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AMWA/EBU FIMS reports first results and roadmap at IBC 2010

Geneva, September 20, 2010

During IBC, EBU and AMWA organised a round table session around SOA and the Framework for Interoperable Media Services (FIMS) project jointly coordinated by the two organisations. Users were invited to highlight the market needs for a FIMS solution. Respondents to the FIMS request for technology were present to reinforce their motivations and expectations on the specification and standardisation work that will follow.

During the round table, which comes after a successful meeting with respondents Amberfin, BBC, Cinegy, IBM, and Sony to its request for technology, FIMS was privileged to announce the following roadmap for developing specifications.

Phase 1 will consist of a common service definition format, after the high level architecture and framework described in the request for technology is first refined. This framework will cover all system and management requirements (service management, awareness and communication, content and time awareness, security, framework extension). The framework will be built upon IBM (SOA based Media Services Framework) and Sony (Media SOA Framework) proposals with the valued experience of service developers and users from Amberfin, BBC and Cinegy. The project will also address container issues seeking maximum compatibility with AAF and MXF.

Phase 2 will subsequently investigate the possibility of defining common services using the framework developed in phase 1. All respondents have already suggested key services.

It is very encouraging to see that these contributions have been received in the framework of the AMWA licensing policy, which is compensation free. This is essential to the successful standardisation of the core technology on which the project is working

The work will continue in a public manner via the FIMS wiki (<http://wiki.amwa.tv/ebu>) and open meetings that will allow third parties to also actively contribute to this important work. Direct participation will be subject to the signature of a 'participation agreement' to safeguard

the favourable licensing conditions under which FIMS operates. FIMS is co-chaired by Giorgio Dimino, RAI and John Footen, Chime Media.

Brad Gilmer says "the AMWA is participating jointly with the EBU in this effort because our members are focused on creating more flexible and efficient workflows". The need for this is obvious - media companies are being asked to deliver more programs to more platforms while operating under a very restricted economic environment. They care about the FIMS work because it provides a standardized framework within which they can design and implement facilities which meet their needs now, but also allow them to more easily adapt to the future. File-based facilities are the way of the future, and FIMS is at its core.

On behalf of EBU, Lieven Vermaele, Hans Hoffmann and Jean-Pierre welcome the successful perspective of FIMS providing the industry with core technology for service based production in collaboration with AMWA and key market players.

Lewis Kirkaldie, Product Manager for Cinegy GmbH, elaborates on their involvement - "Cinegy recognise the importance of the standardisation process, and are pleased to have an opportunity to help the FIMS project produce an industry standard that is relevant to vendors as much as the end customer. By reducing proprietary interfaces as much as possible, vendors can focus on the business of producing great tools for media customers, instead of spending time re-inventing and supporting a different version of the same wheel."

Peter Ludé, Senior Vice President, Professional Solutions of America, Sony Electronics, said "This is a collaborative effort that combines the knowledge and experience of the IT and the broadcast industries. Sony firmly believes that a standardized framework with clearly defined interfaces will maximise the potential of SOA for media applications. We therefore welcome the opportunity to work within FIMS, and consider this to be a collaborative effort that will deliver long-term benefits to both industry and users."

Steve Canepa, General Manager, IBM Global Media & Entertainment Industry, states "As a principal member of the Advanced Media Workflow Association (AMWA) IBM is pleased to be a technology contributor to, and active participant in, the proposed Framework for Interoperable Media Services (FIMS). IBM has long been an advocate of open, standards-based robust solutions for the media and entertainment industry, as evidenced by the Abstract Service Definition (ASD) work. The launch of the FIMS program by AMWA and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) is a significant step forward towards a more simple, agile, modular and market responsive approach to media service integration."

Bruce Devlin, CTO, says "To continue to make more programming available on more distribution channels for less money. We need to define the IT building blocks that allow the media industry to create custom solution from commodity components without eye-watering integration and sustaining costs. FIMS is the only work taking place that is defining, not only the nature of the services required but also their definition and implementation. AmberFin fully supports these activities."

About the AMWA

The Advanced Media Workflow Association is a user-focused industry body dedicated to the promotion, development and adoption of open, accessible standards and specifications relating to file-based workflows (including AAF, MXF and other formats), Service Oriented Architectures, and Application Specifications as they apply to the areas of content creation, production, post-production, rich media authoring, archiving and distribution. AMWA members include Adobe Systems, Ad-ID, Ascent Media, Avid Technology, BBC, Chime Media, Cinegy, IBM, Metaglobe, Omneon, PBS and Turner Broadcasting.

Visit the AMWA on the web at www.amwa.tv.

About the European Broadcasting Union (EBU)

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) is the largest association of national broadcasters in the world (75 active Members in 56 countries, 43 associate Members in 25 countries further afield). The EBU helps public service broadcasters to deliver unique high quality programming to their audiences. It offers Members technical, operational and legal services, and coordinates a growing supply of quality content for radio, television and new platforms. It provides Members with information and analysis on media trends, and training designed to meet their needs. The EBU works to secure recognition of the crucial role of public service broadcasters in the digital audiovisual landscape.

Visit the EBU at: <http://www.ebu.ch>

AMWA Contact:

Barbara Main

Director of Administration

Voice: + 1-608-513-5992

Email: barbara_main@amwa.tv

EBU Contact:

Albert Garnier

Senior Communications Officer

Tel: +41 (0)22 717 2213

Cell: +41(0)79 292 8167

Email: garnier@ebu.ch

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