

Myths of DX

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DX Myths... and Excuses

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DX myths and barriers

- Discourage even current DXers
- Keep new people from pursuing DXing
- Review some of the things that get in peoples' way in pursuing DX

Myth: You can't be a DXer without...

- ... your own station at home.
- Remote stations are more available than ever.
 - clubs
 - snowbirds' stations
 - Remote Ham Radio

Myth: Can't DX if you live in a high-rise

- All the remote solutions are possible.
- We all know someone who proves this isn't true.



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Myth: You can't be a DXer without...

- ...a beam.
- That's what most of us started out with—no beam.
- We all know people who pursue DXCC with only a wire ...
...and make it!



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Myth: You can't be a DXer without...

- ...an outdoor antenna.
- Many people use “stealth” or attic antennas.

Myth: Can't DX without a tower.

- Plenty of DXCCs have been made with wires, verticals, or even mobiles.
- You can drive a Ford or a Maserati.
 - Both will get you there.
 - One might be faster than the other.



Small antennas work!

- This ham has 5B DXCC
- “Any antenna beats no antenna”
 - Bert WBØN



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Myth: Must be an experienced operator to work DX.

- Obviously, experience helps.
- Listen to any pileup, and it's clear that not all operators are experienced.
 - In fact, listen to some of the DX operators!
- The only way to develop experience is to do it!

Myth: There's no one on the DX bands

- Calling CQ will often raise someone on a “quiet” band.
- WSPR can be used to see if a band is really “dead.”
- JT modes prove—no longer true that “if you can't hear 'em you can't work 'em”
 - Working below 0 dB signal-to-noise ratio.

Myth: DX takes too much time.

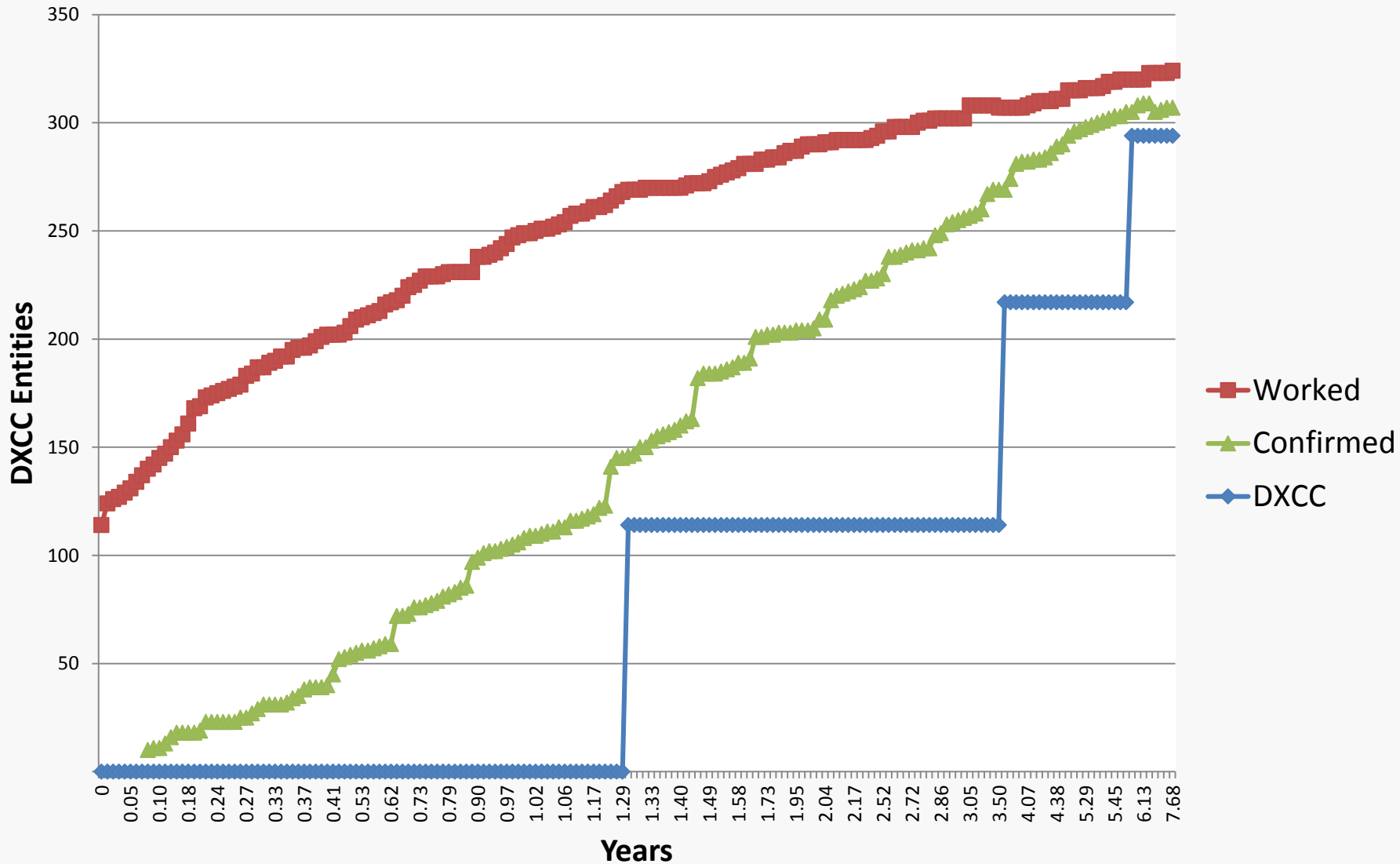
- DXing with the cluster cuts down time.
- Programs exist to flag only those entities you need.
- Each person can adopt their own approach.



