

WHITE PAPER  
2019

# Video Syndication Made Easy



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## Just Press Play

*How premium video providers can deliver top-notch user experiences in a fragmented ecosystem – with a little help from IBM® Watson® technology.*

Judging by revenue trends for the US video market, Hollywood might want to change its mantra from “lights, camera, action” to “lights, camera, click.”

That’s because on-demand access to premium content has rapidly emerged as the favored approach for video consumption in both subscription and advertising-supported models. Rich on-demand content services and the economic models that undergird them have transformed the video environment.

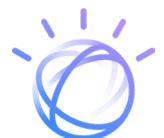
But, among all of this change, one factor has not waived – the continuous increase in consumer demand for content. With 53 percent of US households holding pay-TV and subscription video on demand (SVOD), the desire for content across delivery methods is seemingly insatiable.

While all this growth is good, vying for eyeballs across a growing number of platforms and devices is fraught with challenges. Today’s market is fragmented across hundreds of in-market distributors, including cable and telco video companies, virtual multichannel video programming distributors (vMVPDs) and a new cadre of direct-to-consumer video aggregators. As a result, content owners and providers must account for a surprising range of variation in how video content is prepared or normalized to play nice with end-of-the-line platforms.

But the ability to perform this rapid, time-sensitive content provisioning and distribution goes beyond being “nice-to-have.” It’s essential to the presentation and monetization of video across the growing distribution ecosystem. Because subscribers increasingly have choices for on-demand viewing experiences, these capabilities are more important than ever. As A+E Networks Vice President of Business Distribution Development, Richard Shirley, told us in an interview, “the logistics of publishing on-demand content have become dramatically complex.”

Enter the IBM Watson Media video syndication platform, which helps solve this challenge by creating major efficiencies in video workflow management and distribution. The solution is designed to alleviate the complexity of ingesting, compiling and preparing metadata and video assets for delivery to virtually any screen while maximizing operational efficiencies and control.

The powerful capabilities of this video syndication platform help manage all aspects of content preparation and monetization, including C3/7 and D4/8 windows and dynamic ad insertion. It also has the ability to add new endpoints like multichannel video programming distributors (MVPDs), vMVPDs, over-the-top (OTT) platforms, and owned and operated sites or apps.



## Search and Search and Search and Discovery

But, amid the massive challenge of content syndication lies an emerging problem that grows at the same pace as content catalogs – search and discovery. The never-ending increase in the size of content catalogs, number of platforms and OTT services, and general content viewing options has created an urgent need for providers to quickly satisfy consumer needs. Users demand the right content at the right time before their fruitless searches push them to another platform.

As content providers consider how to help consumers end their searches, the answer lies in something quite obvious – enriched content metadata. But don't be alarmed. The creation of powerful, informative and useful metadata for expansive libraries need not spur thoughts of burdensome and time-consuming tagging and cataloging.

Instead, picture the simple delivery of an enriched metadata file to the affiliates and destination endpoints alongside the content you're already delivering.

Thanks to IBM Watson Video Enrichment – a complementary solution from IBM Watson Media – content owners and providers can leverage Watson™ artificial intelligence (AI) to help automate the creation of powerful metadata packages for their content libraries. To accomplish this task, Watson performs a frame-by-frame, word-by-word, moment-by-moment examination of any meaningful aspect of the content – images, words, sounds, emotions, actors, objects and more. The solution identifies scenes within long-form content and breaks the video into semantically logical scenes, applying cognitive tools to analyze and associate identified items with the scenes.

Armed with this expansive collection of data, Watson performs intricate analysis of the surfaced data to uncover relationships among these and other indicators, producing previously unseen –and in fact, possibly unseeable – insights. Dark video data becomes illuminated and possibilities for more nuanced description presentation, search, discovery and recommendation of content choices may widen dramatically.

