

Message from the Executive Director

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Starting Off on the Right Foot *Walk a Mile in Their Shoes...*

A very important part of my job is getting to know the people, culture, and history of the organization—and using that information to help our governors chart a course for the future. A significant step in learning this, I believe, is to start off on the right foot by walking a mile in your shoes.

I begin to write this article during yet another plane delay...this time in Toronto, Canada, where I had the very fortunate opportunity to address attendees (many of whom are SMPTE members) at the Toronto Section's successful *Boot Camp III: Advanced Technologies-Beyond HD*. I think about the day's events and the many engaging conversations I had. These conversations energize me and help me build momentum for the platform of services we need to develop to better serve our Sections and the members that are involved. It is during these Section visits that I truly recognize the diversity of SMPTE members. We serve a very broad audience—from film to digital cinema and from traditional broadcast to satellite, cable, and others. The one thing that holds constant is that our members all have a tie to media content.

I have attended Section meetings and events in Atlanta, Australia, Boston, Hollywood, Philadelphia, Toronto, New York, and Washington, D.C., and would like to extend a big thank you to our Section leadership for affording me these opportunities. Other members of my headquarters team have also attended other Section meetings and events and our plan is to continue this outreach.

It is important to recognize that our volunteer leaders have a limited number of hours that they can dedicate to working with their Section. Pausing to step out of my role and into the mind of our volunteers helps me to increase the effectiveness of SMPTE. Here, we can begin to recognize and ultimately share best practices.

Whether you call them “best practices,” “great ideas” or simply “ideas that work,” there are many areas where our Sections can learn from each other—and where opportunities to better serve our Sections emerge. Several issues have bubbled to the surface during my visits, and as an organization we are currently working on these issues to improve Section Management and Leadership. They include:

- Succession management for Section leadership.
- Best Practices Toolkit: Dedication of a portion of the website to a “tool kit” of best practices and also sample checklists and materials.
- Development of an online event management and meeting registration tools for Sections.
- Provision of an e-commerce platform to accept online payments for events.
- Development of an online social networking platform.

Current benchmarks of increased service to our Sections include implementation of (1) a centralized member data system; (2) a *simple* content management system for Section websites; and (3) Section leadership training.

In closing, I'd like you to start thinking about what best practices you might share. For example, Peter Hammar of the San Francisco Section is working on an upcoming *SMPTE Journal* article on webcasting to share best practices. I challenge you to envision the Section of the future and what that might look like. I continue to have an open door for you to share your thoughts for the future. Let me hear from you.