



MESSAGE FROM EDITORIAL VICE-PRESIDENT

Edward P. Hobson

SMPTTE participates in a number of outreach programs in addition to our regular conferences, section meetings, and special one-day seminars. Our most recent event was the SMPTE-sponsored and produced session on Digital Rights Management for Television and D-Cinema, held during IBC2003 in Amsterdam last month. SMPTE is a co-sponsor of IBC, along with the IEE (Institution of Electrical Engineers), the IEEE, the IABM (International Association of Broadcasting Manufacturers), and the Society of Cable Telecommunications Engineers. For the past several years we have produced SMPTE sessions during the IBC Conference, to provide updates on the Society's work and to help promote the Society to a broader market, particularly in the European zone.

Last year's topic was Content Labeling and Identification. Michael Dolan and Mike Cox chaired a session that explained the schemes being developed for the purpose of identifying and tracking video, audio, and data material. Schemes are used to label material in realtime during production, identify finished works, track material through distribution channels, and reference material by the receiver equipment. These schemes are important not only in the technical aspects of production and distribution, but also in the rights management arena.

This year we followed-on with a session on Digital Rights Management, which is a hot topic and one of special concern to content owners, broadcasters, and consumers. According to a recent article in *The New York Times*, the Motion Picture Association (MPA) estimates that 90% of the DVDs sold in China in 2002 were illegal copies. The MPA also estimates the value of these pirated films to be more than \$640 million. Furthermore, 90% of music CDs sold in 2002 was also pirated, costing another \$530 million to the legitimate owners. Music content owners and the RIAA have initiated lawsuits to deter widespread copying and sharing of material via the internet. Motion pictures currently require more than an order of magnitude more of storage, and some pundits argue that copying and exchanging material via the internet will not be a significant factor. With improved compression techniques and more broadband services to homes (and University dorm rooms), it is probably only a matter of time before movies and similar entertainment material will be sailing around the world. The widespread deployment of digital broadcasting services further compounds the problem.

So, although content owners need to be protected from unauthorized use and copying, the consumer needs a system that is not intrusive and allows for fair use—a challenging problem, particularly across international geo-political boundaries.

Our presenters at IBC included Andy Setos, president of engineering for the Fox Group, who discussed the need for a "broadcast flag," to prevent unauthorized use; Brad Hunt, CTO of the MPA, who described some solutions and challenges due to an unprotected "analog hole;" Merrill Weiss of the Merrill Weiss Group, who described Extended Content Control Information (ExCCI), a developing SMPTE Standard and associated Recommended Practice that will communicate content owner intentions throughout the professional space. Rist Brouwer, CEO of DMDsecure, described solutions being offered by his firm, including rights management for the first film debuted on the internet: *This is Not a Love Song?* Henning Wilkens of the IRT in Germany, described the challenges that rights management will impose on Europe's public broadcasters. Finally, Robert Schwartz of McDermott, Will, and Emery, described the legal and techno-political aspects of pending legislation and regulation in the U.S.

I would like to thank all the speakers and my co-chair, Peter Symes, SMPTE Engineering Vice-President, for their participation in this important and well-attended session.

Future special events will include the SMPTE Day at NAB 2004 in Las Vegas, where our topic will be D-Cinema. We hope to see you there!