

Community Media Video Distribution Network, TelVue Corporation

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Why we use PBCore

Sharing content between broadcasters used to mean shipping tapes back and forth, which inhibited access and discovery, raised costs, and increased the likelihood of damage. Digital technologies have made file sharing more practical as an access point, but most file sharing on the Internet has been geared towards consumer applications or one-size-fits-all approaches. Previous attempts at program sharing systems also lacked file and metadata standards and compliancy checks required for a seamless experience across vendor equipment. When you download a program, you need to know it will play at your station and fit in with the rest of your workflow.

The [Alliance for Community Media](#), a nonprofit national membership organization that represents over 3,000 Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access organizations across the country, wanted to launch the Community Media Distribution Network (CMDN), an Internet-based broadcast content sharing and distribution system to help make quality video programming available to PEG stations. The ACM created a Standards Working Group to define the program sharing system. Core goals included; a common file format that would be compatible on the greatest variety of playback systems, an extensible metadata standard that met the needs of community media, and seamless integration with popular Content Management Systems (CMS). The vision was a centralized repository of content that could be browsed online, and with a single click, content would be downloaded into a station's local CMS or playback server along with the metadata.

The ACM Standards Working Group decided early on that it would be best to try to leverage an existing, well thought out metadata standard rather than reinvent the wheel. PBCore quickly rose to the top as a great fit due to the many parallel needs between PEG and Public Broadcasting organizations.

How we use PBCore

The ACM Standards Working Group selected PBCore as the metadata standard for the Community Media Distribution Network. A subset of the PBCore fields was designated as required fields, and the PBCore extensions functionality was leveraged to include Tags, Producer Contact Information, and Indemnification information. A front-end user interface and a set of APIs were outlined to allow fully automated program upload/download workflow where PBCore metadata follows the program to eliminate double entry. Additional features of the CMDN include; search, online video previews, and download reports.

After an RFP process, [TelVue Corporation](#) was selected to develop the CMDN due to TelVue's prior experience developing web-based broadcast automation and content management applications, and other broadcast file sharing systems. The CMDN is now fully operational. TelVue hosts the centralized system, developed as a Ruby on Rails web application with back end storage, in its National Data Center. Content management and playback systems can auto publish to the CMDN using the APIs, or contributors can use the web-based interface to upload content and fill out the required metadata fields. Users can browse programming online, and either download directly from their web browser, or add program to their download queue for their integrated CMS to fetch in the background. For example, TelVue Princeton broadcast video servers support the ACM PBCore metadata natively, and can both publish to and download from the CMDN via a single click.

Currently there are over 150 users of the CMDN, sharing hundreds of hours of broadcast quality programming, and the numbers are growing. Content producers including [Democracy Now!](#) and [Perils for Pedestrians](#) distribute video programming on the CMDN. TelVue is ready to support PBCore 2.0 in the CMDN if the ACM Standard Working Group determines the need, for example, to phase out the custom extensions, simplify rights management, and provide new features.

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