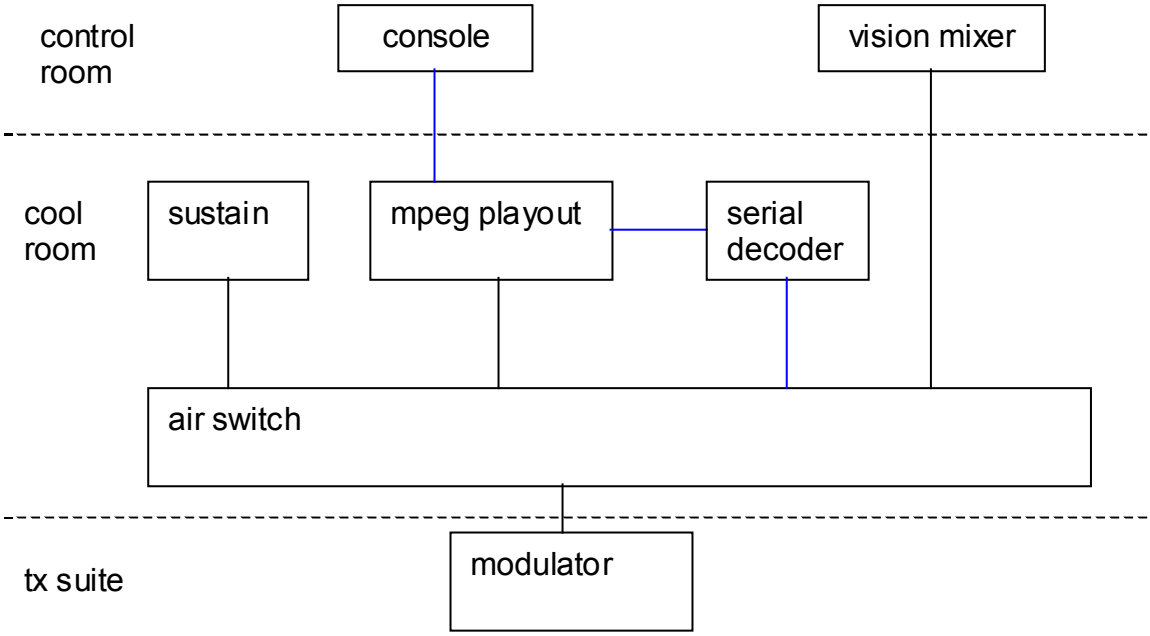
Stoic Playout System Technical Meeting

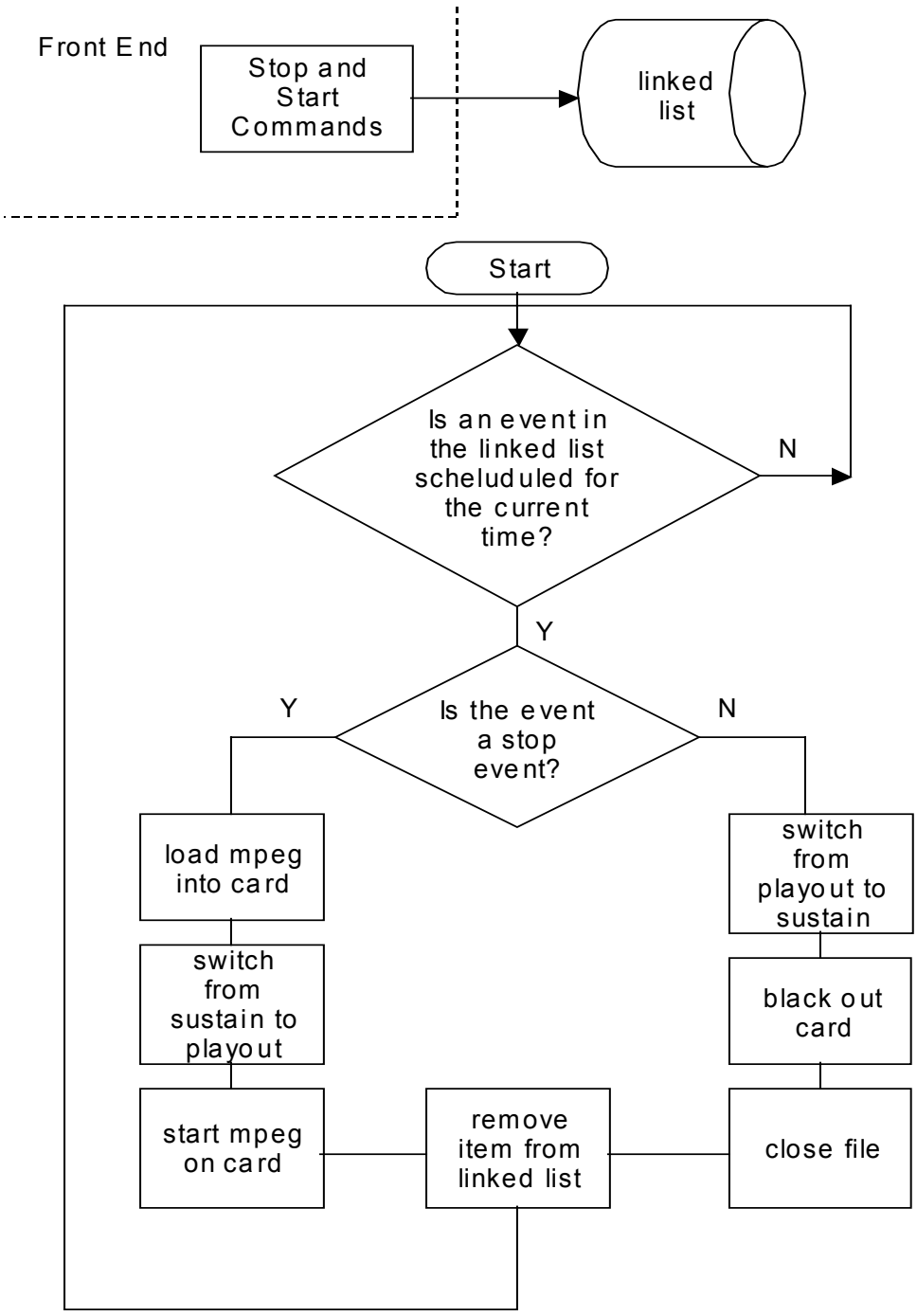
Friday 31st June 2002

Current System:

The current system is outlined in the diagram below and comprises a central "server" consisting of playout and scheduling on the current mpeg windows 2000 machine interfacing with the existing sustain service which remains unmodified.

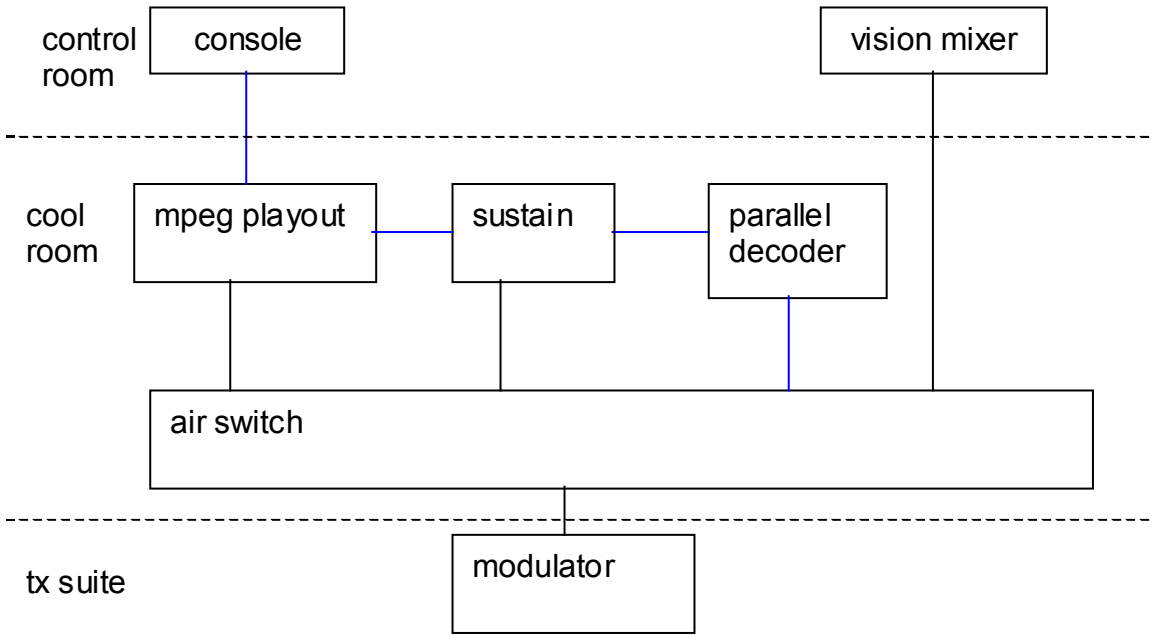


Blue lines indicate contol. The proposed software flow is outlined below.


Front End
Stop and Start Commands
linked list
Start
Is an event in the linked list scheluduled for the current time?
N
Y
Is the event a stop event?
Y
N
load mpeg into card
switch from sustain to playout
start mpeg on card
remove item from linked list
switch from playout to sustain
black out card
close file

Proposed system:

The proposed system comprises of a scheduling system placed on the existing text box. It is outlined in the diagram below:



Major changes are: the sustain system now being the central scheduling server; the control line to the air switch becoming parallel; the control lines to the mpeg system being potentially ethernet.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Current System:

Advantages:

1) Less work, as much of the system has already been built.
2) More secure as there is no IP link between the mpeg playout system and the internet.

Disadvantages:

1) Inflexible as the software relies on a linked list with a non standard interface api.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Current System:

Advantages:

1) Much more flexible. Many useful features like web based administration and scheduling information on the website would be easier to implement.
2) There is scope for “Sorry we’re not on air” type displays in the event of a playout system crash at a critical moment.
3) The development of the system would be done by the new elect, meaning they will have a greater understanding of its functionality.
4) Much easier to maintain.
5) Services such as playout and scheduling are decentralised easing the task of upgrading machines/hardware.

Disadvantages:

1) A shit load of work ;)

Motions.

The group moved to develop the proposed system. It was pointed out by Paul that under all circumstances some form of **fully** working playout/scheduling system should be in place by the last week of the summer break.; this included a "Dan Proof" front end. Steve pointed out that the development of the new system did not destroy the old system until a very late stage in development and Richard suggested that the development team would know well in advance whether the deadline was to be met. It was agreed by the group that a development team lead by Andy Bennett would start work after June 11th and that in the event of a delay that work should be shifted to a new front end for the current system. Andy Bennett will call a development meeting after June 11th to discuss the finer details of his software proposal and to decide tasking. Paul said he didn't want to do anything because in three weeks he's going to run away and laugh at Tim!

Meeting ends.