

Section Meetings

Atlanta

November 18, 1996

Carl Amend, NVision, began the meeting by offering two books to the 36-member audience: his company's *The Book*, about making the transition to digital audio, and *The Video Engineer's Guide to Digital Audio*, by John Watkinson. He then introduced his colleagues, Jim Burger and Chuck Meyer.

Meyer began the formal presentation by listing some of the benefits of digital audio over analog audio. He then discussed the adverse effects of jitter and offered synchronization as a solution. He stressed the importance of reference levels as the secret to transparency in digital audio. He then reviewed the different number of quantization levels in use and the progression of transcoding methods, beginning with simple dithering and ending up with psychoacoustic noise shaping to translate between different quantization level systems. Next, the different versions of AES standards were discussed, along with the AES data structure. Twisted pair was compared to coaxial cable as a means for signal distribution.

Meyer concluded with some practical information on how to configure systems, and offered some advice on what shortcuts could and could not be taken in order to preserve a reliable, high-quality operating environment. — Dick Perin (Secretary/Treasurer), Sony Electronics

Florida/Caribbean

November 12, 1996 (Orlando)

November 13, 1996 (Fort Lauderdale)

For the third straight month, the meeting was held twice, in both Central and South Florida. They focused on video file server technology and the hardware and software issues involved in implementing this technology into television studio systems. The missing link in any open architecture system is the software to manage the network and data using various manufacturers' devices and systems. Clyde Smith, Turner Entertainment, explained that there is a need to automate the control of and information on media regarding access, rights to use, and history of use. There is also the need to keep up with information on the elements: video, audio, captions, subtitles, and storage location, as well as the management of the mounted volume space. He also discussed the need for a new standard in interchange. — Al LeBoeuf (Chair), Lockheed Martin, Electronics and Missiles



Napa Valley College students Tyrone Sweeney (left) and Robert Maniaci (right) with guest speaker Maria Viviani at the November meeting.

Napa Valley College

November 12, 1996

Maria Viviani, Western Image, San Francisco, addressed an audience of 35 Napa Valley College students and two Napa High School students at the November meeting. After graduating from Napa Valley College in 1994 with a telecommunications degree, she went to work at Pacific Video Resource, a post-production facility in San Francisco. Viviani's first job was to help build a blue-screen stage and install the lighting grid. After two years, she went to work at Western Image, where her duties as a video engineer are to maintain VTRs, edit suites, and the telecine. — Robert Maniaci, Student Chair

Nashville

November 21, 1996

The meeting, held at Scene Three Studio and attended by 18 people, featured speakers Pat Patterson and Ralph Hucaby, both retired from Nashville's WTVF. Their program was a look back to the 1940s and 1950s and how broadcast television has become an integral part of our lives. The speakers gave excellent recounts of their experiences as engineers in the pioneering days of television technology. — Tom Hoffman (Secretary/Treasurer), MPL Film & Video

Toronto

November 12, 1996

One hundred ten people came to Millennium Multimedia to hear three different presentations on developments in

CRT, projection, and flat screen video display technologies. The evening started with a presentation by Dan Desmet, Barco USA, about his company's broadcast displays; he presented a paper that focused on Vivaldi, a new Barco product that allows broadcast-quality images to be displayed on a VGA multisync monitor. He went on to talk about current VGA monitors, which provide higher resolution, contain a dark faceplate, and are lower in price due to the numbered manufactured. All these factors were taken into account in Vivaldi's development.

Paul Stechley, Applied Electronics, conducted the second presentation on Texas Instruments' digital micromirror device (DMD) technology. DMD uses conventional semiconductor manufacturing technology and provides a true digital display where pixels are being turned on or off to produce the image.

Mitchell Solomon, Sony of Canada, concluded the evening with a presentation on Sony's Plasmatron video displays. Plasmatron was designed to be a lightweight flat video display that uses a plasma switch to turn pixels on and off. It delivers a 50:1 contrast ratio and up to 260,000 colors on the screen. — Brad Fortner (Promotions Adviser) and Miya Djuric, Rogers Communications Centre, Ryerson Polytechnic University

To publicize your Section events, please send announcements to SMPTE Headquarters, 595 W. Hartsdale Ave., White Plains, NY 10607, tel: (914) 761-1100, fax: (914) 761-3115, e-mail: edit@smpte.org. Information must be received by the 15th of the second month preceding issue date (e.g., January 15th for March issue).