

**Matt Katzer**

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**From:** Bob Jacobsen [Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 22, 2001 3:50 PM  
**To:** loconet\_hackers@yahoogroups.com  
**Subject:** Re: [loconet\_info] Standard API for talking to loconet.

At 2:59 PM -0700 10/22/01, Christopher Coley wrote:

>Is there a standard API for talking to Loconet, or any other control  
>bus for that mater. It must work with Loconet. Or is everybody doing  
>there own thing???

>

>To make software easier for us all, If there is not a standard cross  
>platform API I suggest we develop one.

"The nice thing about standards is that there are so many of them to  
choose from." - Andrew Tanenbaum

There are several efforts to do similar things. There's a list with links at the bottom  
of <http://jmri.sourceforge.net/Technical/index.html> . You can also find them from Don  
Crano's web ring.

One effort in that direction is JMRI. Although by no means complete, it provides various  
tools for talking to LocoNet and NCE equipment.

Its got low-level support for handling the LocoNet protocol via MS100 or LocoBuffer, and  
higher level stuff to let you code at the level of "write CV" or "set turnout". Its in  
java, which has pluses and minuses. For more info, see <http://jmri.sourceforge.net>

Bob

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Bob Jacobsen (Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov, 510-486-7355, fax 510-495-2957)

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**Matt Katzer**

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**From:** Bob Jacobsen [Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 13, 2001 9:43 AM  
**To:** loconet\_hackers@yahoogroups.com  
**Subject:** Re: LocoNet bridge (was Re: [loconet\_info] locobuffer)

At 1:08 PM +0000 11/13/01, Juergen Hauschild wrote:

>Here in Germany we have a lot of initiatives of citizens who want the  
>government to forbid the DECT as well as the GSM technology because it  
>influences our biological communication via the nerve system.  
>A lot of experts have done studies and they show up that pulsed  
>microwaves which are send out from the DECT and GSM can be very  
>dangerous to human live. Lots of effects are described in the  
>international literature.

Although its off-topic to some extent, I think a reply to this is appropriate. If you'd like to discuss this more, please contact me off-list.

Juergen's statement is not consistent with the scientific literature.

My background: I was trained as an electrical engineer, and am currently a Physics Professor at the University of California at Berkeley. I've studied the question of biological effects of EM fields at some length.

In 1999, the United States Food & Drug Administration surveyed the literature and found "no scientific evidence" of health hazards from consumer-level exposure to microwaves, including cell phones of all three types in use in the US. That result explicitly included frequencies around 2GHz used by DECT, although DECT was not mentioned by name.

Additional studies were funded and completed to cover certain topics where the evidence was incomplete or inconclusive. Those were again surveyed by the U.S. GAO (an arm of Congress), who concluded in May 2001 that "The consensus of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the World Health Organization, and other major health agencies is that the research to date does not show radiofrequency energy emitted from mobile phones has harmful health effects, but there is not yet enough information to conclude that they pose no risk."

Various groups (not scientific organizations!) have interpreted the final phrase to mean "the studies haven't shown anything, there's still a large risk". That is an incorrect interpretation. What the studies have shown is that any risks that are present for the vast majority of the public are at least a factor of 3000 smaller than the (mostly unknown) factors that cause the general level of health of the population. What we don't know is whether there is exists one or more small (less than 0.1% of the population) subgroups who may have a sensitivity resulting a small increase in adverse health effects, e.g. cancer. As you can imagine, this is a very hard thing to prove or disprove. Should such populations exist with worst-case sensitivity, the total cancer rate in the US would increase by 0.004%.

If you're interested in learning more, a good place to start is with the GAO report, available online at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d01545.pdf> or via the GAO web site. I can also provide direct references in the scientific literature to specific studies and meta-studies done in US, UK, France, Germany and Sweden. Unfortunately, these are not generally available on the web but should be obtainable in any university library. Please contact me off-list if you're interested.

I encourage people to make their own choices for their own use of technology. That's particularly true for a hobby activity such as DCC. Personally, I've concluded that the risk from cellphones is outweighed by the benefits. I use one, as do other members of my family. I also think that attempts to significantly reduce use of microwave technology are not motivated by scientific evidence, but rather by other political and ideological factors.

Bob

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**Matt Katzer**

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**From:** Bob Jacobsen [Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 23, 2002 7:53 AM  
**To:** loconet\_hackers@yahoogroups.com  
**Subject:** [loconet\_info] What happens on LocoNet when Empire Builder is asked to read?

I'd like to ask a favor of the group.

I want to make sure that the Decoder Pro program works well with an Empire Builder (EB). In particular, I'd like to have it detect that its working with an Empire Builder so that it can disable the "read" buttons.

