

Section Meetings

Chicago

June 25, 2001

Twenty-five attendees gathered at Discreet's regional facilities, where Mike Weaver gave a presentation titled "Jobnet, More Than Just a SAN." Weaver reviewed reasons why users of computer-based editing systems desire shared storage of media and metadata. He described an approach to providing a shared storage editing system where multiple users can access the same media and associated metadata without conflicts. The system uses standard off-the-shelf components where Fibre Channel NICs, switches, RAID controllers, and hard disk drives are all unmodified and commercially available.

Weaver discussed Jobnet, Discreet's proprietary software, which runs on the SAN network. The program allows collaborators to open EDLs, preview associated media, create new edits and re-save the results, or create a new file. The Jobnet file includes metadata with pointers to specific media residing on the SAN.

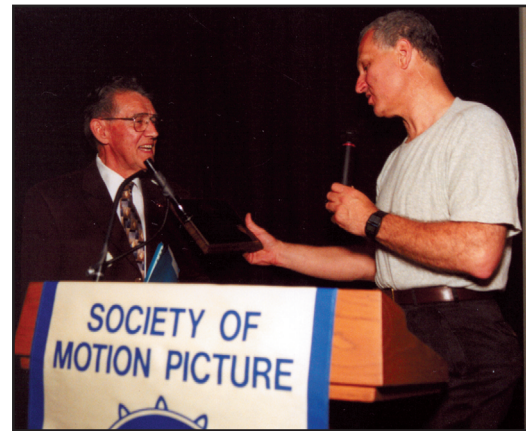
After the presentation, the system was available for hands-on operation.—Steve Robinson, Secretary/Treasurer

Hollywood

June 19, 2001

After an informal dinner at the Crocodile Café in Glendale, CA, SMPTE Executive Vice-President Gavin Schutz, Liberty Livewire Media Co., gave a briefing on digital asset management to an audience of 150 at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage in Griffith Park, Los Angeles. Jim DeFilippis, Fox Television, described the work of the SMPTE W25 Committee on Metadata and Wrapper Technology, pointing out that a structure of layered standards had been developed for this application. Jerry Ledbetter, Concadia Solutions, defined asset management and described the development of a business plan, taking into account projected reductions in the cost of digital storage and the high cost of networking.

Juergen Heitmann, consultant, AV media technology, and SMPTE Governor at Large, gave a European perspective, describing the EBU project on Future Television Archives. He indicated that enterprise systems such as digital asset management are similar to enterprise resource planning systems that have been used in business for 20 years. Heitmann also discussed the need for a constant migration policy in the storage carriers used to preserve media assets.—Alan Masson, Section Chair



Ed Schuller accepting a plaque for 50 years of service to the New York Section, presented by Secretary/Treasurer Ben Homenick.

New York

June 13, 2001

The meeting was held at the Guns for Hire theater with approximately 100 attendees. Ed Schuller was presented with a plaque "In honor of 50 years of dedicated service to SMPTE in New York." Schuller is currently Test Materials Advisor and has served as Manager, Secretary-Treasurer, Chairman, and Governor of the Section. Nationally, he has also participated on more than a dozen committees and is the current volunteer Chair for the 143rd Technical Conference.

Robert Goodman, an Emmy-Award winning writer and director, was the first of two speakers on "Video Capture for Film Release." He projected different film clips recorded with a DV camera and shot back to film. Goodman showed shots recorded in the normal interlaced mode and progressive frame modes, with live outdoor action. He sent clones of the DV footage to ten post-production houses to interpolate the 60-field NTSC or 50-field PAL to a 24-progressive frame image to shoot back to film. This resulted in many different interpolations: one scene looked good, but the next scene showed motion artifacts and blurs of people in motion. The progressive footage had more detail, but the motion was somewhat jittery and unnatural.



