



INFORMATION ON NEXT MEETING

New Master Control Room at SF DRS

tpc, Fernsehstrasse 1-4, 8052 Zürich

Thursday, 1st of September 2005, 17h00-19h30

SPEAKERS: Roberto Belloni, Erich Rathgeb, Walter Honegger

ORGANISER: Gabriel Leuzinger

LANGUAGE: English or German

The master control room is the technical heart of every TV broadcast production house. It manages routing and control of production studios, news studios, postproduction studios, continuity, contribution and distribution signal paths for video, audio and additional signals. Despite partly updated with digital equipment but built more than 20 years ago, the roots of the old master control room were clearly in the analog domain. With the new master control room, tpc (tv productioncentre, Zurich AG) has implemented a concept which offers a high level of flexibility, reliability and ergonomics for the operators, that finally saves time and improves cost efficiency. Since left in the digital domain from camera to the consumer's home, also the quality of the video- and audio-signals has been improved by avoiding non-ideal and costly conversion processing.

Roberto Belloni, project manager of tpc, will introduce to the concept, the general technical and project managing aspects. Systems engineer Erich Rathgeb will explain especially the audio aspects of the master control room and with the additional help of sound director Walter Honegger, we will have competent demonstrations and guided tours through master control room, also recently completed studio control rooms and the brand new news studio 10.

To extend discussions, as usual within the AES Swiss section, an optional dinner will be held at the "Show Bizz" restaurant of SF DRS.

About the Speakers:

Roberto Belloni started at SF DRS in 1992, where he had been responsible for 1" Ampex and Sony editing systems. In 1999 he switched over to the engineering department where he managed several projects before he took over the challenge and leadership as a General Project Manager for the new Master Control Room project. Roberto is a graduated electronic engineer TS and holds a post-degree in business administration.

Erich Rathgeb started at SF DRS in 1981 and as a Systems Engineer Broadcast Audio for tpc, he was responsible for the project of audio- and communications of the new master control room. Erich has further education in digital studio equipment at SRT (Schule für Rundfunktechnik) and holds a SIZ degree in Information Technology.

Walter Honegger started at SF DRS in 1974 and as an initial FEAM (electronic technician) he took several career steps and became a Sound Director at the tv productioncenter (tpc). In this position he's responsible for the sound of large studio- and remote-productions of SF DRS.

REPORT ON PREVIOUS MEETING

The State of the Music Industry: where has it been and where is it going?

Friday, 3rd of June 2005 at Hotel de la Paix, Via Guise Cattori 18, Lugano

SPEAKER: Professor Richard McIlvery – USC Music Industry Programme

REPORTER: Attila Karamustafaoglu

About 20 attendees gathered on this sunny Friday evening in the seminar room of the Hotel de la Paix in Lugano. After introductory words from Patrick Greppi and Attila Karamustafaoglu, the word was given to Professor Richard McIlvery. The first part out of two was about the crisis of the music industry. Knowing this industry very well, he gave a picture of the current state of this industry with some very educative examples. He explained that in the year 2003 the turnover of the music industry decreased by 26% compared to 2000, but the quantity of released albums has gone up by around 25% in the last two years. This inflation is further driven by the peer-to-peer networks which allow the end users to illegally download music. It was also mentioned, that this development has lowered the customer's quality expectations. As a result of this he also gave two example figures to underline this trend: In the year 2000 there were 67 full-service studios in Los Angeles. Within five years, in 2005, this number has decreased to a shockingly low number of 15. Professor McIlvery told that he himself was owner of a studio but is happy that he was able to sell it at a time when the prices were still all right.

Lightening the perspective a bit up, he gave the example of an Irish folk singer who runs a one man company doing everything from composing over producing, recording mastering to marketing and selling himself. Since he runs his own "semi-pro" studio, his income is very well. By the fact that he tours to Irish festivals all over North America he can kind of "grab" the clients by their arms and sell them the CDs after his concerts. The only problem was that this man's income would drop to zero at the moment he will stop doing this. This example leads to a survey about home studios. He explained that Digidesign has sold about 100'000 ProTools systems since 1999. Since the prices for relatively high-quality studio equipment have dropped dramatically due to the PC development, practically everybody can buy now the gear needed to produce a CD. But as he said: "Anyone with 20 million dollars can buy an airplane. But would you want to fly with them?" This issue was used then to formulate a perspective of how the industry could escape this vicious circle: He told that by increasing the musical and audio education of those producing the albums, customers will learn to distinguish better between low and high quality and will be ready again to pay for good music. He praised the activities of the educational AES committee on this occasion and stated that this should be an example for other AES sections as well.

After a break with a champagne apéro, the second part of the presentation took place. There, a ProTools system was set up with some of the usual periphery such as microphone, guitar and loudspeakers provided by Delta. There, people had the chance to explore the possibilities of such a "low-cost" production system and ask practical questions to the presenter. To finish the presentation the presenter himself gave a great live performance of a self-composed song. About a half of the attendees joined the dinner afterwards in the same hotel.

The Swiss AES would like to thank Professor McIlvery and especially Patrick Greppi from Delta Loudspeakers SA for this nice and interesting event.