But I don't know how to identify that the command station is an Empire Builder, rather than anything else. Does anybody know how to do that before attempting a read?

As a minimum, I'd like to properly handle how the EB reports that it can't read. To do that, I'd like to know exactly what happens on the LocoNet during a read request to the EB. Could somebody with an Empire Builder attempt to do a programming read with a throttle, and send me a LocoNet trace of the resulting traffic? Any format will be fine.

Finally, would there be anybody on this list in Northern California who's got an Empire Builder and would be willing to let me talk to it for a little while? I'd like to check my code updates to make sure they really work before sending them to some unsuspecting victim^h^h^h^h^h volunteer. I'm willing to drive pretty far.

Thanks in advance.

Bob

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**Matt Katzer**

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**From:** Bob Jacobsen [Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 26, 2003 9:52 AM  
**To:** digitrax@yahoogroups.com  
**Subject:** [Digitrax] Re: Best way to match speeds?

At 2:54 PM +0000 8/26/03, Craig wrote:

>It looks like we are breaking new ground here. I didn't get any ideas  
>from my posting either. I also emailed Digitrax hoping that they had  
>an app. note and didn't get any good suggestions other than use OPS  
>mode programming to match on the fly or use a PR1.

If you're willing to use a computer with a LocoNet connection, you might want to try DecoderPro with ops-mode programming. You can open a programmer panel for each of several locomotives, and tweak their speed tables separately while they're running until everything is all matched up.

For more info. <http://jmri.sf.net/DecoderPro>

(Mandatory disclaimer: I do some work on DecoderPro, but since it's a free program I don't get any money from it)

Bob

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Bob Jacobsen (Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov, 510-486-7355, fax 510-495-2957) Am in Austria this week, email may be slow.

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**Matt Katzer**

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**From:** Bob Jacobsen [Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 20, 2004 8:05 PM  
**To:** jmriusers@yahogroups.com  
**Subject:** Re: [jmriusers] javax.comm for MacOS X 10.3.2

(I tried to send this off-list, but the email address on the Yahoo account isn't correct. Could you please check that and fix it? Thanks!)

At 8:15 PM +0000 1/20/04, puzzle22000 wrote:  
>After double klicking the installer I'm asked to give my password.  
>Then nothing happens.  
>Again double klicking on the installer opens the installer window.  
>I decide to install the MacOS X version.  
>Start Installation.  
>A message box appears:  
> Visc Error creating file.  
> 1008:,-5000 Access denied error  
>Klicking ok in the box  
>A second box appears:  
> You don't have enough access permissions for this installation.  
>  
>I am using a PowerBook 15" , with MacOS X 10.3.2.  
>I am the only user of this machine and could install everything else before.  
>  
>Please give me some hints.

I just ran the installer ("Java comm installer 2") on a new 10.3.2 system without encountering that.

It does sound like a permissions problem, so the possibilities include:

- 1) Something wrong with file permissions. You should try running "repair file permissions" from the disk tool.
- 2) The account you're using isn't the admin account (as Dave Falkenburg suggested in another email). I'm not sure what the easiest way to check that is. System preferences -> accounts shows you the accounts on the left side, and identifies the "admin" account(s).

Bob

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**Matt Katzer**

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**From:** Bob Jacobsen [Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 21, 2004 10:44 AM  
**To:** jmriusers@yahoogroups.com  
**Subject:** Re: [jmriusers] Havng problems with preferences

At 7:53 AM +0000 1/21/04, Chuck Conner wrote:

>I have downloaded several versions of Decoderpro and can get the  
>program to start. But when I enter my preferences they are not  
>remembered and so I cannot use the program. I have used the program on  
>an old desktop without problems but have loaded it on an IBM thinkpad  
>600 for use at the layout. I have tried Locotools to create throttles  
>and they will not accept addresses. Can anyone help? Tell me what I am  
>doing wrong.

Please try the most recent 1.3.8a test version. It's supposed to fix a problem with Windows XP and 2K that sounds a lot like that.

Bob

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Bob Jacobsen (Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov, 510-486-7355, fax 510 495 2957)

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**Matt Katzer**

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**From:** jmriusers@yahoogroups.com on behalf of Bob Jacobsen [Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 08, 2005 12:49 PM  
**To:** jmriusers@yahoogroups.com  
**Subject:** Re: [jmriusers] Digitrax Cab Signalling

At 5:16 PM +0000 6/8/05, scrhenry wrote:

>Has anyone developed an implementation of JMRI to take advantage of cab  
>signaling feature that comes with DT300 and DT400 throttles?

There's some messaging code in JMRI for doing that. It will let you send alpha-numeric or "semaphore" messages to throttles.

