

## Message from the President

### Stanley N. Baron

Dear Friends:

This month begins my two-year journey as the 39th President of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers. I accept the honor and responsibility of serving as your President and would like to take this opportunity to give you some idea of the journey that we will take together.

The members of the Society and the industries they serve are experiencing a time of change. Advances in the technology we use and the convergence of the various communications media brought about by the implementation of digital technology have impacted the creation of motion-picture and television programming, the means of distribution, and the ways in which the marketplace is viewed.

The Society's role is to help both its individual members and sustaining members to understand and cope with the fast-paced evolving environment in which we must work and to provide the tools necessary to conduct their activities. The Society must adjust to the new environment in its educational services, in the production of standards that define the new technologies, and in the way it provides services to the members. This is not the first time that the Society has faced this kind of challenge. The Society of Motion Picture Engineers (SMPE), founded in 1916, faced a similar challenge in the 1950s as the television production industry began to reach maturity, and it successfully turned the challenge into an opportunity that allowed the Society and the community it serves to grow and prosper. Now, in the 1990s, the Society's members are learning to cope with new electronic forms of communication and new electronic tools.

The members of the Board of Governors represent the membership on a regional basis. That diverse body, along with other invited participants such as the headquarters management staff, representative section chairmen,



and others, has begun a strategic planning process to analyze the environment and provide for the necessary changes in the Society's services and structure to meet the new challenges. The project is called SMPTE 2000, and the first workshop took place on October 16, 1994, at the end of the 136th SMPTE Conference in Los Angeles. The strategic planning process can be viewed as an eight-step process, in which the first step involves gathering data and assessing members' needs and external trends. Later steps include analyzing the Society's mission with respect to the members' needs, developing goals and objectives to meet the Society's mission, developing strategies to achieve its goals and objectives, and taking action to implement the strategies.

The first workshop focused on the Society's primary role as the bridge between the providers of technology and the creative users of technology. We confirmed the Society's commitment to advancing the motion-imaging arts and sciences and discussed the means by which that commitment could be strengthened.

The first workshop identified areas of improvement that can be implemented in the near future, as well as issues that will require further study before an implementation plan and goals can be developed. Four items became priority issues for immediate action. They were: (1) to make membership in the Society accessible and relevant to a

broader range of individuals involved in the motion-imaging arts and sciences; (2) to identify, develop, and market the value-added member services and benefits to the community that the Society currently provides; (3) to upgrade the *Journal* to meet the changing needs of the membership; and (4) to increase the Society's visibility.

As an example, improvements to the *Journal* were divided into two categories, one relating to its image, and the second (and more important) relating to the content. It was agreed that the *SMPTE Journal*, which until the recent past had focused on articles of a developmental nature, would be expanded. The plan is to make the recently added Tutorial section a permanent feature and to add new sections, one on Practice and Application that will address operational issues, and a Point of View section that allows the membership to speak out.

As one of the steps to increase the diversity and usefulness of the material in the *Journal*, the Society has recently entered into an agreement with the organizers of both the Montreux Symposium and the International Broadcasting Convention in Amsterdam. Both organizations publish a *Proceedings* that is distributed to the attendees of their respective conferences. Under the new arrangement, the SMPTE has been granted permission to make those papers part of our editorial review process and to publish in the *Journal* those papers we feel are appropriate to our members' needs. This arrangement benefits the members of the Society in that it provides a more diverse and international perspective on the disciplines in which we are involved. It benefits the two organizations and the contributors of the papers by exposing work to a wider, international community. You will also now find both organizations listed as Sustaining Members of the Society.

This is your Society, and I invite you to write to me with your concerns, comments, and suggestions for its improvement.

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