NPR PAD Workshop
25 September 2007

PAD Harmonization with RDBS and PB Core Update

David Layer broadly discussed the structure of the NRSC, and then talked about the upcoming NRSC vote on PAD harmonization activities. Under Mike Bergman, the DRB subcommittee developed harmonization guidelines, which will allow HD Radio receivers to display consistent text information whether it's receiving an IBOC or an analog signal. The guidelines will hopefully be adopted by early 2008, and will give broadcasters and receiver manufacturers a roadmap to how to populate data fields.

Dan Mansergh framed PBCore as providing a common language of metadata for public broadcasters. Efficiently captured metadata enhances the value of media assets (scripts, CDs, web resources) by making them findable and re-useable.

PRI PSD Study Findings

This panel discussion focused on PRI's PAD work and its practical demonstrations. The theme of the discussion was that it's better to take action with the tools available than wait endlessly for a comprehensive tool that will unite PAD delivery into a seamless workflow. Chuck Leavens of WDUQ discussed and gave a demonstration of their use of the Enco product PADapult. Paul Stribling from WFAE discussed their experience with TRE's Message Manager from Broadcast Electronics, noting the need for more automation from the programming and production perspectives. Overall – the consensus was that while there is great potential in PAD, and the tools are still developing, it's a work in progress.

The European PAD Experience

Matthew Honey discussed the structure of the BBC as it related to digital media, and detailed innovative, widely used PAD techniques utilized in the UK. PAD, or 'live text' as it is referred to in the UK, is used widely, and multi-purposed to be utilized online, on DAB handhelds, and on DAB-enabled mobile phones. The UK market is starting to see competition from independent websites – Honey's solution was to continue to explore new program offerings, like electronic program guides, and timeshifting.

PAD Distribution for NPR Programming

Matt Burrough discussed efforts NPR has done on the PAD front. As NPR.org has shifted more into the publishing arm of NPR, they have increasingly atomized content to more effectively manage the ~250,000 stories on the website. This content management infrastructure has enabled PAD-focused RSS feeds to be created and distributed, which were being displayed live on a bank of radios in the side of the room. NPR Labs' test station WX3NPR has provided ample opportunities for practical testing of PAD capabilities, leading to the creation of a series of PAD tools that provide fundamental PAD functionality. Click-through licenses for the software are currently working their way through the NPR Legal department.

NPR Labs PAD Findings Summary

Mike Starling discussed the preliminary results of a survey conducted by the NPR Labs and Audience and Corporate Research divisions at NPR. The study asked viewers to rate the appropriateness of different configurations of PAD displays. Out of 30 combinations distributed to over 200 public radio listeners, relevancy was deemed the most important element. Listeners noted that they would rather hear topic information then show name or who was on the air. Driver distraction was noted as an issue or primary importance. Issues to resolve with PAD include working towards 50% penetration for PAD broadcast, and figuring out how to standardize displays between different types of receivers. Demonstrations of PAD technology will be on the floor through the show, and NPR's PAD report will be out in a few weeks, and will summarize the research.

PAD Applications in Action

Jim Roberts from Broadcast Electronics reported that in satellite radio listener surveys, the #2 reason people listen to radio is receiver display information. He discussed uses of near-PAD and non-PAD information, including displaying text on billboards and using stored email addresses to send now-playing announcements to listeners. Matt Honey from Unique Interactive discussed the merits of prioritizing different types of PAD messages and encouraged collaboration on technology, and competition on content. Scott Martin from Nautel described and demonstrated an automation system built to retrieve data from an FTP server and transmit it to an HD2 and HD3 channel.

HD Radio eCommerce – iTunes UFID Support

Jordan Scott from iBiquity discussed the structure of the recently announced agreement between iBiquity and Apple, allowing listeners to mark content for download through iTunes on specific receivers. PSD messages for each new piece of content must arrive within 0.5 seconds of the start of each element, and must be tightly synchronized so users won't inadvertently download the incorrect piece of content. The project is targeted to launch during the 4th quarter of 2007.

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