I think that with a little work, somebody could bring it up to a nice general capability. But it's not quite there yet.

If you'd like to play with it, I can send you pointers to the classes, and help you get started with a sample script.

Bob

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**Matt Katzer**

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**From:** jmri-developers-admin@lists.sourceforge.net on behalf of Bob Jacobsen [Bob\_Jacobsen@lbl.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 13, 2006 10:01 AM  
**To:** jmri-developers@lists.sourceforge.net  
**Subject:** Re: Signalling logic (was Re: [Jmri-developers] Status of HEAD of CVS)

(Sorry, bad week at the day job)

At 10:25 PM -0400 4/8/06, Dick Bronson wrote:

>  
>As I understand your proposal the CTC logic would reside in its own  
>"Simple Traffic Control" section under tools. That would be the basic  
>structure that you would add. There would then be a whole new section  
>added that has a similar structure as the BlockBoss has.

Right. The idea here is to leave BlockBoss (simple or vital signal logic) alone, but control it from outside. That prevents BlockBoss from getting much more complicated than in already is and allows the user to separate configuring the two parts.

>The hook to "Hold" a signal red would be done simply by entering the  
>signal to "Hold", and setting it. I missed that concept when reading in  
>the comments, and was making the assumption that to hold a signal red  
>would require that a special sensor be added to the list of sensors in  
>the SSL sections for that purpose. As I understand it now, the SSL  
>would not have any different settings in a system with CTC as it would  
>have for one without.

In almost all circumstances that's right. The one exception is if we eventually want to have "call-on" signals, but I haven't thought them through entirely yet.

>I'm still thinking in terms of using virtual turnout and virtual signal  
>items to get the lever graphics onto the panel. The biggest problem I  
>see with that is that the signal states go R-Y-G-R-Y-G...  
>as you click on them. If they went R-Y-G-Y-R-Y-G... then the lever  
>image could go back and forth nicely rather than jumping from one side  
>to the other. I don't think that change would affect anything else  
>negatively would it? People don't normally click on signals to change  
>them except for testing do they?

I'd prefer to use the "memory" beans for this. They can have an arbitrary set of icons & sequencing. I'll put together an example.

The real question is how do we want them to behave. I think that the best approach would be "Click on the left to put the lever to the left", etc, rather than have a sequence. But it makes the click target noticeably smaller, particularly if the lever has more than two routes.

>While on the subject of signals, there is a bit of a disconnect in the  
>system between the "Change signal icons" window and the "Signal Table".  
>The Signal Table allows you to cycle through states that have no  
>matching icon selection options. Specifically, "Flashing Red",  
>"Flashing Green", and "Dark", are all missing and default to some small  
>images with no obvious way to change them graphically.

yes. this needs to be fixed.

>Back to the subject, I further presume that this new section would be  
>the place for not only the CTC logic, but also APB logic using "stick"  
>circuitry to tumble down all opposing traffic signals in a single track  
>area. Also maybe interlocking would fit there. By automated running do  
>you mean scripted train operations?

There are really two kinds of tumble down logic. True APB is Automatic, operating when a train enters the controlled section. Most model railroads don't have enough blocks between sidings for this to really work right.

CTC usually had something different, called "reserved direction". Basically, when a traffic lever was set to allow entry to the single track between OS sections & coded, the signals would clear for that entire section, and the opposing OS signals (entry to the single track from the other end) would be unable to clear. (Route and/or time locking was added on top of this in case the dispatcher changed his mind before a train went through)

(Another way to put this: The lever is really selecting direction, not signals. The vital signalling logic converts the direction into consistent signal aspects for the entire line)

Reserved direction should probably live in this new chunk of code, along with the CTC logic. I'm not sure whether it can always be present, or whether it would have to be controllable. Some people might not like it because it links the operation of the direction & turnout levers at the two ends in a way that can be quite confusing if you haven't worked through why it's happening.

>I will not have any chance to work on this for a few days, because I  
>have been asked to take a trip to Dallas with a 40' ship container.  
>I am supposed to leave the rig there for another driver to pick up in a  
>few weeks, and they will fly me back home, probably on Wednesday.  
>Supposedly I have hours of "free" time due to the new CDL regulations,  
>but in my experience it is still; eat, drive, eat, drive, eat, drive,  
>sleep, eat, etc. till you finish the trip.

Hope you had a great trip!

>  
>I have started the process of programming the robot to build Tower  
>Controllers, so maybe I can start filling some back orders on them as  
>well. Also I have committed to having my own layout's signals running  
>for an open house at the end of May. Two weeks of the time between now  
>and then is committed to other travel, so I guess I had better not take  
>many naps.

Let me know if I can help with this.

Bob

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