

Exciting Changes in Standards Activities

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In the past few years, the past Engineering Vice Presidents and the Standards Committee have worked hard to make some significant changes to the Standards activities conducted at SMPTE. The Engineering Administrative Practices have gone through a major overhaul to streamline the standards process.

An automated workflow system (Kavi) has been established to support the Engineering work. We further recognized that with the advent of digital technology being used throughout all aspects of capture, production, distribution, display, and storage, there is a convergence that should be reflected in the organizational structure of the Technology Committees (TC). So a reorganization of the TC's was undertaken in the first half of 2008.

In the long-standing TC structure shown in **Fig. 1**, the structure is divided between essentially two business channels for delivering movies to theaters and television shows to television distribution entities. The ability to define appropriate formats and compressions for other distribution channels and to other types of devices was difficult within this structure. Further, digital infrastructure committees that necessarily should support all forms of digital production and delivery, including D-Cinema, were ensconced in the Television meeting cycles because that is where these standards were first needed. Membership indicators at the bottom of the figure show that film standards had sufficiently matured to a point at which four independent TCs seemed unnecessary.

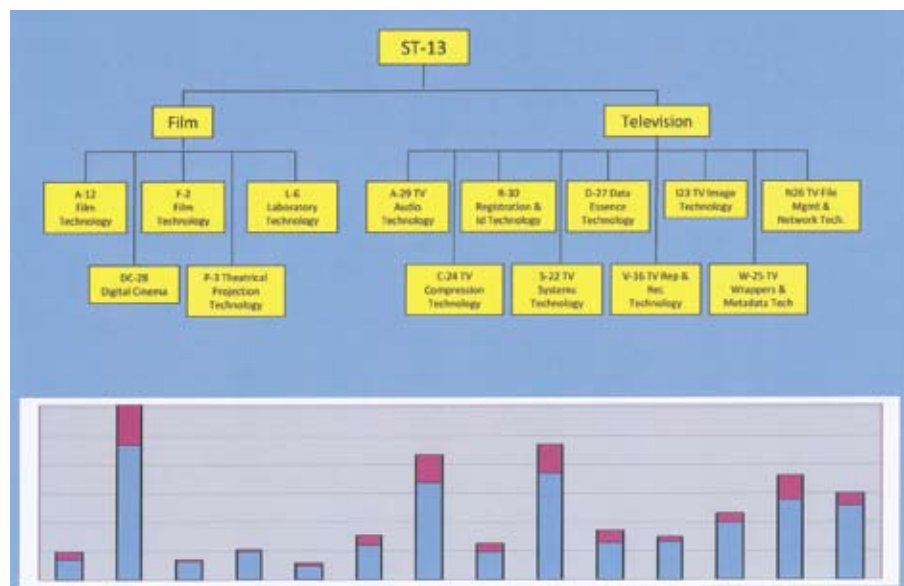


Figure 1

With restructuring, SMPTE's TC work can be thought of as the mastering and packaging of audio/video content to be moved across a variety of transports for consumption on a variety of devices. **Fig. 2** establishes a three-piece paradigm for the new TC structure. The black, quadrangular center of the structure represents the master Essence elements and their storage/archive. The blue fingers on the

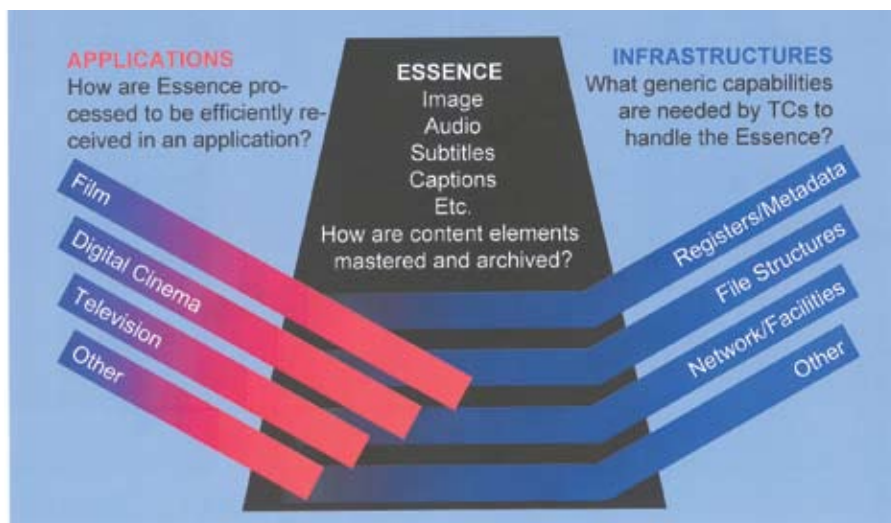


Figure 2

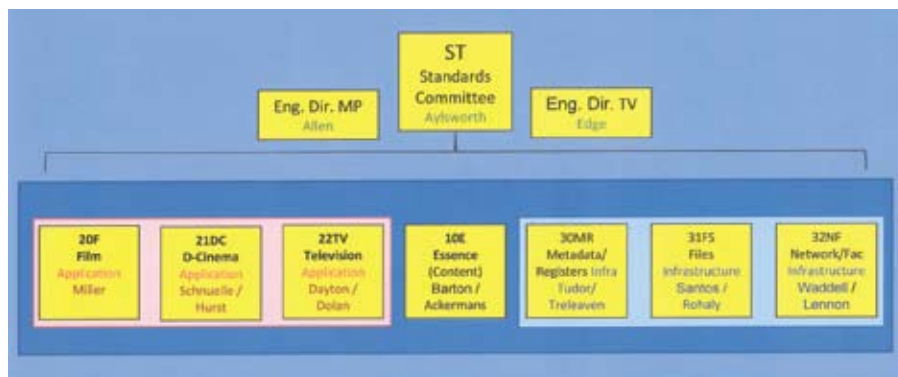


Figure 3

left represent the efforts of manipulating the master Essence to achieve distribution and consumption for a particular application channel. The red fingers on the right represent the infrastructure technologies that support the creation of the master Essence and the manipulation of the Essence in the other two pieces. With this approach, SMPTE can open its structure to create standards needed for new technologies in support of new business models and distribution channels.

The new TC structure, now fully in place, is shown in **Fig. 3**. The first meetings were in June, except for the Film TC, which will meet in the fall. The Chairs have provided a description in the following section of the work efforts within their TCs.

Recently, an external request for work on stereoscopic viewing on a home display was received and will become an interesting new work area for SMPTE. A Task Force was initiated on this work in

August 2008 and will develop a report on the subject area in approximately six months time. Additionally, there are rumors of other distribution channels facing challenges because of a lack in standards, which may also result in new work items coming into SMPTE. What are these new work items? Who will be submitting them? Enquiring minds want to know! Be sure to read the next issue of the *SMPTE Motion Imaging Journal* to find out the latest news in standards!

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Aylsworth started her career with 15 years in the aerospace industry, designing and developing software for military avionics at Lockheed and training simulators at Honeywell (now part of Raytheon). Her 15 years since have been spent in entertainment, in theme parks, animation, and emerging technology development. Aylsworth holds a B.S. from the University of Michigan and an M.S./M.B.A from the University of Southern California (USC).