

Quarterly Newsletter of the Entertainment Merchants Association

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EMA Announces Online Video Repository

EMA is on track to launch an online video repository in the first half of 2017 in order to reduce the costs of file delivery and promote greater standardization and efficiency in the digital supply chain. EMA *fyi* sat down with EMA President & CEO Mark Fisher to ask him about this project.



Mark Fisher

EMA *fyi*: Why is EMA developing an online video repository?

Mark Fisher: Currently, the media file for each online video title is processed multiple times by multiple post houses for multiple retailers. There simply is no need for this redundancy. It's costly, inefficient, leads to errors, and slows the flow of content.

If the file for each title were prepared just once and all retailers were able to retrieve those files from a common repository, retailers, content providers, and the industry as a whole would see tremendous benefits. The EMA Online Video Repository is designed to provide these benefits.

***fyi*:** What are those benefits?

Fisher: Retailers would benefit from significantly lower costs for media file processing, more rapid onboarding of content, and fewer errors.

Content Providers would benefit from more rapid onboarding of content, greater access to and scalability of content, fewer errors, reduced barriers to new industry entrants, and – as a result – greater revenues.

The industry as a whole would benefit from content being made available more rapidly to consumers, greater standardization of the digital supply chain, and a source of funds to support industry initiatives.

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EMA's Mission

To protect the rights of, foster the health and vitality of, and provide a forum for those engaged in the sale, rental, and/or commercial delivery of video or video game content to consumers through physical media or over-the-top Internet-based delivery.

Deadpool, Amazon, and Sony's ULTRA 4K Movies & TV App Receive Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Digital Entertainment

In October, EMA presented Deadpool, Amazon, and Sony's ULTRA 4K Movies & TV App with "Digi" Awards for outstanding achievement in digital

entertainment content, retailing, and innovation. The awards were presented at EMA's Digital Media Pipeline Los Angeles.



Digital Content "Digi" Award: Deadpool (Twentieth Century Fox) received the award for the movie, television program, or other audiovisual work that was most unique in digital delivery over the past year, or that gave the consumer the best digital experience.



Digital Retailer "Digi" Award: Amazon was awarded this honor for the third year in a row. The award recognizes outstanding service by a company that sells or rents audiovisual works to the consumer through Internet-based digital delivery. Amazon was selected for growing both the digital transactional and subscription VOD businesses and expanding subscription VOD options with Prime TV "Add Ons" including STARZ and Showtime premium OTT access and other add-on options for special niche programming.



Innovation "Digi" Award: Sony's ULTRA 4K Movies & TV App was presented the award for its all 4K streaming service, the first to support High Dynamic Range Video, digital extras, and UltraViolet in a single service. The Innovation "Digi" Award recognizes the company that has shown innovation through its technology or programming to enhance the consumer experience of digital entertainment.

"Each of these winners has contributed in significant ways to transforming the home entertainment experience," said EMA President and CEO Mark Fisher. "It's fitting that we recognize their leadership in digital entertainment."

EMA Announces Online Video Repository

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fyi: Will EMA be operating the repository?

Fisher: No. The EMA Online Video Repository will be operated by Premiere Digital Services under contract with EMA, which is the owner of the repository. Premiere Digital Services was selected by EMA after a competitive RFP process.

fyi: So what exactly will the repository contain?

Fisher: The repository will include all available video, audio, metadata, timed text, and artwork files and delivery packages for feature and episodic content in all available languages. Any retailer, either domestic or international, desiring to receive files from the repository would be able to do so for a low fee, provided they agree to abide by the repository's conditions and are authorized by the content owner to offer the files for the title sought to be retrieved.

Each file would be standardized to standards and specifications for delivery if it is not already compliant. These standards and specifications will be established by participating retailers. A certain amount of flexibility and customization of the files would be permitted within clearly defined constraints. In addition, the repository will perform quality control and audio/closed caption/subtitle conformance to standards established by the retailers.

fyi: You mentioned lower costs. How much lower will the repository be than what is charged currently?

Fisher: Initially, and for a guaranteed number of years, the repository will charge a low, flat price for delivery of a video file with one language and associated artwork, metadata, trailers, and other ancillary materials. The exact price point has yet to be determined, but I can assure it will be significantly below current industry pricing. Additional languages, including associated ancillary files, would be available for an additional fee, again at a price far below current industry pricing.

fyi: When can we expect to see the repository operational?

Fisher: EMA has gotten preliminary commitments from several major online video retailers to participate in the repository. EMA is targeting a phased roll-out of the repository to begin in the first half of next year, and expect to offer content from all the major content providers within a year of launch.

Ellen Goodridge of Sony Pictures Home Entertainment Receives Industry Leadership Digital Award



Ellen Goodridge

EMA presented its Industry Leadership Digital Award to Ellen Goodridge, Senior Vice President, Digital Supply Chain & Product Development for Sony Pictures Home Entertainment (SPHE) in October. The award was presented at EMA's Digital Media Pipeline Los Angeles.

In presenting the award, Mark Fisher, President and CEO of EMA, declared, "Ellen Goodridge has not only been a recognized leader promoting industry-wide standards and leading the collaboration among studios, but she also 'walks the walk,' as Sony Pictures Home Entertainment has itself become an early adopter of industry standards. Ellen has been a regular contributor to EMA's workgroup projects and as a panelist at events such as today's Pipeline."

