

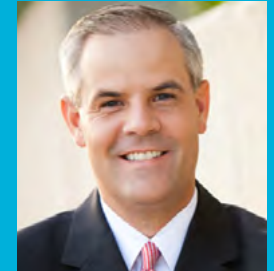


### Business challenge

KSL-TV sought an innovative weather solution that could help it build its brand across digital channels and drive advertising revenue.

### Transformation

In Utah, weather matters. And for 70 years, KSL-TV has been a premier source of local coverage, helping to keep its community informed and out of harm's way. Using The Weather Company's Max Engage with Watson™ solution, KSL-TV is becoming a force in the digital arena with localized and personalized content that is helping to engage a new generation of viewers.



Kevin Eubank  
Chief Meteorologist  
KSL-TV

## Results

### Up to 13x increase

in mobile video views with personalized content pushed out across digital channels

### Revenue-generating content

with custom forecasts, advertising and sponsorship opportunities

### Workflow efficiency

with the ability to create on-air and digital content from a single interface

# KSL-TV

## Forecasting a bright future with weather stories that drive revenue—rain or shine

KSL-TV is an NBC-affiliate broadcast station headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah. In operation since 1949, KSL-TV is home to the KSL Weather Center, KSL News Specialists, SportsBeat and local NBC News and programming. The station has received multiple Rocky Mountain Emmy Awards, including Best News Station and Best Coverage. KSL-TV is wholly owned and operated by Bonneville International.

*“The Weather Company enabled us to have the tools to implement our future vision for this TV station.”*

—Kevin Eubank, Chief Meteorologist, KSL-TV

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## A changing industry

Broadcast television has seen dramatic changes over the past two decades. With a 24-hour news cycle and streaming content available across platforms and devices, the challenge for broadcasters is clear. To stay relevant—and afloat—networks must deliver across all channels with high-quality content that attracts loyal viewers and builds the business by capturing advertising dollars moving away from television.

For nearly 20 years, Kevin Eubank, Chief Meteorologist at KSL-TV, has been using products from The Weather Company, an IBM Business, to deliver broadcasts that help his community stay ahead of the ever-shifting weather conditions in Utah. Eubank remembers the time when preparing for a seven-day forecast took hours. “It was not real-time rendering,” he says. “We needed to create graphics and build out different elements of the show. And if we needed to change something it took a lot of preparation to make it all happen. Now, graphics are automatically created even before we need them. Obviously, the industry has changed.”

Eubank is a second-generation meteorologist who grew up understanding the critical impact weather has on all of our lives. At

KSL-TV, he applies his business acumen to that solid foundation and is helping the company transform and stay competitive as the broadcast industry evolves.

KSL-TV offers a full-featured weather app that delivers personalized forecasts from local meteorologists who are experts in the region. But with weather apps that come readily installed on most phones, the competition is tough, says Eubank, tasking meteorologists with creating and pushing out content across multiple platforms to stay visible and viable.

But that’s not the only challenge, he says. For decades broadcast television has relied on commercials—30-second spots from advertisers—to drive revenue for programming. That model is changing as businesses designate advertising dollars across online and social platforms. KSL-TV knew it needed to create content that could be monetized if it was going to build its brand in the digital arena. Like all TV stations, KSL has limited bandwidth with its weather team; Eubank likewise knew the station needed to innovate to drive efficiency. KSL-TV sought a trusted company with deep expertise and leading tools that could help it execute its ideas and implement its vision for the future of the network.

## The perfect fit

“Innovation isn’t coming from the weather,” says Eubank. “Innovation is coming from technology as a whole. The question we need to be asking is how do we apply that to weather? And beyond that, to the newsroom, media, digital and apps. The Weather Company’s Max Engage solution was the perfect fit for KSL because it gives us the ability to constantly innovate, to try new things and explore ideas.”

The Max Engage solution uses augmented intelligence and automation to help meteorologists quickly create customized, hyperlocal videos that can be pushed out across mobile, web and social channels simultaneously. Seamlessly integrated with The Weather Company’s Max Ecosystem platform, the solution drives efficiency by reducing workflow steps as videos are easily created using the same interface broadcasters use for on-air content. The solution’s geo-fencing capabilities allow meteorologists to target videos to specific regions, so the right audience—and only that audience—receives the push.

