

AUDIOPHILE AUDITION
web magazine for music, audio & home theater

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April 14, 2004

FireWire/iLink Guidelines Published - The DVD Forum has published details of the standards for employing the IEEE 1394 digital interface (also called FireWire and iLink) between audio and video DVD players and associated equipment such as processors, receivers and digital TVs. The differences between DVD-Video and DVD-Audio are reflected in MPEG Transport Stream (MPEG-TS) for video, Dolby Digital or DTS and Audio and Music Data Transmission Protocol for DVD-Audio. The two may be used simultaneously by a player. Copy protection is carried via the IEEE 1394 interface. The main advantages for users will be that the digital data will stay in its digital form from player to processor, receiver or HDTV, and that six analog interconnect cables will no longer be required for the purpose. Also, bass management can now be easily performed in the digital domain. While the original document of a few years ago did not specify a particular multichannel format, the new standards are said now to apply only to DVD-Audio and that no such digital interface for SACD is planned at this time. This would give DVD-A a sizable leg up over the SACD camp.

Dolby Offers 5.1 Sound for Home Video - Dolby Digital 5.1 Creator is the new technology licensed by Dolby Laboratories, which will allow software makers to create DVD-authoring programs to master DVD soundtracks in 5.1 discrete surround sound from a personal computer. Current tools allow consumers to shoot hi-def, widescreen videos with animated menus and advanced special effects. The new technology takes the next logical step in adding multichannel sound to consumer DVD creation. The coding efficiencies of Dolby Digital allow a 5.1 audio track to be recorded in a fraction of the space required for stereo PCM tracks and the resulting space savings allow for a higher video bit rate or extended recording time.

Audio Facts for the Future at AES Convention - The 116th convention of the Audio Engineering Society happens in Berlin May 8 to 11. A list of just a few of the papers and events to be presented give an idea of the growing focus on multichannel sound in the audio industry: AES Multichannel Symposium; Spatial Perception and Processing; Psychoacoustics, Perception and Listening Tests; Multichannel Sound & Wave Field Synthesis; Multichannel in Automobiles; The Role of Multiple Low-Frequency Signals in the Perception of Reproduced Sound; Advanced Recording and Reproduction Paradigms Compatible with 5.1 Media; Surround Sound Design in TV; The Center Channel Challenge; How to Set Up 5.1 Surround; Listening Tests in Practice. More information at www.aes.org

Italy's Fone SACD Label Comes to U.S. - The Italian audiophile classical and jazz label Fone has so far released 22 SACD titles, mostly in multichannel format, but they have not been available in the U.S. Their distribution in the U.S. is now in place with nine titles in the first release. We hope to be reviewing some of them soon.

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