



Getting Started with SMPTE 365



By Joel Welch

You may have heard about SMPTE 365, your new online professional community of practice; however, you may be wondering how to get the most value from it and how to get started. Let me see if I can help!

SMPTE 365 is a professional networking community. We all know how crucial networking is to advancing one's career and enhancing one's sphere of influence. SMPTE 365 is different from other networking sites, however, because the community is populated exclusively by SMPTE Members. A key goal of SMPTE 365 is to provide an easy way for SMPTE Members to find others who share similar professional interests. It is also a place to share knowledge, ask questions, express professional opinions, showcase expertise, connect and communicate with existing colleagues, find new ones, and members can even create a variety of online forums to meet the needs of people with specific areas of interest.

To get started, first log on to www.smpte365.org and update your profile. If you are not sure how to do this, simply click on the "faq" link at the top of the page. This link provides answers to many commonly asked questions about SMPTE 365. Once you've logged in, you will notice most of your basic information has been transported from the SMPTE Membership database so you don't need to start from scratch. Add a bio, upload a photo, and input whatever information you feel is important to share with the rest of SMPTE.

Next, locate other SMPTE Members you know, and invite them to be one of your SMPTE 365 "Colleagues." You can find others' profiles by selecting the "Search for Contacts" button on the left side of your profile page and entering the first couple of letters of their first and last names. Once you find their profile, select "add (colleague's first name) as colleague." This will send an invitation to that person. If the individual accepts your invitation to become a SMPTE 365 Colleague, you will now find that person listed on

your profile page. As you can see, your profile page becomes a very convenient centralized means of organizing your colleagues. If you cannot remember someone's name, but you know they work for a specific company, instead of inputting name information when searching, simply use the company name in your search. This will return a list of all SMPTE Members who work for that company.

You may also want to write a blog. (I can hear some people now! "A blog?") The term "blog" is a short term for "web log." Blogs are typically used to express one's self and SMPTE 365 blogs are no different. Don't think you have anything to blog about? Blogs can be written about anything—you always have something to blog. Blog about your day, explain a complex technology or technical concept, or write about an experience you had in the field. Perhaps you could even just post the projects on which you will work this week and then come back next week with an update. Anything can be a blog. And if you are concerned that no one will find your blog interesting, don't worry! Many people enjoy reading blogs just to learn what people are up to or what they are working on. The number of words is not important. Write something, anything! Start a conversation! Write something to which others can comment or ask followup questions.

You can find where to start a blog right in your profile. Look for the link labeled "Manage Blogs." The more you do it, the easier it gets!

There is so much more you can do with SMPTE 365, such as posting files and resources to a library, starting an online discussion forum, starting a community of interest, etc. These topics will be covered in upcoming installments of this feature of the *Journal*, so stay tuned! But for now, go ahead and get started. Help to make SMPTE 365 a vibrant, active online SMPTE community!

Connect, communicate, and collaborate with SMPTE 365!