



MESSAGE FROM THE

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



By Barbara H. Lange

## Getting Ready for 2016

In less than six months, we will be celebrating another new year. While it may seem early to be paying attention to the calendar change, 2016 is such an important milestone year for SMPTE that it's not too early to begin the planning and celebrating. In fact, come July 2015, the SMPTE centennial celebration will kick off at the biennial SMPTE15 Conference and Exhibition in Sydney, Australia.

SMPTE was founded in 1916, when the world was just discovering the power of the motion picture industry, as both an economic engine as well as a means to document history. Charles Francis Jenkins and his colleagues came together at the behest of the U.S. Government to help organize the chaos of the nascent motion picture industry. Over the intervening years, the SMPE, as it was known then, grew to incorporate television to become the SMPTE in 1950. The work of these technical legends led to interoperability and efficiency that enabled the industry to grow and prosper. It is probably not too much to say that without this critical foundational work, we would not be where we are today with over-the-top (OTT) television delivered via the Internet.

As we look to begin SMPTE's new century in a few short months, it is good to look back at our technical heritage. The first standards came into being in 1917 and covered such things as focal lengths, lens openings, as well as the keystone effect in theaters. Over the years, critical standards such as time code, color bars, closed captioning, digital cinema, and so many others, have helped define the media landscape upon which current technology is based. SMPTE continues to be the place where this work is discussed and standards are created.

Not only has the media landscape evolved since 1916, I would argue that more change has happened in the past five years than in the previous 20. The Internet's impact combined with the devel-

opment of smart devices all contribute to this increased pace of change. SMPTE has had to deal with this rapid evolution by incorporating more Standards work in information technology (IT) and Internet protocol (IP). In fact, it is critical that we take on this work, or risk industry irrelevance if we don't.

Marking the SMPTE centennial allows us to look both backwards and forward, which is why I often refer to this organization as "the 100-year old start-up." Why do I say that? Well, it is a fact that we've reached our century mark. There are many things from our past that we honor and still enjoy today. Our growing membership around the world looks to SMPTE for its high-quality journal, conferences, and standards work. It is also true that much has changed. Within all three of the Society's pillars, we see new developments. In membership, professionals are joining from the OTT and telecom industries. In education, there is a demand for more online courses. And, in standards, we concentrate on new Internet-based and digital media challenges. As we enter our new century, we must operate with greater flexibility and nimbleness—as is done with any new start-up. It is both dynamic and scary at the very same time.

It is a great honor to be leading this organization during this milestone mark. I am excited about our next century and eager to begin the celebration at SMPTE15 in Sydney. The celebration of our anniversary will continue through many activities, including a commemorative book, a documentary movie, and a gala banquet at the SMPTE 2016 Annual Technical Conference & Exhibition in Hollywood, CA. As we turn to 2016, I look forward to increasing our work that shapes the media landscape just like we have done for a century before. It's exciting to consider the impact SMPTE will continue to have in the media industry in our next century.