



Member Contact and Electronic Services

By Peter Symes

We interrupt the series on SMPTE standards activities to discuss electronic services for all members. Most routine services, including elections, are now handled by e-mail or the SMPTE website; you need to know how to access the services you need, and how to ensure that the Society can contact you reliably. SMPTE Headquarters is committed to using our Members' dollars wisely, and these days that means using e-mail and web services instead of paper and physical mail whenever possible. For the time being, we continue to serve our members without access to e-mail, but "paperless" is our principal means of operation, and the direction for the future. This article reviews the ways to access information, to ensure that we can continue to contact you, and what to do if things go wrong!

The article includes some very important information about list subscriptions, so please look at this section, even if you are thoroughly familiar with the electronic services.

The SMPTE Website

This is the main resource for access to information from SMPTE, for contacting staff, and for maintaining your member record. The SMPTE website address is <http://www.smpte.org/> but generally all you need to type in a browser is "smpte.org" (without the quotes). This takes you to the home page where you can see the latest news, events, standards information, and a wealth of other information and educational resources. It is also where your colleagues or your company can join SMPTE, so be sure to encourage them to go to the site and select "Membership"!

Some areas of the website, such as access to the online *Journal* require membership, and so you need to log in. And, of course, you need to log in to access and update your private information. Whenever you select an area of the website that needs you to log in, an authentication dialog box will appear asking for your username and password. Fill in these and click "OK" and you will be logged in—and you will remain logged in until you close your browser (so be sure to do this when you have finished if you are on a public computer, such as in a library).

Trouble logging in? Forgot your username or password? See the next section!

Login Problems?

Your default username is your membership number. If you had a password on the old SMPTE website, and have not changed it, it will still be valid on the new website (but we do encourage you to change your password from time to time). If you do not have your username or password, proceed as follows:

Go to the main website and click on "Members Area" at the top of the page. When the authentication dialog box appears, click "Cancel." You will be taken to a page that says "Unauthorized: Access Denied." Do not despair! Click the link that says "An online tool is available to let you reset your password" and you will be taken to a "Password Help" page. Enter the e-mail address in your member record (see next page if you don't have this) and you will be sent an e-mail with a one-time login link. Open the e-mail and click on the link; your browser will open a page that shows your username at the top, and a space to enter a new password. You may change your username if you wish (or leave it as is); in either case enter a new password. Then, go back to the main website, click on "Members Area" and in the dialog box enter your username (the new one if you changed it) and your new password.

Do not use the link in the e-mail again—it's a one-time link, and you have already used it!

If you do not know the e-mail address in your member record, or no longer have access to that address, or if you just got your first e-mail address, contact Jennifer Andrie, Member Services Manager at Headquarters, and she will be pleased to help.

Your Member Account

Once you have logged in, you will be able to access the Members' Area, and your Member Account. This is where you store and update all the personal information we need to provide member services, deliver your *Journal*, etc.

When you click on "Members Area" (logging in if necessary), your browser will go to the top page of the members-only section. On the left you will see a column of gray buttons. If you click on "My Account," you will see the information we have on file for you. If you need to change anything, look just under "My Account;" you will see your name, and just to the right a blue "Edit" button. Click on this, make any necessary changes, and then click "Save" at the bottom of the page.

Your E-mail Address

One important element of your member account is your e-mail address; this is generally how SMPTE will contact you. In your member account you can specify both a primary and a secondary address. The primary address is where all SMPTE e-mail correspondence will be sent. If you have a second address, it is a good idea to enter it—if anything goes wrong with the primary address we can try to contact you using the secondary address.

Elections

Except for the few members without e-mail, all Society elections are conducted electronically via the website. This results in lower costs, greater accuracy, and a greater proportion of members vote because it is so quick and easy. You will be notified by e-mail when an election opens, so it is really important that you receive e-mail sent to the Region and Section mail lists—please see below to make sure that you are subscribed!

Your Subscriptions

When you join SMPTE, you are allocated to the appropriate Region and Section, and each of these has an associated e-mail list. The Region list is generally used just for regional elections (Governors). The Section list is used for elections, Section meetings, etc. So, it is very important that you remain subscribed to these lists; there is very little traffic, so it should not be an inconvenience. All SMPTE lists are moderated for any postings from outside the group, so you should *never* receive spam through a SMPTE list. (Please let us know if you do—we will investigate immediately.)

There are two types of subscription to the e-mail lists—"regular," where each e-mail is sent individually and immediately, or "digest," where e-mails are combined and sent as a composite when 30 e-mails accumulate, or 48 hours after the first e-mail. (With the SMPTE Region and Section lists there is little traffic, so a "regular" subscription is better, to ensure that you receive meeting and election notices promptly.)

Sometimes a member is unsubscribed from a list because e-mails bounced, or because of some technical error. We will try to keep track and contact you if we see a problem with your e-mail, but we have only recently acquired the tools to monitor this, so there may be a backlog that we cannot see. So, please check this for us! Go to the Members Area, and at the bottom of the page there is a link to "My Subscriptions." Click on this, and you will see all the mailing lists you are entitled to be on. There is a link for "Subscribe All (Regular)" just above the word "Group." We recommend that you click this link; then you should see "regular" on each line under "Subscription Type."

Finally, just a note about spam filters. Sometimes list mail may be trapped by spam filters. Please make sure to add both the **smpte.org** and **lists.smpte.org** domains to your white list to ensure that you do receive e-mail from SMPTE.

Finally . . .

Generally, the e-mail and web services work extremely well, and are quite intuitive. But, if you are having problems, either because of technical problems or just lack of familiarity with web services, please call us at headquarters—we will be happy to help.