Speakers on Digital Asset Management at the June meeting of the Hollywood Section. (l-r) Dr. Juergen Heitmann, consultant; Jerry Ledbetter, Concadia Solutions; Jim DeFilippis, Fox Television.



New York Section meeting in June. (l-r) Lloyd Forcellini, DuArt Film and Video; Robert Goodman; and Section Manager Chuck Roback.

Goodman also presented a twilight scene, which became darker with increased camera gain. This also increased the noise, which can be expected, but the scene would go out of focus.

The next speaker, Lloyd Forcellini, president of technical productions at DuArt Film and Video, demonstrated the projection of different types of video cameras to film, such as the Sony DigiBeta, DV (XL1, PD150, 3000) Beta SP, and footage of 24p from Sony's new multiformat HDCAM F900 camera. Forcellini told attendees not to be discouraged by Goodman's presentation, because it illustrated ten different companies with the same footage interpolating the video, with varying results. He pointed out that consulting the post-production house before shooting a video can make scanning-to-film a less painful process and result in better quality output, by shooting the video correctly and using the right camera for budget. He explained further that the footage was shot with digital Betacam, which has a 422 YUV 2:1 compression and much less aliasing and motion artifacts than DV footage at 4:1:1 YUV 4:1 compression, due to the temporal resolution of the 4:1 compression.

The meeting ended with a Q and A session.—Chuck Roback, Section Manager

Rochester May 8, 2001

The program was held at Rochester's legendary, movie-theme-decorated Animatus Studio, where 21 attendees were lucky to find seats for "The Making of Hand Drawn and Digital Cartoons." Fred Armstrong, founder of Animatus and an animator since 1974, introduced Dave Puls, creative director, and Mike Boas, webmaster/flash animator.

Animatus began operation in 1989 with an Oxberry 16mm, 35mm, and Super 35 Filmmaker camera for production of television commercials and industrial films. Armstrong reminisced about Super 8 film and U-matic tape, recalling how a Lion Lamb frame-by-frame recorder met their needs until they moved to a more stable PC-based-platform with in-sync Speed Razor and a DPS PVR board. The same compact studio space—including what Armstrong calls his "cast-iron camera museum"—also boasts five networked workstations for a broad offering of productions. Along with traditional commercial work, Animatus is producing the Flash animated "Dinner Dogs" musical short for children and the self-stylized, hand-drawn cartoon "Derf," for more mature audiences. From storyboard to exposure sheets, Derf the misbehaving Viking takes shape through the use of up to 100 layers in Celmation AXA animation software, with lip-sync kept intact with traditional "bar" sheets. The Animatus Studio staff conducted several demonstrations of these projects for attendees. —John P. Weiksna, Section Chair



Obituaries

Earl "Mac" Mehaffey, a beloved member of the Bay Area video community, passed away on March 21 at his home in Emeryville. Mehaffey had been employed by Advanced Systems Group after its acquisition of General Electronics Systems Inc. (GESI) in July 2000. He was a loyal member of SMPTE and of the local Bay Area Broadcasters Organization.

Mehaffey had been part of the sales team at GESI since November 1989. Prior to that, he worked as a sales engineer in the broadcast division at Sony Electronics in San Jose from January 1986 until his departure to GESI. He may also be remembered as part of the RCA sales team.

In his earlier days, Mehaffey was the chief engineer at KTVK in Phoenix during some of the most exciting years in television, 1956 through 1977. He was a Korean War veteran.

Louis P. Rankine died on March 2, 2001, at age 62. Rankine was founder and CEO of Instar International Communication Corp., a film and video production company. He had a B.A. in film, television, radio, and journalism from Howard University and a M.A. in telecommunications from Michigan State University. During his career, Rankine worked as production manager of the Audio Visual Telecommunication Department at Howard University Hospital for eight years. He produced videotape programs on a variety of surgical procedures in addition to producing award-winning public relations and public information videotapes. He also worked as writer, lighting technician, and cameraman on many dramatic and documentary television productions in London, England.