AES Technical Committee on Audio For Games

Meeting Minutes, 7th May 2009, AES 126, Munich

Attendees

Michael Kelly, SCEE
Steve Martz, THX
David Trainor, APTX
Ercan Altinsoy, TU Dresden
Sebastian Merchel, TU Dresden
Andy Fritsch, BFFT GmbH
Christos A. Goussios, A.U.Th. Dept of Film Studies
Andreas Floros, Ionian University
Piergiovanni Bazzana, Atmel
Schuyler Quackenbush, ARL
J. Johnston, DTS
Jonas Engdegard, Dolby
Fabio Minazzi, Binari Sonori
Francesco Zambon, Binari Sonori
Damian Muprhy, University of York

1. Welcome and Overview

Michael Kelly welcomed people to the meeting and gave a brief overview of the purpose of the technical committee.

2. Introductions

Everyone introduced themselves.

3. Previous activities

    a. AES125

Steve Martz reported on the program material at the recent San Francisco Convention. Steve also reported that education was suggested as a theme for the game audio content at AES127.

    b. AES 35

Michael Kelly reported on the recent AES International Conference on Audio for Games. Damian Murphy reported the programme outline consisting of 22 Papers, 9 Posters,1 education panel, a special industry panel, 3 demonstrations, 4 industry led workshops and 6 tutorial day sessions.

    c. AES126

Michael Kelly reported on activities at this convention. These include:

- Audio for Games and interactive media

- Technical Committee Meeting

- Techniques of Audio Localization for Games

4. Future activities

    a. AES127

Steve Martz suggested as an education workshop with program material that helps students understanding the different roles and required skillsets for a career in game audio.

Steve Martz noted that there is a planned proposal for a tutorial on interactive dialogue for sports titles.

Jim Johnston suggested the need for a tutorial from game developers about the game audio process so that non-game professionals can fully understand current problems and make valid contributions to solutions faced by the games industry. JJ suggested artificial reverb and coding as possible areas of overlap. Steve Martz suggested a possible collaboration with the technical committee on signal procession as a possible way forward – encouraging a mixed panel of games experts and non-game professionals.

Jim Johnston suggested there may be a "marketing issue" with how workshops of this nature are titled. Michael Kelly enquired whether he meant something along the lines of "An academic's guide to games" was what he was thinking. The group agreed this was the right general area but the title needs work.

Jim Johnston suggested that we should include some tutorial content in the journal that is published one-month before the convention as a lead-in to any tutorials at the convention. He also suggested that we contact people working on the XSDK at Microsoft as possible tutorial presenters or article authors. Jim suggested that the article should be included in the engineering reports section of the journal and not in the back section. Michael Kelly conducted straw poll of the meeting attendees.: most of room reads the papers section of the journal but only 1 person reads the colour section at the back. Damian Murphy asked if this would difficult to do this tutorial style content as a journal paper. Michael Kelly said he would check this process.

Damian Murphy noted that a proposal was planned for an interactive tutorial at NY already and that we repeat this at AES128.

Schuyker Quackenbush asked if API standardisation was relevant in games, for example, standardisation of APIs for using audio codecs. Michael Kelly suggested that we discuss this further and refine as a more general activity of the committee.

Damin Murphy suggested that Michael Kelly present the journal tutorial article "Using Game Audio Tools to Build Audio Research Applications" at the NY Convention.

Jonas Engdegard suggests that there may be interest in mobile gaming platforms. Damian Murphy suggested that iPhone applications may be of interest. There was some discussion about platform standards and interoperability between mobile devices. There was general agreement this was an area of interest.

Fabio Minazzi raised the idea of a possible workshop on optimisation of audio production processes for games and how workflows between contributors to game audio can be improved. He mentioned that the IGDA has a special interest group working on localisation and that there may be room for audio process optimisation group at AES. He suggested there may be room for some convention activity in this area, maybe a talk but suggested no specific theme right now. MK suggested that there was probably further work to do in bringing interested parties together in this area.

Fabio Minazzi said he would consider repeating the localisation tutorial from this convention in New York. Steve Martz suggested could either be a repeated workshop or could be included in another panel if Fabio preferred.

       b. AES128 – London (May)

Jim Johnston emphasised the need to repeat workshops between US and European Conventions. The group agreed and all of the above suggestions should also be considered for AES128.

    5. Open discussion: AES contribution to Game Audio

       a. Tutorial (journal) JJ

JJ suggested the need for a tutorial article in the journal as described above.

       b. Coding standard (SQ)

    Michael Kelly agreed with Schuyler Quackenbush to discuss the issues around use of audio codecs in games. The objective of this discussion would be to produce problem white papers, possible standards for use of existing codecs in game applications and standardisation of APIs for codec use.

       c. Paper on coding

Michael Kelly suggested that a white paper should be published in the journal about codec usage in games as a preparatory step for the discussion above.

6. Announcement of next meeting

The next meeting of this technical committee will be held at the AES 127th Convention in New York in October.

7. Close of meeting

Following the meeting Christos Goussios suggested that should organise sessions on interactive music.