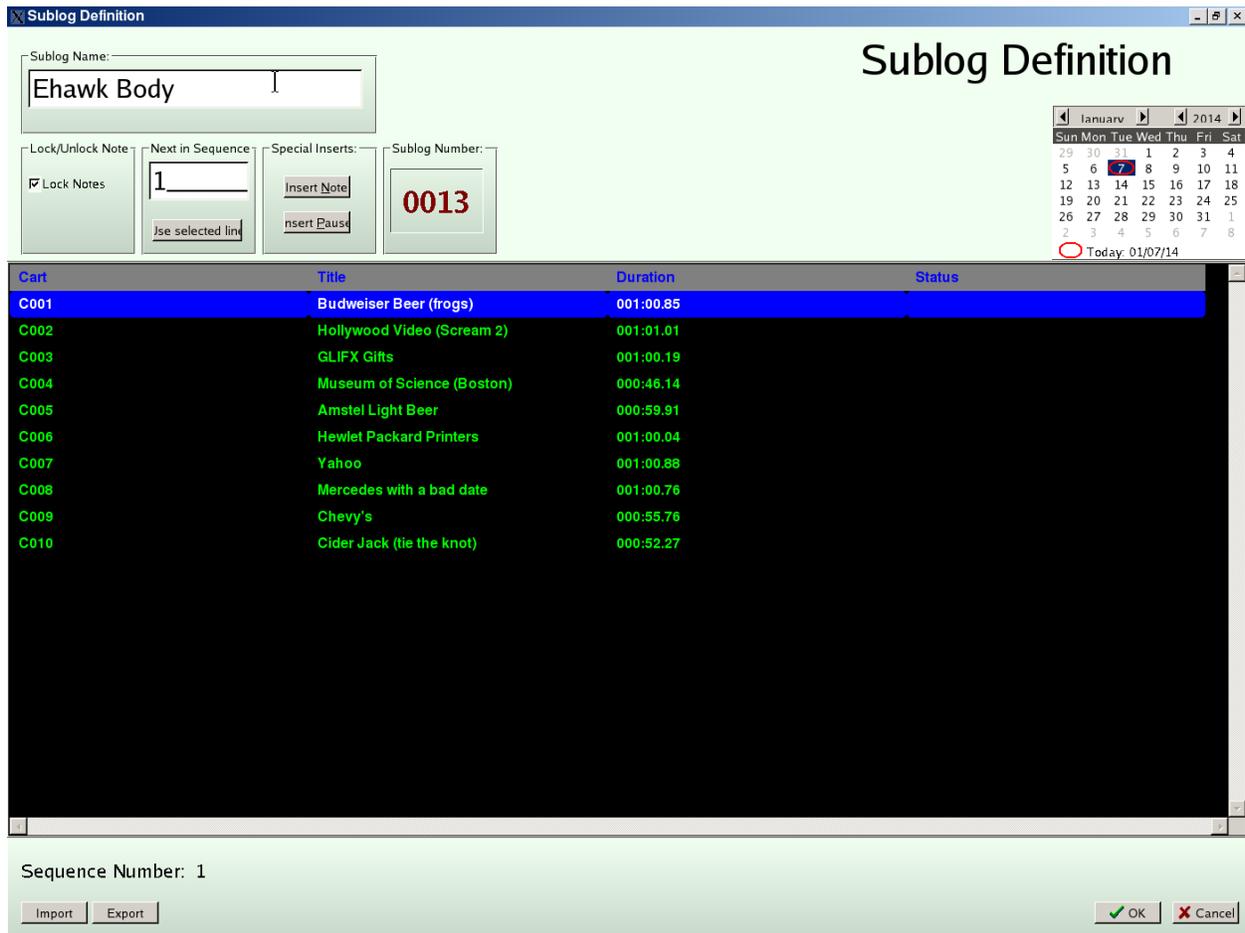
Though the *Intro* sublog can contain multiple audio cuts, it often contains just one:
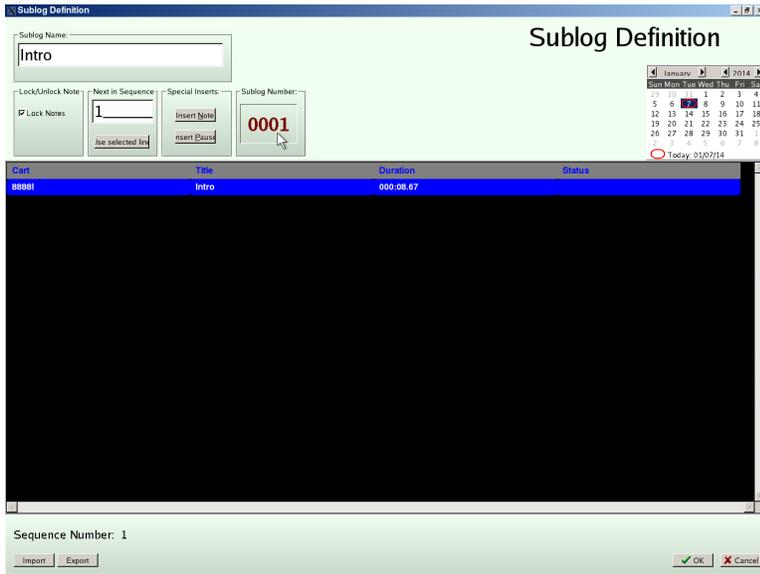
