AES SWISS SECTION NEWSLETTER

93rd Issue

INFORMATION ON NEXT MEETING

SIRANAU Project

Thursday, 12th of February 2004, 17h30 at the Radio Suisse Romande,

Av. du Temple 40, Lausanne

SPEAKERS: Jean-Pierre Molliet, RSR

Gérard Saudan, RSR

Ralf Dahler, RSR

ORGANIZER: Patrick Boehm, TSR

LANGUAGE: French

The next meeting will be held at the Radio Suisse Romande on the 12th of February. The purpose is to present the RSR project entitled "SIRANAU", abbreviation for "Système Integré Radio pour l'Archivage Numérique Audio", that is to say, "Radio Integrated System for Audio Numerical Archiving".

This project, started in 2001, will be presented by three speakers:

- Jean-Pierre Molliet, head of technical project and Infrastructure

- Gérard Saudan, head of project, responsible of workflow

- Ralf Dahler, head of SIRANAU project, responsible of RSR archiving

New Broadcast Facilities at Radio 24 in Zürich

Thursday, 22nd of January 2004 at Radio 24 in Zürich

SPEAKERS: Peter Brun, Program Director Radio 24
Walter Reinhard, Customer Project Manager Studer / Radio 24
Roland Casagrande, Studer Product Management

REPORTER: Attila Karamustafaoglu

About 35 people gathered in the early evening at the studios of Radio 24, the largest private radio station in Switzerland. After welcoming the visitors and thanking Radio 24 for making this meeting possible, two groups were formed for the two parts of the visit. Each part was scheduled to take 40 to 45 minutes. One of the parts was the technical part, presented by Walter Reinhard and Roland Casagrande. There, Walter Reinhard first held an introductory speech about the history of broadcasting equipment at Radio 24. He explained that the old equipment became too faulty so that they decided to completely refurbish the building and most of the technical equipment. To enable this, the broadcasting was done out of a container for two months. Then he explained the needs, which they met with the new equipment. Key is the linking of all the units within the house. A data network provides the necessary links so that e.g. the news redaction can record and edit news at independent editing stations and send it via the network to the momentarily active on-air studio. Further, the links provide concepts for worst-case scenarios so that one studio can seamlessly take over the function of another. Roland Casagrande went more into the explanation of the consoles themselves, actually there are Studer OnAir 2000 and OnAir 3000 consoles installed. He pointed out that flexibility is an important feature for state-of-the-art broadcast consoles. After this, two places were visited within the house. The first was the studio 3 nearby, which is used for some off-line production of trailers, jingles, pads and similar audio-clips. On the OnAir 3000 there it was demonstrated how new features ease the work of a broadcast DJ. One example is that changing a snapshot does isolate open channels to avoid any change for signals, which are eventually on air. Further it has been demonstrated that the settings of a channel always follow the source, like talkback settings.

After this, the group was led to the top floor of the building where the technique room is located. Here the visitors got bright-eyed of all these cables and racks full of codecs, off-air receivers, alarm systems and audio and data servers.

Returning to the starting point, the groups were switched then. Peter Brun took over his second group then and led it to the moderation room. There, he showed the workplaces of news moderators and the music redaction. There the news contributions are edited and the music for the playlist is transferred to the server. In a Q+A round there, some interesting facts were discussed. One was about the way the radio station finds out about what the best music is to play for it. A system with radio control wristwatches worn by a representative group of radio listeners enables the station to obtain the information of the watch-wearer's listening behaviour. Referring to this, a sophisticated algorithm helps to select then the titles to be played up to three days ahead. Peter Brun pointed out how dangerous it would be to play sequentially three titles of a different genre. After those would have been played, most of the listeners would have left the station to another by then because only a few people like such a mix. So selecting the right titles is a key issue for a radio station. Further on, the on-air studios were shown with their equipment, as well as the news redaction where 14 people work. According to its philosophy, Radio 24 focuses on general news as well as local information. In total, 25 people are working on the programme itself. In the on-air studios the group had the occasion to watch a live moderation and see that it is highly assisted by technical equipment. After the groups merged again, another question round was held before the official part ended and some discussions were continued in the pizzeria Santa Lucia nearby. Thanks again to Radio 24 and to the speakers.