



# An Eye on IBC

By Sara Waddington, Managing Editor, SCTE

**IBC2019 in Amsterdam attracted 56,390 visitors. The SCTE, and its IBC bursary winners, report from the event...**

IBC2019, held at the RAI Centre in Amsterdam from **13-17 September 2019**, has been hailed a celebration of industry insights and excellence, with the world's media, entertainment and technology industry once again gathering in Amsterdam to do business and forge connections. With a total attendance figure of 56,390, IBC2019 welcomed a record number of next-generation attendees. The number of under 35s increased by 10% year-on-year and, with a rise in C-level attendees, IBC2019 demonstrated the show's vital role in the industry.

SCTE, as one of the IBC Partners, exhibited at the event on the Partners Pavilion, just outside Hall 8. It showcased its new Learning Management System (LMS) on the booth, which IBC's Show Daily covered during the exhibition (see page 63 for further details).

SCTE also brought four lucky bursary winners to the event. Under the SCTE's bursary programme, members chosen are flown to the event, with travel, accommodation and expenses covered by the SCTE. Entrance to the conference is arranged by IBC.

## SCTE Benelux Lecture at IBC

The SCTE Benelux Group held its IBC 2019 lecture on Monday **16 September 2019**, during IBC 2019 in the Emerald Room at the RAI Centre, Amsterdam (The Netherlands).

On the theme of 'Artificial Intelligence and Content Delivery', the half-day lecture started at 1pm, with registration and a light buffet lunch. Participation was free for SCTE members and IBC visitors.

"With current developments in streaming IP applications, the management and technical challenges associated with delivering flawless, error-free video and audio of these streams becomes more and more complicated. Using Artificial Intelligence (AI), complicated control and IP-traffic issues can be solved, enabling reliable management of OTT, VOD and 5G interconnection streams in the networks," explained Rien Baan, SCTE Benelux Group Secretary.

Moderated by Ed Achterberg, CEO/Research Analyst, Telecompaper, the lecture included contributions from Divitel, Skyline Communications and Adams Network Engineering GmbH. Presentations given on the day were:-

- **"Building data-driven, cloud-based, click-to-deploy video delivery solutions by leveraging advances in Artificial Intelligence"** by Gabor Molnar, Ph.D., Evangelist, Video Services & Science, Divitel B.V.
- **"Management of DAA ecosystems"** by Dominique De Paepe, Market Director Service Provider, Skyline Communications.

- **“Artificial Intelligence, naturally smarter cable networks”** by Dr.-Ing. Alexander C. Adams, Managing Director, Adams Network Engineering GmbH.



Above: In the halls at IBC2019



Above: The SCTE Benelux Lecture at IBC

## New features and initiatives

IBC2019 offered a host of new features and initiatives, including the first-ever Esports Showcase, the launch of the Next Gen Hub, the introduction of the Social Impact Awards and Young Pioneer Award and the showcase of IBC’s first three media innovation accelerator projects under the ‘Accelerator Media Innovation programme’. Leading actor, director and producer Andy Serkis delivered an inspirational and revealing Convention Keynote to a capacity crowd, and Dutch football legends Ruud Gullit and Robin van Persie were at the show to speak about their latest TV projects. Conference delegates also heard from Keynote speakers including Cecile Frot Coutaz (YouTube), Shalini Govil Pai (Android TV) and Max Amordeluso (Amazon Alexa).

IBC Chief Executive, Michael Crimp, said: “Across the exhibition, conference and feature areas, IBC2019 has been a hive of networking, deal-making, product launches, learning and the sharing of ideas. It has been a celebration of the industry’s creativity and drivers of change while also helping to identify and address key challenges.

“We are delighted to see audience growth in our key target areas, particularly welcoming more young people, senior level executives and overseas visitors. While this gives us a focus to build on next year, our metrics for success also include crucial elements such as quality of experience, audience engagement and IBC’s influence on the industry, and our conversations with exhibitors and attendees tells us that these have all improved on 2018.”

