



Robert P. Seidel

100 Years of Service in Motion Imaging

As President of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers and on behalf of the Board of Governors and staff, I would like to send greetings to all our members around the world on the 100th anniversary of our Society. Your dedication and hard work has transformed the Society into a global organization that is recognized as the leader in motion imaging and sound. In 1916, our Society was founded when C. Francis Jenkins and a small group of engineers signed the incorporation papers establishing the Society of Motion Picture Engineers. The mission of the organization was set forth as "...advancement in the theory and practice of motion picture engineering and the allied arts and sciences; the standardization of the mechanisms and the practices employed therein; and the maintenance of a high professional standing among its members." One hundred years later, these aims remain unchanged. While the technology has changed over the years, in large part due to SMPTE, we have continued to be instrumental

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in establishing some of the most iconic standards for high quality content. SMPTE Standards and Recommended Practices touch nearly every piece of motion imaging content seen

by viewers around the world. Entertainment programming remains one of the leading U.S. exports that entertain and inform the world. Our Society has enabled the production, post-production, and distribution of content on a global scale, which has truly created the "Global Village."

Our Society is built on three main pillars: Membership, Education, and Standards. Our individual

membership roll now exceeds 7000 and is growing. We are also increasing our corporate memberships and expanding into adjacent markets, such as over-the-top (OTT) television and user groups.


To better serve the industry as a whole, SMPTE and the Hollywood Professional Association (HPA) consolidated in 2015. The new relationship between SMPTE and HPA presents many exciting possibilities, including fresh occasions for interaction and dialogue, broader educational opportunities, and even richer contribution to standards development.

In February of this year, SMPTE was honored by the Academy of

Motion Picture Arts and Sciences with a special award recognizing the Society for its 100 years of contributions to the motion picture industry. The plaque reads as follows: "For one hundred years, the Society's members have nurtured technology, provided essential standards, and offered the expertise, support, tools and infrastructure for the creation and post-production of motion pictures."

Similarly, The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences has recognized SMPTE over the years with the Emmy Engineering and Technical Awards for their contributions to the television industry, including the Philo T. Farnsworth award in 2015.

As the motion picture industry moved to digital image capture and distribution, SMPTE played a critical role in the merging of traditional television technology into the motion picture industry to ensure that the original creative intent of the storytellers was preserved.

Today, the Society continues to fulfill the original intent of its founders by advancing and standardizing the creative tools used by the storyteller to "suspend disbelief," invoke emotion, inform, and educate the audience. As we look to the next 100 years, the Society is already exploring new frontiers such as ultra high definition, 4K, 8K, high dynamic range, IP video, OTT, high frame rates, and wide color space. It has been my honor to serve as President during this major milestone of the Society, and I can assure you we are well positioned for the future. 

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