

**Minutes from Technical Committee on Archiving, Restoration, and
Digital Libraries Meeting
Sunday October 9th, 2005
119th AES
New York, NY**

Present

Chris Lacinak, Dave Nolan, Gordon Reid, Tom Erbe, Bruce Gordon, Steve Bellamy, Sarah Cunningham, Ian Kuhn, Tom Spahm, Bruce Whisler, Daniel Sbardella, Peter Alyea, Wieslaw Woszczyk, Brad McCoy

The sign in sheet was passed around, introductions were made, meeting minutes from 117th AES were reviewed and approved and discussion began. All minutes below are organized by topic.

Follow up on “the need for standardization of system measurements” and “selecting an analog to digital converter” from the 117th AES TCARDL meeting

There was discussion on how to move forward with these two topics. The need for standardization of system measurements ended up being realized as serving multiple purposes.

1. For an operator to perform a test periodically to ensure that the equipment is performing correctly.
2. As a means of allowing an archive to specify a practice and performance results to a vendor which the vendor must perform and meet the requirements of. This would also be helpful to an organization applying for a grant in that it would give assurance to the granting agency that the proper practices were being applied.

Some concerns around publishing of such a document included the availability and cost of tools to perform such tests as well as the required expertise. The group came to consensus that while we are all concerned with the budgetary constraints of archives and realize that there are varying levels of expertise within the community that surrounds archives that this would still benefit all involved. It provides a tool for communication for those that don't have the expertise to perform such work. In regard to budget, it was felt that the alternative to this would be to do nothing which is not appropriate. The compromise was felt to be in trying to use specifications that were obtainable in a wide variety of various test tools so that they were not limited to only high end equipment.

As far as methods and tools currently being used there were two attendees who mentioned using Spectrafoo as a tool to ensure system integrity. There was also mentioning of a test method whereby one would take a digital source test signal, play it through the D/A, back into the A/D and measure the difference between the original digital source and the new digital signal in the digital domain.. The difference would define the artifacts of the signal path/system. These were both appreciated comments that will be taken into consideration in future work.

It was felt overall that a solution for the system integrity issue may also address one of the true concerns of the A/D issue as well in that it would define a base level of performance for the system as a whole. Realizing that this still leaves the practitioner who is concerned with choosing the “best” A/D converter with a dilemma we discussed defining a methodology for choosing an A/D converter as well with regard to transparency.

It was felt that we may need the expertise of others in AES Technical Committees and Working Groups to achieve the drafting of these documents. Wieslaw mentioned that a TC has the ability to do a couple of different things. We have the ability, if we feel like there is a need for a standard, as opposed to a technical document, to write a proposal to a Working Group on the development of a specific standard. We also have the ability to create a technical document and request the participation of other TCs and WGs that attain a specific expertise that we do not represent, but would require in the drafting of such a document.

Resulting Proposed Action Items:

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE TEST SETS AND
MEASUREMENTS

TECHNICAL DOCUMENT DEFINING METHOD OF
CHOOSING A/D CONVERTER BASED ON TRANSPARENCY

Metadata

It was mentioned that the community which the TCARDL serves needs a “State of the Union Address” on Metadata. The need includes definition of overarching structure with a clarification on how all the different models, standards and initiatives fit into the overarching structure; identification of the gaps, overlaps, strengths and weaknesses of each of the them; a tool assessment that identifies what tools are available for working with various standards and initiatives and which ones yet to have tools associated with them. It was felt that this is what is needed for people to gain an understanding of how the current state applies to them and practical application of them into their current and short term work efforts.

Resulting Proposed Action Items:

METADATA WORKSHOP IN PARIS SPONSORED BY
TCARDL

Current Formats being used with the intent of Preservation

There was a broad concern that was brought up and agreed upon regarding institutions archiving/preserving their content on CD-R, DAT and other formats that are “questionable” in their ability to serve the role of preservation. It was recognized that we are in a particularly precarious point of time with regard to preservation formats. There has recently been an overwhelming leap away from audiotape as a preservation format without a lot of clear definition/consensus on what will take its place. The stand-ins have been CD-R, DAT and digital files stored in any number of ways. While CD and DAT are questionable formats, digital files are troubling due to the budgetary requirements necessary to provide an actual supportive infrastructure worthy of preservation. The initial thought was to define what the minimum guidelines for selecting a format for preservation. Through discussion we agreed that a better alternate approach may be to offer guidance on challenges that the predominant formats present, and an associated appropriate strategy for storage and migration if preservation is the goal. This would include a list of available and used formats, associated challenges, recommended lifecycle/refresh rates and migration strategies.

It was mentioned that we may want to collaborate with experts who work with data migration/management strategies for other fields who deal with other types of data, but have been doing this for years and may have insight into addressing some of these issues.

Resulting Proposed Action Items:

WORKSHOP IN SAN FRANCISCO ON PRESERVATION
STRATEGIES FOR PREDOMINANT FORMATS SPONSORED
BY TCARDL

Collaboration with other organizations and representation of meaningful work

In discussing the need to, and questioning how we may, support and present work going on in other organizations that we feel is valid and representative of our needs to our community Wieslaw responded that we are able to place links on the AES website. It was also mentioned that the participants of TCARDL would be wise to engage in

organizations such as JTS and IASA to promote collaborative movement forward among all the organizations that are addressing the same issues.

In a separate discussion regarding who the target audience of TCARDL is exactly, there was a similar response in conclusion which is why I will place this under this section. It was mentioned that we may be an inaccurate representation of AES, since there is no/very little commercial representation in the TCARDL, but rather by large majority Universities. There was concern about the implication of this in the publishing of documents and their reception in AES. Responses included “generating documents and work will draw in people from other communities and will illicit input.” “We should get involved with IASA and JTS who are grappling with the same issues, producing a lot of the same work and also offer a broader representation from Europe that includes Government and Broadcast entities”.

Resulting Proposed Action Items:

GENERATE A LIST OF LINKS FOR OTHER PERTINENT
WORK TO POST ON AES WEBSITE

Proposed Action Items and Follow-Up:

SYSTEM PERFORMANCE TEST SETS AND MEASUREMENTS

Need to come to consensus on whether this should be a technical document or standard. Please post comments on the reflector over the next 2 weeks.

**TECHNICAL DOCUMENT DEFINING METHOD OF CHOOSING A/D
CONVERTER BASED ON TRANSPARENCY**

Needs a general editor and TCARDL subgroup to take on the outline, allocation of writing and timeline for the initial drafting of this document. Volunteers need to step forward in the next 2 weeks (by 10/24) to take this on or the project will be considered to not be of interest. I'd like to see a minimum of 3 people volunteer to make up the subgroup and 1 must be defined as the chief editor.

METADATA WORKSHOP IN PARIS SPONSORED BY TCARDL

The co-chairs will draft the proposal for the workshop and post to the reflector within the next 2 weeks.

**WORKSHOP IN SAN FRANCISCO ON PRESERVATION STRATEGIES FOR
PREDOMINANT FORMATS SPONSORED BY TCARDL**

The co-chairs will draft the proposal for the workshop and post to the reflector within the next 2 weeks.

**GENERATE A LIST OF LINKS FOR OTHER PERTINENT WORK TO POST
ON AES WEBSITE**

Needs a “general editor” and TCARDL subgroup to take on the initial compiling of links. Volunteers need to step forward in the next 2 weeks (by 10/24) to take this on or the project will be considered to not be of interest. I’d like to see a minimum of 3 people volunteer to make up the subgroup and 1 must be defined as the chief editor.

Drafted by
Chris Lacinak
Co-chair of TC_ARDL
10-10-2005