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Captioned Movie Access Advocacy – Timeline

- 1927** – The first talking picture, *The Jazz Singer*, was produced. Talking pictures replaced silent films, making the movie going experience inaccessible to people with hearing loss.
- 1948** – **Captioned Films for the Deaf (CFD)** organized. First open-captioned film, *America the Beautiful*, produced. CFD became Captioned Films and Videos (CFV) in 1984 and then Captioned Media Program (CMP) in 1998.
- 1971** – **The Caption Center** was established at WGBH, a PBS affiliate in Boston.
- 1982** – **Tripod Captioned Films** was established. Open-captioned film prints donated by movie studios and Tripod arranged with local non-profit organizations to rent theater space.
- 1990** – Title III of **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** applies to movie theaters. US Department of Justice ADA regulations, Section 36.306(b), includes “open and closed captioning.” However, guidance for the regulations says, “Movie theaters are not required by Sec.36.303 to present open-captioned films.”
- 1993** – The National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM) is formed at WGBH.
Tripod Captioned Films begins captioning feature films for special open-captioned movie screenings in theaters. Between 1993 and 1997, Tripod received 3 to 5 prints for 25 movies.
- 1996** – **Movie Access Coalition**, a subcommittee of the NAD, was established.
- 1997** – **Rear Window[®] Caption (RWC)** display system debuted in California.
- 1998** – Direct-studio distribution of open-captioned movie prints began.
- 1999** – The Caption Center at WGBH captioned five movies for 10 RWC equipped theaters.
- 2000** – Movie Access Coalition renamed the **Coalition for Movie Captioning (CMC)**.
CMC charter member organizations: AGBell, ASDC, ALDA, CI Association, CAN, DSA, LHH, NAD, SHHH, and TDI.
- Oregon Case** – Claims against Regal, Century, Carmike, and Cinemark theater chains. Case dismissed in 2002.
- DC Case** – Claims against AMC and Loews; class action. Court denied request to dismiss the case in 2003 (see below). Case settled in 2004 (see below).
- About 16 RWC caption display systems installed by year end.

2001 – Connecticut captioned movie legislation introduced – did not pass.

DTS Cinema Subtitling System (DTS-CSS) demonstrated with pilot showing of *Pearl Harbor* at TDI Conference.

2002 – CMC Theater Watch – Memorial Day Weekend: 30 states with no captioned movie.
CMC member organizations: AGBell, ALDA, CAN, LHH, NAD, SHHH, and TDI.

InSight Cinema formed to carry the mission of Tripod Captioned Films forward.

Texas Case – Claims against movie studios/distributors dismissed in 2003. Claims against movie theater operators (AMC, Cinemark, Regal, and Century) dismissed in 2004.

About 40 RWC caption display systems installed by year end.

2003 – Movies begin to be produced with captions that can be projected on the screen in movie theaters with DTS-CSS caption display systems.

DC Case – Court denied request to dismiss the case. Decided ADA could require showing “closed captioned” movies.

2004 – CMC supported federal legislation creating tax break for movie studios and theaters to caption movies and show captioned movies (“Dayton Amendment”) – did not pass.

DC Case Settled – Added RWC caption display systems to 6 AMC and 6 Loews theaters (50% of AMC and Loews theaters in DC area; about 5% of their screens).

New Jersey – Attorney General signed agreements with 4 movie theater chains (AMC, Clearview, Loews, and National Amusements) to have 39 RWC systems for 35 theaters (about 10% of 383 screens). Filed lawsuit against Regal Cinemas; settled in 2006 (see below).

About 190 RWC caption display systems installed; and 50 DTS-CSS caption projection systems installed by year end.

2005 – CMC member organizations: ALDA, DHHCAN, DSA, HLAA, NAD, TDI.

Connecticut – Connecticut Association of the Deaf filed complaints with the Connecticut Human Rights Office against 33 movie theaters; case pending.

New York – Attorney General signed agreements with 8 movie theater chains with about 129 theaters and 1,132 screens. New York will have 38 theaters/screens with some caption access: 20 RWC systems, 9 DTS-CSS systems, and 9 Insight Cinema locations. This represents about 30% of these 129 theaters and about 3% of their 1,132 screens.

About 270 RWC caption display systems installed; and 150 DTS-CSS caption projection systems installed by year end.

2006 – **New Jersey** – Attorney General signed agreement with Regal Cinemas to show movies with DTS-CSS captions at least 8 times a week in 10 of its 12 movie theaters.

Regal Cinemas, the largest theater chain in the country, announced commitment to show captioned movies through Insight Cinema and DTS-CSS caption projection systems.

About 360 RWC caption display systems installed; and 210 DTS-CSS caption projection systems installed by year end.