



Business challenge

Cox Media Group (CMG) Jacksonville TV sought an innovative solution that would allow their weather team to quickly generate and push content out to audiences and expand its stations' digital brands across platforms.

Transformation

Weather audiences want the good, the bad and the ugly—and they want the information yesterday. CMG Jacksonville TV in Florida worked with The Weather Company®, an IBM Business, and implemented the Max Engage with Watson® solution to provide viewers with automatic, localized and personalized content on multiple digital platforms.

Results

Streamlines workflows and distributes stories faster

by simultaneously posting to mobile, web and social platforms

Increases video views and engagement

with the delivery of personalized, relevant and curated content

Provides revenue-generating opportunities

by monetizing content with local ads and sponsors

Cox Media Group Jacksonville TV

Equipping broadcasters with personalized AI technology to keep viewers safe

CMG Jacksonville TV (external link) operates two TV stations—FOX affiliate WFOX-30 and CBS affiliate WJAX-47—that serve nearly 700,000 households in the Jacksonville-Brunswick area of northern Florida and southern Georgia. Based out of Jacksonville, CMG finds and creates innovative ways to deliver news and information and tell entertaining stories to its audience.

“Each shift is really busy—we have a lot of news to get out and it is critical for us to be able to move quickly, accurately and smoothly.”

—Mike Buresh, Chief Meteorologist,
Cox Media Group Jacksonville TV

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Facing unprecedented weather events

Weather is an authoritative force that people need to track, monitor and, above all, respect. No one can predict the weather with 100% accuracy, as conditions can change in seconds. But for many, consuming weather information has become part of their daily routine, making decisions based on the local reports.

Jacksonville, a fast-growing city in northern Florida, sees its fair share of ever-changing weather conditions and unprecedented tropical events during hurricane season, keeping local meteorologists on their toes and viewers hungry for updates. At CMG Jacksonville TV, streamlining workflows and delivering accurate weather data quickly to viewers are driving forces for growing and staying ahead of the competition. The media company covers the city's local news across two stations, FOX affiliate WFOX-30 and CBS affiliate WJAX-47, and delivers a 24-hour news cycle with an adjoining weather app.

Still, CMG Jacksonville TV started to notice that its hyperlocal expertise was being underutilized. Its push notifications were ineffective and cryptic, and viewers were demanding more personalized weather news without having to search for it.

"We were lacking a way for our digital platforms to quickly be shareable across all of our properties and be branded according to whatever we were doing in the city," explains Mike Buresh, Chief Meteorologist at CMG Jacksonville TV. "As critical it is to maintain personalized branding, it's also crucial to put out a vast amount of accurate data in a very short period."

First to surface crucial information

CMG Jacksonville TV began researching tools that would increase mobile app usage, complementing the work of its meteorologists and boosting video views. The media company landed on an innovative AI solution from The Weather Company that would push content out to audiences across multiple platforms and expand on the two stations' digital brands: the Max Engage with Watson solution.

Max Engage with Watson gathers custom, geotargeted content from a Max workstation and publishes it directly to the station's mobile app. The content can also be released at specific times, with expiration dates. The video content is embedded right on each station's digital property, placing timely, relevant and compelling videos right in front of users, who no longer have to search for the information.

"The numbers reflect just how much people do rely on content from local folks; apparently people are really eating it up."

—Garrett Badenbaugh,
Meteorologist, Cox Media Group
Jacksonville TV

Although both CMG Jacksonville TV stations have a lot going on, Buresh and his team quickly adjusted to the new system and guidelines and were able to get out no fewer than four video pushes a day. Each curated video is less than a minute long and can incorporate either a talking head or graphics with the necessary real-time information. When on air, the stations utilize the Max Event Engine to deliver interactive newscasts during severe weather occurrences.

"It's very handy to use when on air. We can immediately go interactive with severe weather information as soon as an alert is issued," explains Buresh. "The alert button pops up on our screen and bang, it's on the air and we can talk about it—it's phenomenal. Nobody can beat us if they aren't using it. That aspect in itself is priceless."

The Max Engage with Watson dashboard readily displays engagement results of postings to

help the stations understand what is and isn't resonating with viewers. The metrics don't lie—the app numbers and video views grew instantly.

The metrics speak for themselves

By incorporating the Max Engage with Watson solution into their daily routines, meteorologists have streamlined workflows and can distribute stories faster with simultaneous posts to mobile, web and social platforms through a single interface. Using the solutions automated geofencing feature and push notifications, CMG Jacksonville TV has not only met viewer demand for daily weather updates, but it has also drastically increased video views and engagement metrics.

"It's no little thing what we've accomplished," adds Buresh. "It's really tremendous."

For example, during a tornado outbreak in February 2020, CMG Jacksonville TV's video views more than doubled, jumping from 13,000 to 27,000 views in under 24 hours and from 10,00 to over 40,000 for the week.

The Max Engage with Watson solution can also monetize relevant local opportunities throughout CMG Jacksonville TV's mobile app experience using interstitial ads or

pre-roll videos to showcase ads or promotions for local businesses. The media company is also exploring the option to geotarget these campaigns toward customers in the area for increased value.

“Video views are increasing month to month every year, and when we look at a year’s difference, those are very big numbers,” Buresh says. “It’s driving views and driving app downloads, so it makes you realize this solution is worthwhile. We want to continue this partnership with The Weather Company.”

“Max Engage has certainly helped gain and maintain viewership amongst other things, and now I can hardly imagine being without it.”

—Mike Buresh, Chief Meteorologist,
Cox Media Group Jacksonville TV

Solution component

- Max Engage with Watson®

Take the next step

To learn more about the IBM solution featured in this story, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner.

About The Weather Company

The Weather Company, an IBM Business, helps people make informed decisions and take action in the face of weather. The company offers the most accurate forecasts globally with personalized and actionable weather data and insights to millions of consumers, marketers and businesses through its business solutions division and its own digital products from The Weather Channel (weather.com) and Weather Underground (wunderground.com). A global AI and cloud company, IBM is the largest technology and innovation employer in the world and serves clients in 170 countries. For more about IBM’s Weather business, visit newsroom.ibm.com/the-weather-company.

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