Likewise, the *Close* sublog often contains just a single audio cut (but can contain more):
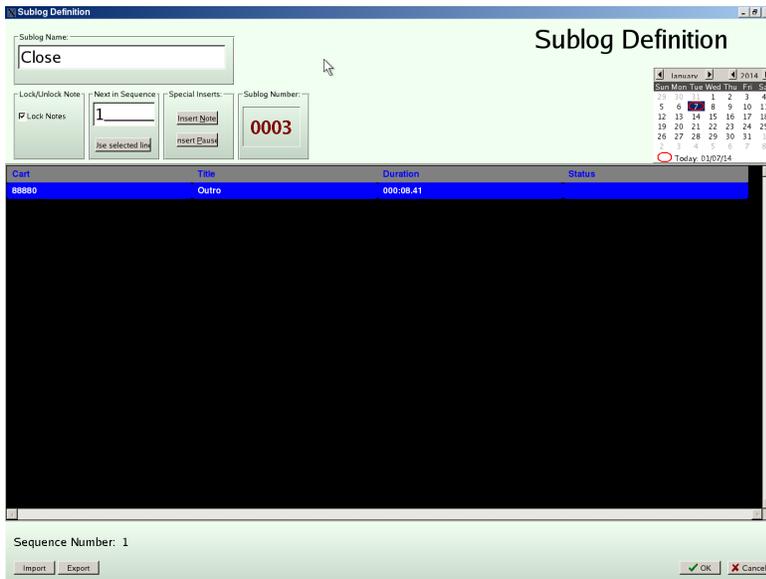
The *Ehawk Body* Sublog contains quite a few commercials:

