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Audio Engineering Society – New York Section

MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, February 12, 2008 -- 7:00 P.M.

Please come to the "Meet and Greet" at 6:30 P.M.

Jazz Performance Space

The New School University

55 West 13th Street (bet. 5th & 6th Avenues), 5th floor, New York City

Archiving Today's Media

Saving Audio Stuff in a Digital Age

Hosted by: **Robert Auld**, Audio Engineer, AuldWorks, The Radio Foundation
Presenters: **Brad McCoy**, Senior Studio Engineer, Library of Congress
David Nolan, Archive Engineer, 92nd Street YM-YWHA, WNYC

Back in the day, archiving audio was easy. Every recording session produced an analog master tape, safety copies were made of the masters, track sheets were filled out, and everything was carefully stored.

Well, that was what was *supposed* to happen. In real life, lots of things went wrong: tapes were poorly labeled, or not labeled at all and subsequently lost, tapes were stored fast wound instead of slow wound and ended up being virtually unplayable, old splices came apart, tape binder formulas were changed and the tapes became sticky after only a few years in storage--the good old days were not always so good.

Then, digital audio came along. Now we had an optical disk carrier with robust error correction of a digital signal that could be replicated bit for bit. As the Sony ad said, "perfect sound forever". That was what was *supposed* to happen.

Reality: present day recording sessions usually produce digital data stored on a hard disk drive. The final product could be virtually anything, including a download to somebody's computer. The hard drive master has a finite life, so we need to back up the data to something else, maybe another hard drive. Or maybe an optical disk in CD-ROM or DVD-R format. And we hope that the proprietary DAW program that we used to record the session will still exist in some form twenty years from now, that it will be able to play the session, and that the optical disks will still be readable. All of which is a crap shoot because we have all heard horror stories of disks that failed or sessions that would not open, or, or....

What's a poor audio engineer to do? Come to the February meeting of the New York AES. We're going to talk about how to save your stuff.

Brad McCoy has been associated with the Library of Congress since 1983, and as a Senior Studio Engineer at the National Audio Visual Conservation Center (NAVCC), the premier preservation facility in the country, since 1991.

David Nolan is a recording engineer with experience in transferring all types of historical audio media to digital formats. He currently oversees the audio archives of the 92nd Street Y, one of New York City's most noted cultural institutions, and is also a staff engineer for WNYC radio.

The AES NY Section wishes to thank **NHT Loudspeakers** and **Studio Consultants, Inc.** for their valued support.

We also appreciate the continuing support and assistance of the **New School University**.

Remember to check our web site for the latest updates and information - <http://www.aes.org/sections/ny/>
PLEASE POST ... This is an open meeting ... EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND

January 8th, 2008 "**Audio Patents: Protecting Your Audio Creations**" Host: **Jonathan Abrams**, Nutmeg Audio Post
Presenters: **Konomi Takeshita**, U.S. Patent Attorney at Keisen Associates; **John Chester**, Audio Engineer and Patent Holder;
Dave Amels, Bomb Factory Digital

On July 13th, 1836, the U.S. Patent Office granted patent number one, a railroad wheel. Since this event, millions of patents have been registered via a complex system which requires deep knowledge of the strategies which will best protect the intellectual property of the inventor. This process is best navigated by an attorney specializing in patent law. At our January meeting, we were fortunate to have U.S. Patent Attorney Konomi Takeshita present an overview of the process, describing its pathways and pitfalls.

The meeting began with John Chester providing an outline of the basic structure of a patent, and the significance of each section. Starting with a descriptive title and the names of the inventors, the document continues with a filing date, a classification describing which category of patent is being pursued, an abstract describing the invention and then a detailed description. References, figures and descriptions of the figures are followed by the claims, which delineate the idea and describe the construction of the object being patented. One challenge of the document is to be descriptive enough to protect the inventors' ideas, while not allowing competitors enough information to easily construct the device themselves.

Ms Takeshita continued to describe the different categories of patents: utility (for hardware and software), design (for ornaments and "appearance") and plants (for asexually created plants). The terms trademark, servicemark and copyright were defined, and the symbols for these terms were clarified, as they indicate whether the invention is Federally registered or claimed using "commonlaw" rules. She then described the patent application process, and warned of the expense this pursuit may incur. Foreign patents were discussed, as well as issues involving infringement from the perspective of plaintiff and defendant.

Dave Amels, a pioneer in digital modeling of analog devices, advised the audience to make a claim as broad as possible, stating that the U.S. Patent Office often leaves patent holders to resolve conflicting claims themselves. He relayed cautionary tales based on his experience of selling Bomb Factory's software to Digidesign and protecting his newest ideas from infringement as he prepares to debut new products at an important trade show.

Mr. Chester showed several patents which appeared to predict PCM digital audio, and explained how the patents were issued decades before the supporting technology (A/D converters and recorders) was good enough to use for digital music recording. Two decades elapsed from the issue date of the definitive PCM patent (1941) to the first commercial use of PCM technology to transmit telephone speech in the US (1962), and a third decade elapsed before digital music recording became a reality.

Mr. Abrams displayed the patent for a Pro Tools TDM system, and the presenters dissected the document for all in attendance. The audience was lively, often asking pertinent questions and contributing anecdotes and additional words of experience.

Review By **Noah Simon**

Upcoming AES events:

March 2008 - AES 60th Anniversary! Special events will commemorate as we look all the way back to 1948.

April 8th, 2008 – Gaming Audio presented by **Noah Simon** and **Joel Spector**

May 13th, 2008 – Worship Audio presented by **Bill Siegmund**