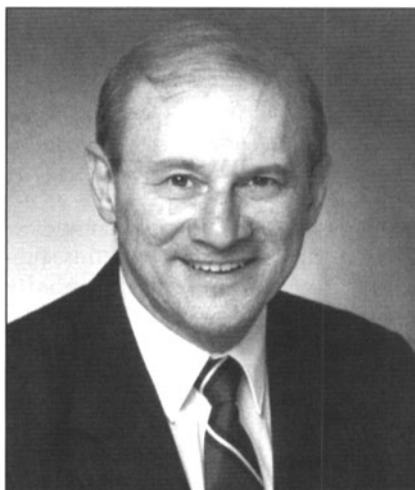


A Highly Successful "Off-Year" in Australia

SMPTE'95, the 7th International Conference and Exhibition held by the SMPTE Australian Section, was supposedly an "off-year" event. This conference has traditionally been held in even-numbered years, as was a similar event in Singapore. The Australian members, noting a growing interest and participation in their conference by the international community and Australia's role in the future of the global market, altered the timing of the event to encourage overseas participation and rescheduled the conference to odd-numbered years, thus eliminating potential schedule conflicts with the Singapore event. SMPTE'94 had been considered a very successful event, attracting approximately 525 conference attendees. It was felt that SMPTE'95, as the transitional year, would not attract that large an audience.

Change in Conference Structure

Our Australian colleagues decided to use this opportunity to experiment by changing the conference structure. A limited number of specific key industry issues were identified, and speakers were invited from both the national and international communities to develop as diverse a perspective as possible. The goal was to have SMPTE'95 continue the tradition of presenting dynamic new technologies that has established the SMPTE Australian conference as a leading forum in film and television engineering. The sessions were based on an interactive format, with the speakers presenting their basic positions on the topic in question and



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retiring to a "living room" setting to further discuss the issues among themselves and with the audience. The experiment proved to be highly successful, attracting over 560 conference attendees.

New Interface Role for Program

SMPTE's traditional role has been to act as a bridge between the providers of motion-imaging technology and the creative users of that technology. The Australian program organized some of the sessions as a forum to provide a direct interface between the creative community and the manufacturers. In one such session on nonlinear editing, about 75% of the audience identified themselves as editors, directors, or producers. Dominic Case, Chair of the session, stated that the program's goal was to move out from the engineering and product presentations to cover issues of importance to the creative users of the systems. [A revised version of his address appears in this issue.]

Both the program format and the attempt to provide a forum that allowed direct communication between the creative users of the technology and the providers of the technology proved highly successful. The debate was spirited, and the format allowed for a very open and positive flow of information.

The conference seminar topics were "Subscription Television," "The New Experience" (which included widescreen television, surround sound, and other issues), "Compression, Multimedia and Desktops," "Video Disk File Servers," "Non-Linear Editing," and "Digital Effects on Film." Straw polls of the audiences, asking for professional identification, showed that the program proved to be of interest to a much broader cross-section of the industry than the traditional members of SMPTE. The Australian conference was highly successful in terms of meeting the Society's goals of education, communication, and maintenance of technical standards.

Conference Sets Standard of Excellence

Chris Minahan, Chair of SMPTE Australia North, Tim Waygood, Chair of SMPTE'95, and the members of the Managing Boards of both Australian Sections are to be congratulated on executing an exceptional conference. The response from both the Australian and international communities is testimony to their having achieved their goals and provided a conference experience that set a standard of excellence. The content and format of this year's event was well received and left the delegates and exhibitors looking forward to SMPTE'97.

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