MIDI MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

Supporting the Arts Through Technology

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MIDI Manufacturers Association (MMA) Adopts MIDI Capability Inquiry (MIDI-CI) Specification.

New Feature of MIDI Technology Paves the Way for Significant Future Expansion

Los Angeles, CA, January 28, 2018 - Today marks the MIDI Manufacturers Association's (MMA) ratification of an important new extension to MIDI, the MIDI Capability Inquiry (MIDI-CI) Specification. MIDI Capability Inquiry messages enable devices to automatically inquire and set features that improve compatibility and simplify configuration. The messages also enable future enhancements such as negotiating to use a next generation protocol, and provide a "fall back" mechanism, so if a device does not support a new feature it continues to work as defined by MIDI 1.0.

MIDI-CI enables 3 main areas of new functionality: Profile Configuration, Property Exchange, and Protocol Negotiation. Documents defining specific profiles, specific properties and values, and the new protocol are expected from MMA during 2018.

About Profile Configuration

Profiles are defined sets of rules for how a MIDI device sends or responds to specific MIDI messages to achieve a specific purpose or suit a specific application. Profiles make products easier to configure and provide better interoperability. "Profile auto configuration of complex controller mappings is like MIDI Learn on steroids," said Mike Kent of MK2 Image and the Chair of the MMA's MIDI-CI working group.

At the MMA's Annual Meeting during the 2018 Winter NAMM Show, Korg, Roland and Yamaha demonstrated products interoperating using a draft Drawbar Organ Profile and a draft Analog Synth Profile. They also produced a movie showing a Drone Profile, which used MIDI messages sent to a Digital Proportional Controller to control the movements of a Drone in sync with music.

About Property Exchange

Property Exchange (PE) messages can get and set device properties including but not limited to product name, configuration settings, controller names, controller values, patch names and other meta data, etc. "Property Exchange total recall enables storing of multi device setups from a variety of manufacturers into a DAW project file, and allows seamlessly combining hardware and software synthesizers, providing users with the best of both worlds" stated Koichi Mizumoto of Roland Japan, and head of the AMEI MIDI-CI working group in Japan.

The demonstration at the MMA Annual Meeting included "total recall" of Yamaha, Roland, and Korg hardware instrument settings using draft PE messages and Steinberg Cubase software.

About Protocol Negotiation

MIDI-CI defines a method for two devices to negotiate to use a future industry standard "Next Generation" MMA/AMEI protocol that is now being developed, or a manufacturer-specific protocol. Devices that do not support any new protocol will continue to use MIDI 1.0 protocol.

The MIDI-CI Specification was developed by MMA with the Association of Musical Electronics Industries (AMEI), the body that maintains the MIDI Specification for Japan. AMEI adopted the CI Specification in November 2017. Having the Specification adopted by both bodies is necessary for it to be considered part of the official MIDI 1.0 Specification, which is a world-wide voluntary industry standard. MIDI-CI is just one of several initiatives that the MMA and AMEI are working on together to enhance MIDI technology.

"The really exciting part of MIDI-CI is that Protocol Negotiation paves the way for a new industry standard MIDI protocol that could enable new features like higher resolution, more channels and improved performance and expressiveness (while still maintaining backwards compatibility with current MIDI 1.0 devices)," said Yutaka Hasegawa, chairman of AMEI. "A new MIDI protocol would offer a bridge between music technology and new emerging technologies in other industries and allow creators, performers, and consumers to enjoy new and exciting musical experiences in the future."

MMA President Tom White added: "MIDI-CI is a very important first step towards next generation MIDI products with added capability and creates the possibility to expand MIDI into new markets in the future. The MMA and AMEI will continue to develop additional specifications that build on MIDI-CI's framework to expand the capabilities of MIDI while enhancing ease of use."

The MIDI-CI specification will be available for download in a few weeks. To obtain a free copy, join the MIDI Association, the global community of people who work, play and create with MIDI at www.MIDI.org.

About the MMA

The MIDI Manufacturers Association is an international group of hardware and software companies that evaluates, develops, and approves extensions to the MIDI specification, and promotes MMA technology. For information on how to join the MMA, please visit www.MIDI.org/about-the-mma.

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