

BKSTS-SMPTE-TVB EUROPE HDV MASTERS SEMINAR: HIGHLIGHTS



The HDV Masters Conference, held on May 17 and 18, 2006, at the Imax Theatre Complex in London, U.K., brought together many broadcasters from around the world to discuss topics in high-definition television.

The conference, which was organized by BKSTS, working in close partnership with SMPTE and TVB Europe (the technology business magazine) was a great success.

The two-day event, attended by about 240 people, was chaired by SMPTE Past President and Engineering Vice-President Gavin Schutz, and addressed themes on Standards, Acquisition and Production, HD Editing, Sound, Contribution and Distribution, Program Interchange and Storage, Production, Viewing, and Display.

The sessions included an array of presentations by industry professionals as well as panel discussions, giving attendees the opportunity to participate and interact with speakers.

Here are some highlights of the event:

In the first session on Standards, Phil Laven, director of the EBU Technical Department, gave a history of HDTV since the 1980s until present. He also explained the different formats and summarized the EBU's work in this area. In this session, Bruce Devlin, Snell & Wilcox, gave a detailed explanation of the many different standards that apply to different areas of HDTV and also provided some interesting clips of what can go wrong when trying to convert between standards.

The Acquisition and Production session included three presentations on the design and properties of HD cameras from Thomson Grass Valley, Sony, and Panasonic.

Journalist George Jarrett chaired a panel that discussed the difference in editing in high-definition, and the problems that HD can cause in post-production.

Wes Simpson, Telecom Product Consulting, discussed the problems of transmitting HD signals in the uncompressed form.

Addressing issues on Program Interchange and Storage, John Ive, previously from Sony, led a discussion and explanation of the roles that tape, optical disks, hard disk, and solid state



media currently play. He spoke of file-based interchange mechanisms such as MEF and MXF.

In the session on "Viewing," two case studies were provided by Ethan Bush, National TeleConsultants. The first, for ESPN's digital high-definition program production facility in Bristol, Connecticut, the second, for PBS affiliate station KQED in San Francisco. Bush provided a vast amount of detailed practical information to the audience.

Richard Salmon, BBC R&D, provided a technical treatise on Displays, from the basic characteristic of the eye to show that 720p HD displays are good up to 50 in. at a 2.7 m viewing distance. He also described a range of display technologies. David Bancroft, Thomson, also addressed this theme by highlighting the problems of picture quality and control on professional monitors as the CRT displays are inevitably replaced by LCD or other technologies. He suggested several interesting ways to overcome the difficulties, perhaps using CRT emulators to drive the studio monitors.

The sessions concluded with a final panel in which participants Gavin Schutz, Roderick Snell, Mike Croll, John Ive, and Andy Quedsted debated the future challenges of HDTV.

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