Using the Max Engage solution, the KSL-TV Weather Center is able to create meaningful content in short snippets and engage with its audiences across channels—mobile, web social—in whatever areas they choose throughout the day. And it’s

not just geo-pushes for severe weather alerts, says Eubank. “We create custom forecasts—anything we think may interest our viewers. We want an engaging product, but we also want to be able to monetize that product so that we can continue to provide that product in the future.”

To that end, KSL-TV uses the Max Engage solution for a wide range of advertising and sponsorship offerings, including logo placements, video pre-roll opportunities, concert forecasts and other event geo-targeting. The company currently has an exclusive partnership with the University of Utah providing weather forecasting for their home football games. Before each game, KSL-TV’s on-staff meteorologist will send out a geo-push with a weather forecast to everyone in the stadium. If there’s a chance of severe weather, the audience is notified to watch the KSL Weather app for push alerts. And if there’s lightning, the audience in the stadium and the onsite officials are alerted at the same time—in real time. “That type of engagement and customization with the ability to monetize allows us to secure our future and be able to deliver this type of service to our customers in years to come,” says Eubank.

KSL-TV was an early adopter of the Max Engage solution and has been using the product for the past five years. Over that time, the KSL Weather Center has seen an increase

in its mobile views of up to 13 times and a rapid uptick in downloads of the KSL Weather app, with recent stats showing 130,000 active users and 2.6 million sessions.

“Max Engage is both a really good product and really profitable,” he says. “We’re never limited. I can have one advertiser or 100. As long as they’re happy and we’re happy with what we’re doing, our customer gets a great product.”

According to Eubank, that flexibility, along with the sophisticated analytics tools in the Max Engage solution, have allowed KSL-TV to create revenue-generating content that keeps advertisers coming back.

“IBM not only delivers the products,” says Eubank. “But they deliver the analytics so I can then go back to my advertisers and say, ‘Look, here’s your CPM. Here’s your penetration. Here’s your user usage rate. Here’s your fulfillment rate. Here’s your completion rate.’ Those analytics are what allow us to not only survive but thrive because I can then pull up any other digital product these advertisers are buying and say ‘look at what we’re delivering to you. Look at the value.’”

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***“The automation that’s possible with Max Engage allows us more time to do customized content.”***

—Kevin Eubank, Chief Meteorologist, KSL-TV

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## Innovation reaps rewards

Eubank says unequivocally that the Max Engage and the Max Ecosystem solutions have transformed business at KSL-TV. Using Max Engage software, the KSL Weather Center’s staff of four is able to easily create relevant and personalized content across platforms in minutes—and is first to air with vital information that keeps its audience safe. Max Engage software has allowed KSL-TV to increase mobile video views by up to 13 times with revenue-generating content that will secure the network’s future.

“With Max Engage, KSL is able to grow because we can deliver actual numbers back to a General Manager and News Director,” says Eubank.

“We can show them that not only are we self-sufficient, but we’re revenue positive. And we can use that to continue to innovate.”

From a viewer perspective, Eubank says the KSL Weather audience loves getting customized weather alerts. The communications keep them informed and engaged while in Utah and connected to home when they may be traveling. Customization options in Engage likewise allow viewers to easily tailor the level and frequency of notifications.

Moving forward, Eubank is excited to work with The Weather Company to take advantage of geo-pushes and perhaps explore the potential that tools like the Max Engage solution might have in the newsroom and with news products.

“The Weather Company is always innovative,” says Eubank. “That’s what we love about them. They’re continually pushing the envelope to see what’s next.”

## Solution components

- Max Ecosystem
- Max Engage with Watson™

### Take the next step

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

### About The Weather Company

The Weather Company, an IBM Business, delivers more than 25 billion personalized and actionable forecasts globally each day to millions of consumers and thousands of marketers and businesses. It accomplishes this through Weather’s API, its business solutions division, and digital products from [The Weather Channel](#) and [Weather Underground](#). Its products include the world’s most downloaded weather app, a network of 250,000 personal weather stations, a top-20 US website, one of the world’s largest Internet of Things (IoT) data platforms, and industry-leading business solutions.

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