

IABM Student Bursary Scheme Report - Jan Ludwig

IBC is the place to be for everybody interested in media technology and I was lucky enough to be chosen by IABM to receive a bursary this year. So together with three of my peers from RheinMain University of Applied Sciences I made my way to Amsterdam on Thursday the 12th of September.

We arrived just in time to attend the World Skills Café, a forum for everybody in M&E to discuss the current skills shortages. I really liked how open the discussion was and that I could contribute my perspective as a student and former apprentice in the M&E industry. The small groups with people from very different sectors were also a great opportunity to network.

On Friday the show officially started with the IABM Opening Session, where I learned a lot about which trends industry leaders are currently seeing as the most important ones and which topics to expect on the show floor and during the conference sessions.



Afterwards we had a quick get together with all the IABM bursary students, where we met the students from France and the UK and got some valuable tips on how to spend our time in Amsterdam.

Equipped with this knowledge I made my way to the show floor, where I spent the day with my fellow student Niklas looking at all things audio and talking to several vendors about their products. Especially interesting was the Artisto platform by on-hertz,

which is a software suite running on COTS hardware, that makes it possible to build an audio mixer out of small modules like an equalizer or a single fader which can then be controlled by a web GUI or MIDI controller.

Another exhibitor that I had wanted to visit was arkona technologies, who have their headquarters very close to my university. They produce a FPGA-blade that can be configured to do all kinds of video and audio processing, like IP-encapsulation or color correction. At their booth I could talk to one of their development engineers, who showed me how you can automate the deployment with a script and their upcoming node-based GUI. In the end he even offered to organize a demo unit for our university to try it out further.

In the afternoon I visited the outdoor exhibits to look at the OB trucks. It was very interesting to see the different technological approaches used in the design of the trucks, from a classic SDI-based truck with massive patch panels for every signal up to NEP's latest fully IP-based truck, where it was hard to spot even a single video cable.



The next day I joined up with the students from the SMPTE German Student Chapter to tour the AWS booth that showcased a range of solutions for the entire production process, like automated subtitling, AI-translations and cloud-based live production and playout.

Afterwards I attended the session “Innovating the F1 Broadcast” that explained how F1 was able to rapidly shift to remote production of the races during the pandemic. It ended with a watch party of the qualifying session that day with live commentary from a F1 race strategist, which was really fun.

The day ended with the BaM Awards, which were a great opportunity to network with the other IABM bursary students and hear about their favorite things on the show floor so far.

On Sunday I attended the conference session “The Evolution of Live Production: Where are we on the transformational IP journey?”. This session offered interesting perspectives from some smaller broadcast companies on how they use IP-technology to address the challenges they are facing, an area that I think is oftentimes overlooked as the discussions only focus on the major broadcasters.

I also saw some demos at the Adobe booth of their new AI-features like text based editing, automatic audio mixing and automatic music editing and was amazed at how far these features have come over the last few years.

The last day of IBC started with the IBC Talent Programme that showcased some great initiatives to help newcomers to the industry advance their careers. Some recent graduates also shared their tips to get started in the industry and I’m sure this advice will help me navigate my way in this industry after graduating.

The IBC accelerator was another interesting exhibition that showed cutting edge technologies that were developed in collaboration between different companies. The session “IP Networks: Finding the Needle in the Haystack” offered deep insights into the new NMOS IS-13 and BCP-002-02 standards and afterwards I had a long conversation with one of the engineers involved in the accelerator about the current challenges when deploying a large IP-based system.

Besides all the interesting conference sessions and exhibitors, IBC was also a great opportunity to network with students from other universities, be it at one of the many networking receptions or in the evenings with pizza and drinks.



I'm thankful to the IABM for making this valuable experience possible, which offered me great insights into the industry and connected me with inspiring professionals and peers who will surely shape the future of the M&E tech industry.