In a show full of memorable moments, a major highlight was its first ever IBC Esports Showcase live tournament, which demonstrated how gripping and entertaining esports can be and why it is such a fast-growing and important sector for those involved in the media and broadcast industry. Two professional teams from ESL’s network of National Championships across Europe went head-to-head in classic FPS multiplayer Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO).

This year’s recipient of IBC’s highest award, the International Honour for Excellence, brought some Hollywood stardust to the RAI as actor, director and producer Andy Serkis accepted the award for his outstanding contribution to the industry and his pioneering work in the field of motion capture.

New awards were also introduced: the Social Impact Awards, which recognised diversity and inclusivity, environmental impact and ethical leadership. The Young Pioneer Award was awarded

to Vera Bichler, Austrian broadcaster ORF's first female football director.

At IBC2019, the results of three of IBC's media-telecom catalyst programmes were presented – a 5G-enabled tourism experience, AI indexing for regulatory content management and mobile news gathering using AI-powered compression - showing how collaboration across the media and telecoms communities can transform both businesses and consumer experiences.

The Big Screen which was equipped with Dolby Vision and Dolby Atmos, included an exclusive cinematic screening of Game of Thrones' epic Season 8 battle episode 'The Long Night' with a discussion of the craft and technology behind the show; the stories behind the edit and the music of the Elton John biopic, Rocket Man, as well as an inspiring BBC Studios' Natural History showcase.

## SCTE bursary winners

SCTE sent four lucky bursary winners to IBC2019 from European cable operators. Each of the winners was an SCTE member. Annual bursary winners enjoy free entry to the IBC conference



**Arber Vitija and Armend Krasniqi of IPKO, in the foreground, were IBC2019 bursary winners**

and exhibition (provided by IBC) and hotel accommodation in Amsterdam and flights (provided by the SCTE).

The SCTE also hosts all bursary winners during the show, providing the use of its stand as a 'hospitality base' for its bursary winners, and taking them on a tour of the show floor (mentoring, where required). It also invites all SCTE bursary winners to a special dinner during the show.

Two of the bursary winners chronicle their experiences below at IBC2019.



## Flutura Sadiku Network Coordinator, Arding SHPK

This year, SCTE honoured my company, IPKO, by selecting me as one of the IBC2019 bursary winners, granting me a fully funded trip



and access to the IBC conference and exhibition at the RAI Convention Centre in Amsterdam, Netherlands. I have been wanting to join IBC since its 50th anniversary in 2017 and was thrilled to be given the opportunity to go last year as a young professional in the industry.

The main objectives that I had during my visit to this event were to widen my professional network, discover and learn about the latest products and innovations and keep up to date with the latest market trends in the field. Not only were these objectives met, but IBC exceeded every expectation that I had.

IBC provided every guest with a free IBC2019 app that was available for all platforms. The app itself was very interactive

and made the whole experience better by providing all the information and details needed for a productive visit to the RAI Centre every day of the event. I could plan everything ahead by creating a personalised journey and agenda, take notes throughout the panels or discussions and use the interactive floorplan to get to the next session or new exhibition using the shortest route and fastest way possible.

Thousands of attendees could visit exhibitor showcase events, listen and interact with speakers in panel discussions, witness the latest and futuristic inventions in the Future Zone, meet and greet people from the organisations responsible for creating such a huge event at the Partnership Pavilion - SCTE included - or see the latest inventions and products of giants such as Google.

The highlight of this event was definitely the SCTE Benelux Lecture Meeting: **"Artificial Intelligence and Content Delivery"** which gathered experts in the field to discuss the latest problem-solving technologies using artificial intelligence to detect, predict and prevent HFC issues. Artificial intelligence is also helping to solve IP traffic issues, allowing the reliable management of networks, such as 5G interconnection streams.

“ The main objectives that I had during my visit to this event were to widen my professional network, discover and learn about the latest products and innovations and keep up to date with the latest market trends in the field. ”



IBC2019 in focus

According to the panelists at this lecture, AI has great potential to be used, as a tool, to discover what users really want through data analysis and to therefore improve products and services.