In addition to the list of audio cuts, the Sublog Definition window contains other fields and buttons.

Sublog Name - The human-readable name of the sublog.

Lock Notes - When checked, any notes on non-audio cut entries become undeletable. This option is *rarely* used in SmartTouch/STI-II Special Events.

Next in Sequence - Which cut within the endless loop-list of cuts is cued up next to play. SmartTouch and STI-II Special Events start where they left off last *even from broadcast to broadcast* to allow for even rotation of the commercials contained within the sublog. That way a local ballgame, for instance, does not always start with the same sponsor from week to week.

Use Selected Line - When the user clicks this button, the currently highlighted audio cut is marked as the first to play when the sublog airs.

Insert Note - Since SmartTouch/STI-II Special Events use an endless loop of cuts, notes are

rarely used, but it is possible to insert a note into the sequence of events. The notes have no effect on the air, but notes appear on the Skylla screen as they execute.

Insert Pause - Since SmartTouch/STI-II Special Events use an endless loop for audio playback, the use of a pause is discouraged in SmartTouch/STI-II style Special Events. When Skylla executes the pause, it stops playing back the list of audio cuts, and puts the caller back on the air.

Sublog Number - This number is assigned automatically by Skylla and is just a means by which Skylla can unambiguously identify a sublog. This number can be used by Traffic systems to populate a sublog directly from Traffic (see "Programming a Special Event from Traffic" below.)

Calendar Widget - While editing a sublog, a user can click on dates on the calendar widget to check date eligibility for the contents of the sublog. A red warning appears adjacent to cuts that are outdated or missing on the selected date.

Sequence Number - This shows the list-number of the audio cut cued to play next.

Import - A previously-saved list of audio cuts can be imported into the sublog (see "Export," below).

Export - The contents of a sublog can be saved to a text file for archiving or transferring.

Building Sublogs and SmartTouch/STI-II Special Events

When building sublogs and special events, consider these questions:

- How many different lists of audio cuts are needed in the Special Event?
- What is the audio source?
- What are the Intro and Outro sublogs going to contain?
- What audio cuts are scheduled in the "Main Breaks" list?

Building Sublogs

Repeat steps one through six below until there are at least three sublogs created: Intro, Close, and Main Breaks.

1. Choose the SPECIAL EVENTS tab.

2. At the bottom of the screen, on the right-hand side, click the "SUBLOGS" button.

3. Click the "ADD" button to add a new sublog.

4. In the "Sublog Name" field, enter a meaningful name for the sublog (like "EHawks Football Breaks").

5. Click on the blue line under "cart", and enter the cart numbers of the audio cuts that will play when this sublog executes. Be certain to enter the cart numbers in the order in which you wish them to air. Also realize that this list is an endless loop. After the last item in the list plays, Skylla will play the first item again, so be sure that the first and the last audio cuts are compatible with each other (for instance, you may not want two restaurants back-to-back).

6. When finished entering cart numbers, click the "OK" button.

Once completely finished with building sublogs, click the "Close" button in the lower-right corner of the Sublog Manager window.

Building Special Events from Sublogs

Now that sublogs are created, they'll need to be combined with *DTMF (telephone keypad) numbers* and *Special Powers* to form a Special Event.

1. Click on the "Special Events" tab

2. Click on the "Make/Edit/Delete Events" button at the bottom right of the screen.
3. In the "Special Events Definition" window, click the "NEW SPECIAL EVENT" button.

4. When prompted for a name, enter the name of the Special Event, then click "OK".
5. In the upper right corner of the Special Events Definition window, click the drop-down menu labeled "Switcher Channel". Choose the audio source for the Special Event (usually SmartTouch or STI-II).

6. In the field labeled "CODE", enter a unique 4 digit number. This is the code that the remote caller will use to choose *which* special event to run.

7. On the left-side of the Special Events Definition window, click the "SmartTouch Template" checkbox.

8. Below "Sublog" (on the blue line), click the "Add Entry to this Special Event" button.

9. On the blue line directly under "Sublog", click on the "0000-". A drop-down menu appears that shows a list of all sublogs. Choose the Intro sublog.

10. Click on the blue bar under the "Closure" column. A drop-down menu appears showing you a list of all DTMF tones. (If you see a list of closures instead of DTMF, please be sure that the SmartTouch checkbox is checked, then try again). For the Intro sublog, choose DTMF 1.

11. Click on the blue bar under "Special Power". A drop-down menu appears listing all possible special attributes for this sublog. Choose "INTRO".

12. Click the (now wider) "Add Entry to this Special Event" button.

13. On the blue bar under Sublog, click on the 0000-. This time, choose the sublog that contains the main breaks for your Special Event.

