

Engineering News

William H. Gates, Chairman of Microsoft Corp. Addresses SMPTE Engineering Committees

William H. Gates, III, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board of Microsoft Corporation addressed the SMPTE engineering committees on June 11, 1998 at Microsoft's corporate campus in Redmond, WA. The quarterly series of meetings for SMPTE Technology Committees and subgroups was hosted by Microsoft during the week of June 8-12, 1998.

Gates welcomed committee members and noted that standards are critical to Microsoft and to the industries concerned with the future of digital television. As an example, he used set top boxes and the strong economic influences involved. He believes digital television implementation will be extremely difficult without the cooperation of the cable industry.

He reported on Microsoft Research, the fastest-growing unit in the corporation; MS Research now has 300 people and is expected to double in five years. The unit was started because Microsoft can no longer simply rely on research performed at other corporations, such as IBM, and the universities.

Gates stated partnerships were key to the future. He believes the success of the personal computer is based on specialization by the companies involved, and software continues to hold the greatest opportunities for Microsoft. Microsoft focuses on the authors of software by providing production tools for software developers. He expects specialization to continue in the future: Microsoft in software, Intel in



SMPTE Engineering Vice-President William C. Miller and William H. Gates, Microsoft Corp., at the quarterly meetings of SMPTE Technology Committees in June. — photo by C.V. Girod

chips, Compaq and SGI in computer hardware systems.

He went on to say our collective participation in and support of SMPTE will render important developments in the future. Hand-held devices using Windows CE will become very important; high-resolution, flat screen, portable devices will change the nature of personal computers.

Gates responded to a question from the audience concerning the importance of "content." He stated, "Microsoft's involvement in content is limited to a few games, e.g., Golf and Flight Simulator and an encyclopedia; but in general,

Microsoft is not interested in providing a motion picture or a television series.

In response to another question concerning selling moderately priced items to millions of customers versus selling a few \$1.5 million items, he said he'd love to sell anything for \$1 million.

William C. Miller, SMPTE Engineering Vice-President, thanked Gates for meeting with the group, for Microsoft's hosting the week of meetings, and for the excellent support received from Craig Mundie, Tom McMahon, and their staffs.

— C.V. Girod

Engineering Meeting Schedule

September

Wed. 9/16	A12.68 - SG on Audio Prod/Post Prod. Ent. Program (Strong)	Disney Studios, Burbank, CA
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October

Wed. 10/28	A12.68 - SG on Audio Prod/Post Prod. Ent. Program (Strong)	Disney Studios, Burbank, CA
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December

Fri. 12/4	M21 and Subgroups	AMPTVP, Encino, CA
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Mon.-Fri. 12/7-11	A12, S17, PT20, V16, P18 and Subgroups	JVC Pro Products Los Angeles, CA
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Wed. 12/9	A12.68 - SG on Audio Prod/Post Prod. Ent. Program (Strong)	Disney Studios, Burbank, CA
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