

Minutes - 129th Convention

AUDIO ENGINEERING SOCIETY

Technical Committee on Audio Forensics Meeting

at 129th AES Convention

November 4, 2010

Meeting began at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Durand Begault; Co-Vice Chair, Eddy Brixen; Co-Vice Chair, Andrey Barinov, Kristin Bidwell, Tricia Boer, Enrique Fuentes, Brad Fuller, Leah Haloin, Rob Maher, Christoph Musialik, Christopher Peltier, Dustin Ruspini, Jeff Smith, Gregg Stutchman, Charles Van Winkle.

Overview of the Mission of the Technical Committee on Audio Forensics

- Durand Begault presented the current mission of the Technical Committee on Audio Forensics.
 - o “Audio Forensics refers to engineering and scientific analysis, evaluation and presentation of audio and acoustic evidence in a judicial inquiry normally leading towards a presentation in court. The complex challenges faced by the field transcend borders and jurisdictions, and becomes increasingly complex with the proliferation of new types of digital media. In order to establish a reliable scientific basis for the procedures and analysis of the outcomes of audio forensic analysis, the technical committee meets at AES conventions to plan conferences, workshops and tutorials; to encourage dissemination of scientific information through peer-reviewed journal and conference publications and posters; to provide support to the AES Standards Committee on Forensic Audio SC03-12; and to communicate educational opportunities in the field. Presently, the technical committee meetings for audio forensics are open to all attendees.”
- Begault emphasized that the mission statement is not fixed, and can evolve as the needs of the audio forensic community evolve. Comments were requested, and can be submitted any time to the committee.

Introductions

- Attendees at the meeting introduced themselves.

AES Website

- Durand Begault fielded a question about the purpose of the website and how it fits in with the mission of the Technical Committee. He responded that it would be a good task of the committee to brainstorm about how to leverage web resources, for example including a list of publications online. This could include providing information for those who are not familiar with audio forensics.
- Begault asked how Technical Committees leverage the web, and if there was any interest in researching options for development in this area.

AES 128th Convention

- Eddy Brixen reviewed the 128th AES Convention in London. Relevant discussion at the event focused primarily on preparing for the 39th International AES Conference on Audio Forensics.
- There was an excellent workshop offering at the convention, which was hosted by Peter French and associates. The workshop was initiated by the organizing committee for the convention.

AES 39th International Conference: Audio Forensics – Practices and Challenges

- Eddy Brixen as Chair of the conference presented a report on the AES 39th Conference on Audio Forensics in Hillerød, Denmark. He also presented images from the conference which will be included in the next AES journal.
- The AES 39th Conference was successful, including over 74 participants in attendance from 19 different countries. There was good representation from both United States and European law

enforcement, which had not been seen previously. There were 24 papers and workshops presented. The papers from the conference can be downloaded from the AES website. A conference report will also be posted on the web.

- The chairs of previous audio forensics conferences were honored: Roy Pritts and Richard Sanders.
- Responses to the questionnaire distributed to attendees were very positive with regard to overall satisfaction with the conference. There was a general acceptance that conferences like this should continue to be offered.
- Durand Begault thanked Eddy Brixen for his outstanding contributions to making the conference a success.

Future Audio Forensic Conference Planning

- Jeff Smith addressed plans for the next AES conference on audio forensics to be held in 2012 in Denver. He noted that a goal would be to get attendance over 100, and perhaps leverage video forensics professionals as well.
- The timeline of offering an audio forensics conference every two years, alternating between Europe and Denver, has proven to work well. This usually includes a small group of exhibitors. Sessions are intensive and single-track, usually lasting 2-3 days.
- Jeff Smith noted that any discussions or comments about the 2012 conference would be welcome, particularly potential exhibitors. Thoughts can be sent to Jeff at jeff.smith@ucdenver.edu.
- There was discussion about the types of topics that may be focused on at the 2012 conference. It was mentioned that it would be worthwhile to solicit papers from individuals on some of the hot-button topics for the 2012 conference.
- An announcement of the dates of the conference will be made after the AES Conference Policies Group approves.
- It was also noted that there is a push for the quality level of the conference papers to be raised, potentially so that conference publications might go directly to the journal.

Upcoming Conventions

- Durand Begault asked if anyone had ideas for activities (worships, tutorials, paper sessions, etc.) for upcoming conventions. He also reviewed the process for submitting a proposal.
 - o There was a suggestion for vendors to participate in a speech enhancement workshop – possibly set-up as a competition. This might also be a more appropriate topic for the conference, rather than the convention, and could possibly draw vendors.
 - o Jeff Smith volunteered to organize a topical workshop on enhancement.
 - o A potential tutorial topic would be authentication: then and now.
 - o Charles Van Winkle noted that he would feel confident helping coordinate a tutorial on authentication.
 - o Durand Begault also noted that an option would be to invite a professional in a different but relevant field that could provide insight that has bearing on audio forensics.

Codecs related to Voice ID

- Durand reviewed one of the goals of the Technical Committee: to support the call for papers on codecs related to voice identification. Feedback was provided on what had been accomplished in this area.

Enhancement Effects on Voice ID and Authentication

- There is potential for creating a best practices paper with regard to enhancement effects on voice identification and authentication. Durand noted that the Technical Committee on Audio Forensics could sponsor a paper on this topic, if there was any interest in an individual writing one.
- Jeff Smith noted that the Scientific Working Group on Digital evidence (SWGDE) had developed a best practice guideline for forensic audio, and it could be the feeder document for an AES best practices document or combined effort.

Listing of Audio Forensics Articles on AES website

- Durand Begault noted that it would be helpful to collect various audio forensics papers on the AES website.

Technical Committee Chair and Vice Chair

- Durand Begault stepped down as Vice Chair of the Technical Committee on Audio Forensics.
- Jeff Smith was elected to serve as Chair.
- Christopher Peltier was elected to serve as Vice Chair of North America.
- Eddy Brixen will remain serving as Vice Chair of Europe.
- It was noted that any type assistance that anyone wants to provide for committee activities is more than welcome.

Outreach/Partnerships

- Durand Begault asked about potential outreach and partnerships that the committee could be doing to enhance the field, including educational opportunities.
- Gregg Stutchmann was appointed as the new chair of the American Board of Recorded Evidence (ABRE) with American College of Forensic Examiners International (ACFEI.) He noted that there is definitely interest in partnerships.
- There is also potential for partnerships with SWGDE.

Meeting ended at 5:00 p.m.

J. Smith approved on 11/10/2010