Alan Lambshead

Introduction to the SMPTE Technology Committee Reports

The SMPTE progress report summarizes the key activities of the Society's Technology Committees, as well as the Standards Committee and other subgroups. The contents of this 2017 report demonstrate that there has been a lot of activity in the Standards Community, with a host of standards' documents published in the past year.

The SMPTE Standards Committee is comprised of the chairs of each of the Technology Committees as well as several invited members. This committee oversees all the Society's Technology Committees, ensuring that the standards process is open and fair to all. One of the ongoing tasks of the Standards Committee is to review our processes and seek to streamline them whenever possible. To this end, the Standards Committee has been working on further refinements to the Standards Administrative Guidelines. The scope for each of the Technology Committees is listed on the SMPTE website (https://www.smpte.org/standards/engineering-committees).

This past year, the Technology Committees have met face-to-face four times: September in Geneva, Switzerland—hosted by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU); December in Burbank, California, USA—hosted by The Walt Disney Company; March in San Jose, California, USA—hosted by Intel at their Altera facility; and June in Shanghai, China—hosted by the East China Television Technology League and the Shanghai Media Group. In each case, these meetings are hosted by sponsoring companies who provide the venue and hospitality. On average, there are usually 60 to 80 who meet in person, as well as many more who join remotely. On behalf of the Society, I would like to thank our hosts and sponsors, without which the block standards' meetings would not be possible. In addition to the face-to-face meetings, the various subgroups meet regularly by electronic means to conduct their business. More than 830 Society members (about 15% of those eligible) are involved in SMPTE Standards' activities, with about 60 having joined the Standards Community in the last year. During the past year, over 60 standards' documents have been published, with many more currently in the committees. Shortly after each of the face-to-face meeting cycles, an outcome report is published that allows the industry to track the progress of SMPTE standards' activities (https://www.smpte.org/standards/meeting-reports).

SMPTE is involved in the Joint Task Force for Networked Media (JT-NM) in collaboration with the EBU, the Video Services Forum, and the Advanced Media Workflow Association. The JT-NM updated its roadmap for the deployment of internet protocol (IP) technology in September, and again in April, just prior to NAB. Throughout the year, JT-NM sponsored several rounds of interoperability testing of the video over IP standards as they were being developed. The most recent of these resulted in a very successful demonstration of IP technology at NAB in April. Please see the separate report from JT-NM in this Progress Report issue of the Journal.

In June, SMPTE published two Study Group reports: the Time Code Summit Report and the Material eXchange Format (MXF) Time Code Study Report. Both reports offer valuable insights into how the SMPTE Time Code standard (ST 12-1 Time and Control Code) can evolve to serve as a more useful tool in media production, especially in the emerging world of IP infrastructure in media facilities.

Each of these reports is available on the SMPTE website (https://www.smpte.org/committee-reports). The following is a brief description of the work of these three study groups.

The MXF Timecode Study Group Report examines the usage and requirements of Timecode in MXF files and identifies areas where further recommendations or standards could be created to improve interoperability. The report also differentiates between content that is being produced or shown and that same content when it is being archived. The archive and

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preservation application requires all Timecode values to be preserved whereas the production/playback application requires a single canonical representation of Timecode that all devices and software agree on.

The Time Code Summit Report presents the methodology and findings of surveys performed at the Time Code Summit, a series of focus groups held in London, New York, and Los Angeles. The report summarizes user requirements that must be addressed by any new Time Code standard, particularly the proposed Time Labels standard to address the radical changes brought about by the industry's integration of IP, the push to higher and variable frame rates, and other factors testing the limits of the existing Time Code standard. The report also includes an explanation of the study effort, the survey questions asked and answers provided, and the dialogue that occurred at each summit.

The following detailed reports from each of the Technology Committees give only the highlights of the standards work that has been undertaken by the Society in the past 12 months. I trust that you will find them not only informative but that they may spark your interest to participate in this vital pillar of our Society.

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