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ASIST Annual: Business Meeting Summary

By Amy Wallace

The business meeting opened with a report from outgoing President Nicholas Belkin. He reported that the American Society for Information Science and Technology accomplished much in 2004/2005. The society has a digital library that is well indexed thanks to the help from Access Innovations. Most of the redesign for the ASIST website is finished and the new site will be launched before the end of the year. It was noted, however, that it would still be some time before all the desired content is made available. Progress has been made on improving chapter communications and membership data. The ASIST board has embarked on a five-year strategic planning process, which should help focus direction and projects. New technologies are being employed to get information out to members, including a video of the Leadership Program and the Annual Meeting blog and wiki. Last, there has been an increase in international awareness and collaboration by making direct contacts with key members around the world. Some of the successes include the conference partnership with ICKM, the European IA Summit, and Canadian IA Summit. The one area of concern that was noted is that membership continues to slowly decrease.

June Lester gave the Treasurer's Report. She noted that this

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year was expected to be much worse financially than it was for the society. Membership revenue continues to decline, but an increase in membership dues and program revenue helped sustain society income.

Michael Leach, the incoming President, wrapped up the meeting with an extremely dynamic presentation on what he would like to accomplish while President. He and the board have been working on a five-year strategic plan that will focus on five main areas. These areas include internationalization, publications, chapters, standing committees, and intellectual content. He plans to create an Internationalization Task Force to explore opportunities for raising awareness about ASIST and making ASIST programs and

benefits accessible to members around the world. He plans to create a publications standing committee to explore options for resurrecting old publications as well as opportunities for new publications. He sees the need to revitalize chapters by developing and supporting local leaders as well as encouraging chapters to work together to share some of the great programs and services that are offered to their members. He promised to give each standing committee a charge that supports the strategic plan and allows committees to help the society reach out to specific member population each year. Last he will work to leverage the intellectual content of the society by getting unique content up on to the new website (best papers, oral histories, etc.).

ASIST Executive Board meeting in Montreal, March 4 2005

Beata Panagopoulos

Music Searching

Jon Dunn, Associate Director for Technology in the Digital Library Program, Indiana University

Since 1996, Indiana University's innovative Digital Library has been building discovery tools for music formats and representations. Jon Dunn first provided background into the context at Indiana University and the challenges addressed; then he reviewed some of the tools available.

At Indiana University, some 200 undergraduates need simultaneous access to course reserves for class assignments. Instructors need to pull sound files and score notation segments into lectures and class assignments. And researchers need to use scores and sound files for analysis. These various demands have led to user interfaces that focus not only on discovery tools but also on application tools.

Challenges arise not only from layered user needs but also from the nature of the

content. Unlike text, with linear strings, music has many simultaneous attributes, including: pitch, duration, tempo, dynamic level, and articulation. (For further information see: Selfridge-Field, Eleanor and Walter B. Hewlett, eds. 2001. *The Virtual Score: Representation, Retrieval, Restoration*. Cambridge: MIT.) The written representation for Western music, called Common Music Notation, is open-ended; any coding must allow for creation of new music elements.

Because there is so much to represent, over 50 formats have been developed (<http://www.music-notation.info>). Among these formats are the commonly-used MIDI, proprietary formats (Finale, Sibelius), and "open" formats (Music XML).

In addition to score notation and audio formats, in an academic context, descriptive metadata is an important aspect of resource discovery. Four categories of schemes used for discovery of music resources are: MARC, MP3 ID4 tags (user created), Dublin Core, and some commercial schemes (e.g., GraceNote, Muze).

To address these challenges, the IU Digital Library developed Variations, Variations 2, and (most recently) Variations 3. The interface supports discovery by performer, composer, title, key, media format, and themes/incipits. Organization of records has some parallels to Functional Requirement of Bibliographic Records (FRBR). But rather than work-expression-manifestation-item, the levels are container-instantiation-work-contributor. User tools include score annotation; synchronized score

and audio; a timeliner tool (bubble diagrams); personalization features (bookmarks, playlists); and a lesson editor.

Having discussed tools already in place at IU, Dunn next explored upcoming developments. Audio fingerprinting technology (e.g., Shazam) matches sound fragments to recordings. The limitation is that only exact matches can be made--the technology cannot identify a music from one performance to the same music via a different performance. A less precise query interface has been developed by Ohio State in its Themefinder (<http://www.themefinder.org/>). Still less precise is "query by humming." In 2003, University of Michigan developed one experimental "query by humming" interface for identifying Beatles songs. For the latest developments in music information retrieval, take a look at: The International Conferences on Music Information Retrieval and Related Activities (ISMIR: <http://www.ismir.net/>).