14. Under "Closure", choose "DTMF 2".

15. Under "Special Power", choose "MAIN BREAKS" (you may have to scroll down slightly to see the "Main Breaks" option).

16. Click on to the "Add Entry to this Special Event" button.

17. Under "Sublog", choose the Close or "Outro" sublog.

18. Under "Closure", choose "DTMF 4".

19. Under "Special Power", choose "END GAME".

20. IF you have created additional sublogs, you may continue in the same fashion as above. You may assign additional sublogs to DTMF buttons 3, 8, 9, and 0. *Be *sure* that these entries have the Special Power set to "none".*

    When the remote user wants to play from the sublog assigned to DTMF 3, for example, the remote caller presses "3" to start the playback, then "3" again to stop the playback. Buttons "8", "9", and "0" work the same way--press the button once to start playing from the list assigned to the button, press the button again to stop the list playback.

21. When done adding entries into the sublog, click "OK". The SmartTouch Special Event is now ready to use.

Operation of SmartTouch and STI-II

The behavior of SmartTouch and STI-II are slightly different; each device is documented separately. The keypad cheat-sheet is the same for both SmartTouch and STI-II.

Running a Typical SmartTouch Special Event

1. Dial the phone number for SmartTouch. When SmartTouch answers, it emits a long, low tone.
2. Slowly enter the SmartTouch security code number (NOT the Special Event number)[3]. Normally the security code is "8888". If successful, the caller will hear about five seconds of air cue followed by silence.
3. Slowly enter the Special Event number. A success is met with air cue that is periodically broken by short periods of silence. At this point, the remote caller can monitor air cue indefinitely until the right moment to start the Special Event.

4. To interrupt normal programming and start the Special Event, the remote caller presses "1". The Intro sublog executes playing all its entries. The remote caller is now on the air.

5. Whenever the remote caller wishes to start commercial playback, they press "2". The remote caller hears audio playing. Audio playback will continue in an endless loop forever until the remote caller presses "2"[4] again. Skylla will continue to play the currently-playing item to completion, then place the caller to air.

    The remote caller continues the broadcast, pressing "2" to start and stop commercial playback.

6. When the remote caller wishes to conclude the Special Event broadcast, they press "4". This removes the caller from Air, plays the close, and resumes normal programming.[5]

7. Once the remote caller hears that normal programming has resumed, the remote caller is safe to press "* * *" to hang up SmartTouch. Prior to rejoining normal programming, it

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[3] SmartTouch ships with the security code of *8888*. Changing this code involves taking apart the SmartTouch and changing dip-switches on its motherboard. If you wish to change the security code on your SmartTouch, please contact Smarts Support at 800-765-2930.

[4] Smartcaster users might notice that this behavior differs slightly from SmartTouch remotes in Smartcaster. In Smartcaster pressing "3" stopped playback. In Skylla you press "2" to start, then "2" *again* to stop. The reason for this change is that Skylla allows more than one list of audio cuts. Buttons "2" and "3" can be associated with *different* sublogs.

[5] Skylla will not start in the middle of an audio cut. If Skylla rejoins to the middle of an hour that has large pre-recorded segments, Skylla attempts to start the segment that would have been playing had the Special Event not taken place. BUT the playback will start from the *beginning* of the audio segment.

is NOT safe to hang up SmartTouch.

Running a Typical STI-II Event

1. Dial the STI-II phone line. When STI-II answers, the remote caller hears air cue.

2. Enter the Security code (NOT the Special Event number).[6] Two short DTMF tones are heard after a successful entry.

3. Enter the Special Event number. Again, success is signified by two short beeps of DTMF tone. At this point, the remote caller can monitor air cue indefinitely until the right moment to start the Special Event.

4. To interrupt normal programming and start the Special Event, the remote caller presses "1". The Intro sublog executes playing all its entries. The remote caller is now on the air.

5. Whenever the remote caller wishes to start commercial playback, they press "2". The remote caller hears audio playing. Audio playback will continue in an endless loop forever until the remote caller presses "2"[7] again. Skylla will continue to play the currently-playing item to completion, then place the caller back on the air.

    The remote caller continues the broadcast, pressing "2" to start and stop commercial playback.

6. When the remote caller wishes to conclude the Special Event broadcast, they press "4". This removes the caller from Air, plays the close, and resumes normal programming.

7. After the remote caller confirms that regular programming has resumed, the remote caller is safe to press "* * *" to hang up.