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KØGW—Zero to 294 in 8 years



Myth: DX takes too much patience.

- Patience and perseverance are definitely assets to the DXer...
- ...but this is less so in getting the first 100.
- Cluster makes it easier to know when DX is available.
- Band scopes make it easier to find the best frequency.



Debunking myths

- ...doesn't imply that overcoming them is easy.
- Easy vs. impossible.
- There's a reason it's called "working DX".

DX barriers

- Many are excuses.
- Some are mistaken beliefs that get in the way.
- Many are self-imposed.
- *“You can’t make the Q if you don’t try” —WBØN*

You can't be a DXer without...

- ... at least a General Class license.
- Techs have HF privileges—10m phone, or 80, 40 or 15m CW
- There are Techs who have their DXCC.

You can't be a DXer without...

- ...more than 100 watts.
- There are plenty of “hundred watts & a wire” DXCCs out there.
- Don't confuse easier with impossible.

I can't hear the DX!

- Here's one place the experienced DXer can help.
- Diagnose the problem.
- Remember that \$ in the antenna pay off on both receive and transmit.

The bands are dead.

- If a band is open, but no one calls CQ, how can you know if the band is dead or not?

Using the cluster is “cheating.”

- The cluster (DX Summit, DXLite, etc.) are legitimate “alerting” mechanisms.
 - Just a variant of “two rings and hang up.”
- Only you know if your DXCC is *really* QRP, or all YL ops, or ...
- This is an individual decision—ops are really competing with themselves.

QSLing takes too long.

- These days, electronic QSLs are easy and becoming easier to get.
- Digital mode ops QSL at rates > 80%!
- Many QSLs “arrive” the weekend after the operating event.
 - Some within minutes! (LoTW)

QSLing costs too much.

- Electronically QSLs remove the cost of postage, printing cards, envelopes, etc.
- Even DX stations that want green stamps have figured out how to accept them electronically.
- “Lost” QSLs are reduced.

Computer logging is too hard.

- For most newbies, computer logging is easier and more natural.
- It's practically "free" for digital modes.
- Contest logging also provides LoTW uploading with practically no effort.
- Good logging programs are worth learning how to use.
- Some programs are really simple.



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LoTW is too hard to use.

- Using Logbook is much simpler today than it was when started in 2003.
- Most of the tricky parts have been removed.
- LoTW is working to simplify process.
- People who can answer questions
 - ARRL-LoTW group on Yahoo!
 - Logbook help line.
 - Friends who already use Logbook.



I have lots of cards, but only online QSLing counts these days.

- ARRL continues to accept cards.
- However, cards and electronic confirmations can no longer be mixed in the same application.
- Field checking continues to be available, and prevents having to ship cards via mail.

I moved from FLA to MN.
I need to start all over again.

- DXCC contacts within a DX entity are all considered equivalent.
- WAS contacts of course are different if you move states.

DX stations only work pileups.

- 9J2BO—calls CQ; goes away when too many people respond. Doesn't want "599 TU" QSOs.
- "I am a great believer in calling "CQ" on an apparently dead band !" —9J2BO
- DXing during a contest means there are fewer other stations calling than on a DXpedition.



JT65 and FT8 are special digital modes and don't count for DXCC.

- All the digital modes are counted equally for DXCC (except RTTY).
- Different digital modes can be merged in a single DXCC application.

Other self-imposed barriers

- I'm not a good enough operator.
- I haven't had my license long enough.
- I don't want to do anything wrong. People will laugh at me.
- I don't have a "big enough" station/antenna/amplifier.
- My Elmer told me DXing is for experts.



Why am I telling you?

- Experienced DXers can dispel the myths.
- Provide a proof it can be done.
- Can help newbies get started...
 - By example — see it and hear it.
 - With loaned equipment
 - Sharing their station

DXing...

- ...is lots of things.
- ...*isn't* lots of things.
- Experienced DXers learned all this “the hard way.”
- New DXers are more likely to stay with it if they don't have to learn it all the hard way.

If DXing is to continue into the Second Century...

- ...we need to get new amateurs to join the party.
- ...we need to eliminate the “barriers to entry”.
- ...we need DXing to be attractive *compared to other radio activities.*
- ...we need DXing to be attractive *compared to other hobbies.*

All of us are ambassadors of DX

- Even the “little pistols” (*or, maybe, most especially*) have a role to play.
- If we just talk to ourselves instead of welcoming the newbies, we will have only ourselves to talk to.

The real “challenge” award

- Some of your biggest, or best, DX may be the distance between you as a seasoned operator and the new kid down the block who is afraid he can't measure up to working 100 countries, much less Honor Roll.
- You can help fix that!
- 73 es gud DX!



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For new DXers

- Many “myths” are untrue, or can be worked around.
- But don't labor under *too* many.

DX “don’ts” for starters

- Though you don’t need a kW, don’t start out with QRP.
- You don’t need a brand new rig, but don’t start with a vintage rig you must restore.
- Give yourself a break!