

## SMPTE time code aids to standardize hi-tech innovations

NEW YORK CITY - Between Oct. 28 and Nov. 2, the Big Apple was host to the 126th Annual SMPTE Technical Conference and Exhibit which comprised five days of technical sessions, and exhibits consisting of 409 booths with more than 160 manufacturers participating.

Papers focused on advances in motion-picture and television technologies, and a continuing merge of the two fields.

The greatest common denominator in synchronizing both areas appears to be the use of the SMPTE Time Code, which can now synchronise sound, video and film frames within an accuracy of 1/100th of a frame.

Although there is consensus on the Time Code 1/4 inch recording format (both Nagra and Stellavox use a narrow centre track as originally pioneered by Stellavox), two alter-

native approaches battle it out for Time Code film encoding. Aaton cameras record the Time Code in form of 7 by 13 squares in between the perforations on 16mm and outside the perforations on 35mm. Coherent Communications Inc., which encodes the Arri 16S, records the code in form of 200 bars opposite the picture on the sound track area.

Several film/video editing systems were exhibited or described, all contesting for acceptance and standardization.

Most advanced, and pointing the way to the future, was the Editroid system developed by Lucasfilm and available from

Convergence Corp.

Briefly, video or film camera footage is transferred to several laser videodiscs. The editor sits in front of an editing console consisting of a computer monitor, two video monitors and a small control box on which are mounted several pushbuttons, a shuttle knob and a trackball. Elsewhere a rack houses four video disc players, a video-tape recorder, and the interfacing electronics. The editor can access any frame and accompanying sound in the transferred footage within 4 seconds with the shuttle knob. Edits are as simple as pushing a button, and a half-hour (or longer) film

segment can be assembled and played without breaks and in real time from the videodiscs, or transferred to tape with all edit codes.

At \$147,000 it's not unrealistic for a large production house.

Several new video cameras were introduced, most notable was the RCA CCD-1 Solid state ENG camera which used 3-charge couple-devices for pick-up elements, and resolved 525 lines at 52 dB Signal-to-Noise ratio at low or high light levels, free from any lag, comet-tailing, or microphonics.

Panavision introduced its new "Elaine" super 16mm studio camera, a quiet technological marvel, and a cameraman's dream, whose footage was shown to compare most favorably to 35mm.

Complementing the new cameras were new lenses from Angenieux including the fastest X14 zoom lens (9-126mm), f/1.6, designed for 2/3 inch video cameras. A new cine zoom, a 10-120mm, T2, with a non-rotating front element, is said to maintain its aperture constant throughout the zoom range and its sharpness is said to be equal to that of finest fixed focal lenses.

Another 12 x 12.5 Super 16, and a redesigned 10 x 25 35mm, the "workhorse" of the industry, were demonstrated.

Agfa, Fuji, and Kodak, all introduced new and faster films; in general however most new equipment was destined for video.

Everywhere you looked were columns of colour monitors displaying computer-generated logos, computer animation, and special effects. Even trusty Steenbeck had a scanner with a video monitor, and a video-sound-editing table.

Sony once again demonstrated its high-definition video system, still in search of a standard, but clearly offering a sharper picture than 35mm film.

Low-price computers from Radio Shack, Atari, Apple, Commodore, and IBM, were vowing for attention and jobs as cameraman's assistants, budget organizers, script writers, prompter, and animators.

But, amidst all the new video standards, the 1/4 inch, the 8mm, the several 1/2 inch, the 3/4, the 1 inch, the videodiscs, the innumerable computer operating standards, it still feels good to handle... film.

Arthur Makosinski •

TORONTO - *The Boy in Blue* completed eight weeks of principal photography in Ontario and Quebec, announced 20th Century Fox Oct. 14. Filmed from an original screenplay by Douglas Bowie, *The Boy In Blue* tells the story of the legendary Canadian rower Ned Hanlan who dominated international rowing for a decade from 1874 to 1884.



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