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[6] The security code of the STI-II is set in software in SmartTouch section of Skylla Setup (there is an icon for Skylla Setup on the desktop).
[7] Smartcaster users might notice that this behavior differs slightly from SmartTouch remotes in Smartcaster. In Smartcaster pressing "3" stopped playback. In Skylla you press "2" to start, then "2" *again* to stop. The reason for this change is that Skylla allows more than one list of audio cuts. Buttons "2" and "3" can be associated with *different* sublogs.

Telephone Keypad Cheat Sheet

1 INTRO	2 ABC START/END SPOTS	3 DEF
4 GHI CLOSE	5 JKL GO TO AIR WITHOUT PLAYING INTRO	6 MNO END WITHOUT PLAYING CLOSE
7 PQRS CANCEL PLAYBACK AND PUT CALLER TO AIR	8 TUV	9 WXYZ
* PRESS 3 TIMES TO HANG UP	0	# END WITHOUT PLAYING CLOSE

Special Cases

Programming a Special Event from Traffic

If the station uses SMARTS Traffic and Billing or Visual Traffic, it is possible for Traffic to supply Skylla with the contents of the Main Breaks sublog for a Special Event. Please contact SMARTS support at 800 765-2930 to find out details on how to make this work.

Running a Special Event from an Alternate Audio Source (other than a phone)

In the "Switcher Channel" drop-down menu, it is possible to select an audio source other than the SmartTouch/STI-II switcher channel. There are numerous Internet-based audio distribution systems as well as older solutions (like a MARTI) that can use this feature.

Operationally, the remote caller still uses a telephone to call and control the Skylla Special Event, but the audio is fed not from the phone, but from whatever alternate source is desired.

Note that when using an audio source other than SmartTouch/STI-II, it is possible to *hang up* the phone by pressing " ***** " (**never just hang the phone up**) during the broadcast. Skylla knows that an alternate audio source is on the air, so it won't terminate the remote. The remote caller can then call back in and resume control when it is time to end the Special Event. Of course, hanging up means that the remote caller cannot start and stop commercials. This feature is only used when the remote caller has the ability to run ALL audio (commercials included) by some means at the remote location.

Running a Special Event in-Studio (not remotely)

The Skylla Special Events interface is designed for *remote* operation. Local, in-studio operation is possible, but currently is limited. A local operator has access only the the Main Breaks and Intro of a Special Event. A local operator cannot currently access End Game or any other Sublog (except Main Breaks or Intro).

Skylla currently does not have the ability to call *out* to a remote location. Any Special Event that is run by an in-studio, local operator **must** use an audio source other than the SmartTouch/STI-II phone line.

The local user can start a Special Event by doing the following:

1. Click on the "Special Events" tab.

2. Click on the "MAKE/EDIT/DELETE EVENT" button.

3. Use the "Select Special Event" drop-down menu to select which Special Event to start.

4. Click the "RUN THIS GAME NOW" button.

5. When asked to confirm, click "YES".

    Skylla interrupts current programming and plays the contents of the Intro sublog. When the last item of the Intro sublog is complete, the switcher channel designated for this Special Event is placed on-air.

    The user interface for Special Events is limited to three red buttons on the right-hand side of the Special Events window: "PLAY", "STOP", and "EXIT". Note that a local user can switch to the "Hot Buttons" page and play buttons to air was well as the contents of the active Special Event.

6. To play spots, the local user clicks "PLAY". Spots will play forever in this loop until the local user presses "STOP" *one time*. The "STOP" button flashes, indicating that Skylla will stop at the end of the currently-playing item.

    Note that if the local user presses the blinking "STOP" button again, Skylla stops playback immediately.

    The local user continues to press "PLAY" and "STOP" as needed.

    While the local user is unable to make changes to the active sublog, the local user can change which item in the list is cued next by right-clicking a line item and left-clicking "MAKE NEXT".

7. To end the Special Event, the local user presses "EXIT". This terminates the Special Event and returns Skylla to normally scheduled programming. Note that pressing "EXIT" does NOT play the close/outro sublog. If desired, a local user can play a close from the Hot Buttons tab.