



Newsletter

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Come to Santa Fe for the next AMWA Meeting

The Advanced Media Workflow Association continues to make advances on several projects, including the latest release of the AAF SDK, development of user requirements for AS-02, MXF Versioning and AS-03, MXF Program Delivery, and we are very near completing AS-05, an enhancement of the AAF Effects Protocol which enhances the interchange of color effects information.

But the real excitement happens May 19-21 in Santa Fe when we have our next face-to-face meeting at the Inn at Loretto. During this meeting, in response to demand from our user members, we will host a user panel focusing on what people are doing with file-based workflows today, and what they would like to see in the future. The panel will include Jim Hopkins of Fox, Clyde Smith of Turner, Gwynne McConkey of Lifetime Television, Phil Tudor of the BBC, Brinton Miller of

Discovery Communications, Jerry Butler of PBS, and Ian Wimsett of Red Bee Media. In addition, Michael Karagosian will talk about file-based workflows in the digital cinema industry. Expect a blunt, reality-based discussion about how people are operating their facilities today. In addition, we will have an in-depth presentation from Chris Lennon of Harris Corporation and Ian Wimsett of Red Bee Media talking about work going on within the AMWA on the link between BXF and MXF. Of course, we will hold a meeting of the Technical Steering Committee and the Business Steering Committee, and we will host the AMWA Annual General Meeting as well.

Find more about this important meeting and register at www.amwa.tv. Please join us.

Brad Gilmer, AMWA Executive Director

PBS Next Generation Interconnection System (NGIS)

NGIS is a PBS project to replace the existing Public TV program distribution system. The aim is to replace much of the real-time satellite distribution of today with the non-real-time delivery of programming as files, and to build it on industry standards such as the SMPTE MXF standards.

The SMPTE MXF standards that define file formats cover a very wide range of parameters and user needs. The effort underway in the AMWA is to develop a vendor-neutral subset of the MXF file format to create a "Distribution" file definition. This format will be used to deliver finished programming from program producers and distributors to broadcast stations. This specific encoding profile is known as the AMWA AS-03 Distribution Format.

Recognizing that all broadcasters require a distribution format but that each may have a unique set of requirements, the AMWA has (or the AMWA members

have) introduced the concept of a "shim." Each shim provides a further set of constraints within AS-03 that changes the range of variability that may be needed in but in well-defined categories of applications. These categories may address particular types of programming or programming genres, or they may address requirements of particular broadcast station groups. As examples, the shim could define bit rates or audio configuration but do not change the fundamental structure of the file.

The NGIS NRT project, of which AS-03 is an integral component, forms an important subject at this year's PBS Technology Conference, which is held annually just prior to NAB. PBS will also be participating at the AMWA Santa Fe conference where the next phase of AS-03 will be discussed. The next phase will be linking AS-03 to AMWA's IS-02 interface specification and SMPTE BXF.

David Austerberry, AMWA

AMWA Europe Meeting Highlights

Sun Microsystems hosted an AMWA Europe meeting in London March 19. Twelve people attended, representing the vendor and broadcaster communities, and several regular participants joined by teleconference from the USA.

The AS-02 project for MXF versioning was discussed at length. The executive summary is being revised as a marketing tool to explain the project to senior management. The folder structure of AS-02 is being revised to meet current requirements. The documentation should be available before the AMWA meeting in Santa Fe, May 19-21.

Bruce Devlin reported on the issues of mapping the language tagging project (AS-04) into the SMPTE working group on MXF multichannel audio.

Harold Geller led a discussion on Ad-ID, including different practices in North America and Europe. Work needed to optimize commercial pods and to represent Ad-ID within BXF messages.

David Austerberry presented graphics for the web site revisions, part of the project to re-launch the AMWA site near to the May meeting with the aim of making the site more attractive to potential members.

Richard Cartwright gave an update on the MXF/BXF mapping project to include MXF metadata in BXF messages. He also gave a demonstration of the Javi API.

A theme of the meeting was to avoid unnecessary work that was being carried on by SMPTE, or to simplify AMWA standard by combining elements. As an example, AS-03 (MXF Program Delivery) should be extended to cover contribution files by a shim or similar, or spawned as a very similar, but separate standard.

David Austerberry, AMWA

New AMWA Members

The AMWA Membership continues to grow and is currently at 64, which compares favorably to 58 members at year-end 2008 and 41 the previous year. New members since the last newsletter are:

- Artesia Digital Media Group
- BroadView Software
- FirstSpin
- Florical Systems
- Harmonic Inc.
- MAGIX AG
- Red Bee Media Limited
- SeaChange International
- Sun Microsystems
- Four new Individual Members

In addition, new member applications are pending dues payment. Check www.amwa.tv for the full membership list and invite your business colleagues to join AMWA, too!

Register for Santa Fe Now!

Attend the next meeting of the AMWA at the Inn at Loretto in Santa Fe, New Mexico, May 19-21, 2009. Complete meeting and registration information is posted at www.amwa.tv.

But act now...the registration deadline is May 15!

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