



Barbara H. Lange

# SMPTE Sections Do Amazing Work

**S**MPTE members are spread around the globe. You may have heard me reflect on the reach “from Australia to Alaska!” It is an amazing thing and one of the many reasons I love to be part of this organization. But what exactly is a Section, and why is it important?

Today, we have 30 designated Sections around the world, including in Australia, Hong Kong, India, Germany, U.K., Nordic, Canada, and the U.S. to name a few. Sections are the heartbeat of the Society. Sections were established so that members could gather locally to share ideas and knowledge across SMPTE’s broad spectrum of activity. They help recruit new members and serve as a resource for anyone looking for a specialized industry network. Successful Sections are managed by a dedicated group of volunteers. These people are the pulse of the Section, organizing events to educate and entertain the local community.

People often talk about SMPTE’s Standards work, which keeps the industry working in an interoperable manner. However, many forget the Section leaders, who also work tirelessly to serve the industry at a local level, which is vital to our members.

They organize monthly meetings, seminars, and conferences, and always with ample refreshments.

Over the course of my years with SMPTE, I’ve enjoyed visiting many of our Sections during their meetings. I love that each Section has its own culture, based on what part of the industry is more prevalent. Hollywood has the obvious connection with motion picture studios, while Hong Kong seems to pay closer attention to the broadcast side of things. San Francisco leans heavily toward new media, and the U.K. represents a microcosm of the global media technology ecosystem. Each Section does a great job in catering to the needs of the local audience.

Sometimes things change, and Sections fade away. This is often because an enthusiastic volunteer decides to step down, leaving a void that is difficult to fill. Today, we have gaps that we would love to fill in our Central Texas, Germany, Nordic, and Nashville Sections. So, if you are reading this and want to bring SMPTE to life in a quiet location, please reach out!

This dreadful pandemic has demonstrated the resilience of the Sections. They pivoted very quickly to delivering core content using virtual event tools. Suddenly, local needs are open to the global SMPTE audience! Rocky Mountain, Chicago, Hong Kong, Hollywood, and New York all held

Section meetings virtually the same week in January, available to anyone. All in all, the Sections delivered more than 40 virtual events in 2020. This is an amazing community of dedicated volunteers sharing their knowledge.

I am delighted also to share that the cooperation between the Sections and our home office team is stronger than ever. With our new website, the Sections are now better equipped to manage their websites; we are linking them to the e-mail platform and helping with event platform services. These tools allow the Sections to concentrate on what they do best—delivering excellent content—and the staff team can support their endeavors with our partnership. The cooperation also enables us to coordinate programming to share across the SMPTE community. It is a win-win situation.

SMPTE survives because of the generosity of volunteers across the spectrum of the Society’s activities. Our local Section leaders are the ones closest to the needs of our membership. We are grateful to all of our Section volunteers.

This issue focuses on another great organization with tremendous support from its volunteers. Advanced Television Systems Committee (ATSC) 3.0 is rolling out across the U.S. and parts of the world. Get the latest on this remarkable technological work on the following pages.