By embracing these new possibilities, premium video providers have the opportunity to stand out in a crowded video marketplace, improving content insights and thereby engagement, “screen time” metrics and incremental ROI in ad-supported models.

But again, complying with the broad and varying requirements of affiliates is critical. AI-infused search and discovery improvements must be compatible with the way distributors handle the intricacies of presentation and categorization to ensure that enriched metadata corresponds with the metadata hierarchy and catalog structure of a destination endpoint.

A second consideration for future-proofing video syndication has to do with captioning. The good news is that premium video providers have embraced automated and agile ways to inject captioning elements that are essential for serving the roughly 20 percent of the population who are deaf or hard of hearing, according to the [Hearing Loss Association of America](#).

IBM Watson Captioning – the IBM Watson Media automated captioning solution – leverages powerful AI-infused technology that's designed to be trained on content-specific terminology and improve accuracy over time. But, as is the case with search and discovery advancements, enhanced captioning must occur in a framework that's compatible with the way consumer-facing distributors present on-screen content.



## Help Is On The Way

As premium video providers advance the way their content is presented on the screen, they must accommodate larger data sets and more complex analysis of video content. However, doing so can be challenging in light of pressures to get content to the end viewer rapidly to meet deadlines tied to exhibition windows.

IBM Watson Media solutions help accommodate rapid-fire processing and provisioning of premium video assets. As a result, the right combination of attributes gets delivered to the proper affiliate on time and ready to grace the screen the moment a viewer picks up the remote or calls out to their voice assistant.

How so? By using advanced computing, AI solutions and parallel processing, IBM Watson Media applies coding that helps:

- Provide properly provisioned content packages, depending on affiliate or endpoint requirements.
- Mark assets at precise intervals for advertising insertion or other purposes.
- Parse content for millions of bits of information that can be used to augment search and discovery experiences.
- Produce nuanced captioning output to support individuals with hearing loss.

The ability to transcode and provision multiple assets for distribution helps reclaim precious minutes as video assets make the circuit from content originators to affiliate partners and various endpoints. By adding advanced parallel processes that combine enhanced metadata elements with augmented captioning, content distributors are better equipped to address today's – and tomorrow's – challenging video syndication requirements.

As you might expect, applying massive-scale parallel processing to complex video files requires a rare confluence of skills that pair advanced technology acumen with state-of-the-art expertise in managing video syndication. Your technology partner needs to understand affiliate requirements down to the smallest market footprint. They also must know how to conduct simultaneous processing of multiple tasks to get files from their origination point to their destination within incredibly tight and fleeting time windows.

IBM Watson Media video syndication helps some of the best-known names in television today do just that. Even as their markets morph, change, fluctuate and evolve, the solution is designed to empower them to deliver excellent end-user experiences whenever someone presses "play."

To learn more about IBM Watson Media's content management capabilities visit:

<https://video.ibm.com/solutions/video-solutions-for-media-entertainment-companies>



## About IBM Watson Media

Created in January 2016, IBM Watson Media brings together innovations from IBM's R&D labs with the IBM Video Streaming platform capabilities of Clearleap® and Ustream®. Through the unit, IBM delivers a powerful portfolio of video services that spans open API development, digital and visual analytics, simplified management and consistent delivery across global industries. IBM Watson Media supports top media and enterprise companies with reliable video on-demand and streaming services.

For more information on IBM Watson Media, please visit [www.video.ibm.com](http://www.video.ibm.com).

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### Footnotes

- 1 "[Exclusive: 'Game of Thrones' hasn't aired in 16 months but was 2018's top on-demand show](#)," Gary Levin, USA Today, Dec 12, 2018
- 2 "[69% of U.S. Households Have an SVOD Service](#)," Leichtman Research Group, Aug 27, 2018
- 3 "[Premium Video: A Bundle of Growth](#)," FreeWheel Advisory Services, Q3 2018

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IBM Watson Media  
San Francisco, CA 94108

Produced in the United States of America  
March 2019

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