At SPHE, Goodridge focuses on delivering a superior, immersive consumer experience with SPHE's digital products through advancement in new features and technologies including digital extras, 4K, virtual reality, and more. She also oversees SPHE's global digital supply chain for the studio's film and television content as well as content from third-party distribution partners. Goodridge's leadership enables SPHE's retailer partners worldwide to deliver world-class experiences with SPHE's transactional digital content. Goodridge previously was chair of the Technical & Operations Committee of DEG – The Digital Entertainment Group.

The Industry Leadership Digital Award is given to a company or individual that has made a significant contribution to the industry. Previous recipients are Google's Content Ops Team, ContentBridge Systems, and Craig Seidel of Movielabs.

EMA Event Photos



Digital Media Pipeline New York - November 3, 2016
Duncan Stewart/Deloitte, Andrew Grathwohl/Littlestar,
Bachir Zeroual/Samsung, Mark Sternberg/REVRIE Immersive,
& Seth Hallen/Sony DADC NMS



Digital EMA Holiday Salon - December 5, 2016
Lisa Carlross, El Nido Family Centers & Steve Apple, EMA

Digital EMA Update

Digital EMA Meets with Japanese Retailers: Digital EMA conducted its first event outside North America when EMA Senior Vice President Sean Bersell visited with Japanese retailers in Tokyo in September. Bersell met with representatives of eight major Japanese online video services and introduced them to Digital EMA and its supply chain initiatives, including EMA avails. The group expressed interest in keeping abreast of Digital EMA's activities, and planning for a follow-up meeting is currently underway.

Workgroup Tackles Ratings: Sorting through the motion picture and television ratings used in the different countries throughout the world is a major source of frustration for online video services that operate in multiple territories. In 2015, EMA created a workgroup to provide clarity on the various rating systems and develop best practices for ratings. The workgroup is currently focused on identifying the rating system(s) in each territory, the governing body or bodies for each of these, and correct values for each rating system. Following that, the workgroup intends to address standardization of the rating systems and values for encoding and use in EMA Avails.

EMA Avails Version 1.7 Released: In November, version 1.7 of the EMA Content Availability Metadata ("EMA Avails") spreadsheet was released. (Content availability metadata provides information about the time, location, and business rules related to offering an asset.) The new version refines the spreadsheet to address issues involving product IDs, languages, and pricing information. In conjunction with the release of the version 1.7 spreadsheet, an updated version of the XML format for EMA Avails was released. It is intended that eventually EMA Avails will be communicated via XML to facilitate full automation of the process.

Retailing Councils Meet

EMA's Digital Video Retailing Council and Game Retailing Councils both met in the fall. The two councils have similar missions: to facilitate cooperative collaboration among retailers and content providers in order to foster efficiencies and category growth.

At its meeting, the Digital Video Retailing Council discussed release windows, the branding of digital video, what "buying" confers in the digital marketplace, bonus content, the digital supply chain, and digital sales reporting. After a morning of internal discussion, the council shared its views on these topics with studio representatives.

The Game Retailing Council had a meeting focused on the digital game market. Participants met with first- and third-person video game publishers and addressed digital sales reporting, parity between physical and digital formats, downloadable content, game sharing, and opportunities to bring efficiencies to the digital supply chain for videogames. Workgroups are being formed to forward the objectives of this council between now and the next meeting in February.

Activision Blizzard Joins EMA

For more than 30 years, Activision has been changing the way people play. In the process, we have built one of the largest portfolios of recognized brands, and today we are one of the most valuable interactive entertainment companies in the world.

Founded in 1979 as the first independent video game software developer and distributor, the company launched a series of multi-million unit selling titles in the early 1980s for the Atari 2600 including Pitfall, Kaboom! and River Raid. And since then, Activision has created some of the most iconic and memorable game experiences of all time.

Today, the company is a leading worldwide developer, publisher and distributor of interactive entertainment and leisure products for various consoles, handheld platforms and the PC.



Flynn, Harkins, and Larrinaga Join EMA Board

Lori Flynn of Redbox, Steve Harkins of Baker & Taylor, and Javier Larrinaga of Microsoft have joined the EMA Board of Directors.

Lori Flynn has more than two decades of experience in the home video industry. She currently is Vice President of Content Purchasing for Redbox and previously worked for Blockbuster, where she was responsible for managing the rental-merchandising group for corporate stores and online.

Steve Harkins is Vice President/General Manager of Baker & Taylor. Harkins has worked for Baker & Taylor for 37 years, and is a graduate of Loyola University. Harkins was nominated to the Board by EMA's NAVD Council, which represents the physical distribution segment of the industry.

Javier Larrinaga is Principal Group Manager for Microsoft Movies & TV. Originally from Donostia-San Sebastian, Spain, Larrinaga studied Sound & Video Engineering before joining Microsoft in 1993 where he had different managerial roles in Windows, Tools, and Office. After exploring different professional ventures including his own startup, VideoActiva, Larrinaga joined Microsoft Media Services in 2013. Larrinaga and his team are active participants of the EMA Digital Supply Chain Committee and have helped deliver the current EMA avails and media manifest specifications.



Lori Flynn



Steve Harkins



Javier Larrinaga



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Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming EMA Events



Annual Forum as CES

January 5 – Embassy Suites Convention Center, Las Vegas



Independent Product Market

March 28 & 29 – Marina del Rey Marriott



NAVD Business Sessions

March 30 – Marina del Rey Marriott



Los Angeles Entertainment Summit

July 17-19 – Loews Hollywood Hotel



Digital Media Pipeline LA

September 26 – Skirball Cultural Center



Digital Media Pipeline NY

November 2 – Helen Mills Theater

For event sponsorship information, contact Carrie Dieterich at ddieterich@entmerch.org or 818.385.1500 x 227.