There are many reasons why IBC is considered the world's most influential media, entertainment and technology event. The panels, exhibitions and workshops that I attended during

the event were really insightful and beneficial, but also gave me a clearer understanding of the cooperation and collaboration between companies in sharing their latest technologies and ideas.

If you are a young graduate or technician and an SCTE member, I strongly suggest that you apply for the SCTE bursary awards for future events or conferences which the SCTE organises or supports. If you are not an SCTE member yet, I strongly recommend that you become one and benefit from the many opportunities that they offer for everyone in the industry and beyond.

My company and I have benefited from the numerous training and events which SCTE provides for its members but, most importantly, you can obtain access to the largest network of professionals and experts in the industry.



**Catriona Holland**  
Technology and Innovation Graduate,  
CPE Security, Virgin Media



I arrived at the RAI centre in Amsterdam for the IBC conference on **Friday 13 September 2019**. The conference

featured 15 halls. I caught Cecile Frot-Coutaz's (Head of Youtube EMEA) keynote presentation which, although not directly related to my role at Virgin Media, I found very interesting to gauge market trends for the type of content that customers are watching. There was also a very interesting discussion on creator freedom versus ethics and how YouTube controls controversial content on its platform.

I took the opportunity to attend talks that wouldn't typically be available to me. I thoroughly enjoyed the Sustainability talk which mostly focused on how content can encourage sustainable behaviour. However, I was particularly interested in

how these companies were working towards becoming plastic-free and how this could be incorporated within Virgin Media. I can already see how the company is moving towards this, but I picked up a few ideas that I have already suggested in our sustainability forum. I hope, in future years, that there will be more of a focus on how telecoms companies can work towards being more sustainable in the ways that they grow and expand, rather than just in day-to-day operations.

I also attended a session on the "Ground-Breaking Cinematography Behind the Lion King" which was brilliant. As an engineer, I found it fascinating to see the technology that went into filming using a virtual set. For me, this was definitely a highlight of the event!

As a graduate at Virgin Media, I have spent the past six months working in E2E Entertainment architecture specifically on a next-generation encoding trial. I therefore attended one of the featured sessions around the subject of encoding as well taking the opportunity to meet the vendor (with whom we have been working on the trial) at its booth at IBC2019. It was

“ It was great to broaden my knowledge around the subject as well as gain experience into how to navigate vendor interactions at conferences. ”



A sustainability presentation at IBC2019

It was great to broaden my knowledge around the subject as well as gain experience into how to navigate vendor interactions at conferences.

After the conference, I moved into a new team for my third rotation on the Virgin Media grad scheme. This was in CPE Security and so I took the opportunity, at IBC2019, to attend a security session on the topic of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. From my previous placement, I had a bit of background knowledge on the subject and this session provided a really good bridge for my new placement to get an

idea not only of the importance of security but also on how I would employ this technology to perform penetration testing.

On the Monday evening, the SCTE was kind enough to take both myself and the other bursary winners out for a brilliant meal. I had a lovely time meeting the SCTE. I spent the evening chatting and laughing away while consuming what seemed to be endless amounts of incredible food.

My team from Virgin Media joined me on day four of the conference and I spent the next two days introducing them to and attending meetings with vendors. It was great to put faces to names and enjoy some free tea, coffee and beer. My manager and I attended the SCTE lunch and Benelux lecture and enjoyed the presentation from Dominique Da Paepe, who discussed management of Distributed Access Architectures as opposed to traditional hybrid fibre coax.

After the five days, I was completely shattered but so thankful for the experience and all that I learned at IBC. I would thoroughly recommend applying for the bursary and I hope to be back next year with Virgin Media!

### Apply for your bursary today

Don't miss your chance, as an SCTE member, to apply for an event bursary to IBC2020, as well as to ANGA COM 2020 (Cologne, Germany) and Cable-Tec Expo 2020 (Denver, USA). Please email 300 words to [office@thescte.eu](mailto:office@thescte.eu) on why you wish to be considered for the bursary.

IBC 2020 will be held from **11-15 September 2020** in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. See [www.ibc.org](http://www.ibc.org)



IBC2019



Andy Serkis accepts his award at IBC2019