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Opening Shot

Maintenance Requires Extended Transition to BuNOC

NPR Distribution is planning a period of extended maintenance in mid-October that will require the transition of ContentDepot to the Back-up NOC in St. Paul, Minn., for a period of up to one week.

While the operational impacts to stations and producers are expected to be minimal, it is important that PRSS members be aware of what is happening. Two primary elements of this operation involve an extended transition of ContentDepot to the BuNOC and the temporary use of an alternative telephone number for the PRSS Help Desk. Both of these are detailed below.

Transition to the BuNOC

NPR Distribution is tentatively planning to switch ContentDepot from the primary NOC to the BuNOC on Wednesday, October 10, 2018, at 9:59 pm ET. From this point, ContentDepot will continue to run from the BuNOC for an extended period. The exact length of time ContentDepot will run out of the BuNOC is still to be determined, but we anticipate duration of approximately one week.

The only noticeable effect for users will be that access to ContentDepot will be restricted for approximately one minute when we make the switch to St. Paul at 9:59 pm ET on Wednesday, October 10. Apart from that, ContentDepot will run fully functional from the BuNOC, and all users will be able to access and use the portal in the usual way with the following link: https://contentdepot.prss.org/portalui/app/#!login

As soon as the NPR Distribution team has confirmed when ContentDepot will be transitioned back to the primary NOC in Washington, it will be communicated to the system.

PRSS Help Desk Telephone Number

Due to the maintenance we will be performing, there will be a period of time when stations and producers will not be able to reach the PRSS Help Desk through the normal telephone number of 800.971.7677.

Beginning at 10:00 pm ET on Friday, October 12, and lasting until 3:00 pm ET on Saturday, October 13, ContentDepot users needing to reach the PRSS Help Desk by telephone will need to call 651.228.4908. After 3:00 pm ET on Saturday, the Help Desk will again be accessible at its standard number of 800.971.7677. Please note that the prsshelp@npr.org email address will remain active and accessible to all users throughout this entire process.

All dates and times are subject to change, and NPR Distribution will communicate any alterations of the schedule as soon as they are confirmed.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please contact the PRSS Help Desk at 800.971.7677 or prsshelp@npr.org.

PRSS Survey Requires Your Hands-On Perspective

The PRSS Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey is closing soon, and we've only heard from approximately 15 percent of stations. The survey is a valuable tool for NPR Distribution to assess its performance in serving you, and the results are presented to the D/I Committee, which uses it as a source of information in its various deliberations.

If you have not yet filled it out, please take a few minutes to do so. It doesn't take long, but the benefit to us is substantial and it allows us to serve you more effectively.

The survey is available at https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4556886/PRSS-Survey-2018.

The News

WRIR Staff Embrace LPFM Station Community

The PRSS is a very diverse community, made up of large multi-facility stations in urban markets as well as smaller operations serving less populated communities. While it's often the bigger stations that garner the most headlines, NPR Distribution also works hard to ensure smaller stations are equally served as well and that their unique needs are satisfied via ContentDepot, the PRSS Network Operations Center (NOC), the PRSS Help Desk, and its other services.

WRIR in Richmond, Va., is a proud member of the LPFM (low power FM) station community and has learned how to make the most of its interconnection. Below, WRIR's Bill Lupoletti, National Programs Manager, and Melissa Vaughn, Volunteer Coordinator and Board Operations Manager, talk a little bit about what it means to be a LPFM station and how ContentDepot has benefited their operations.

Bill Lupoletti

News & Public Affairs Committee, National Programs Manager

WRIR 97.3 FM Richmond Independent Radio

Can you tell us a little bit about your station, your community, your reach, your listenership?

Bill Lupoletti, WRIR
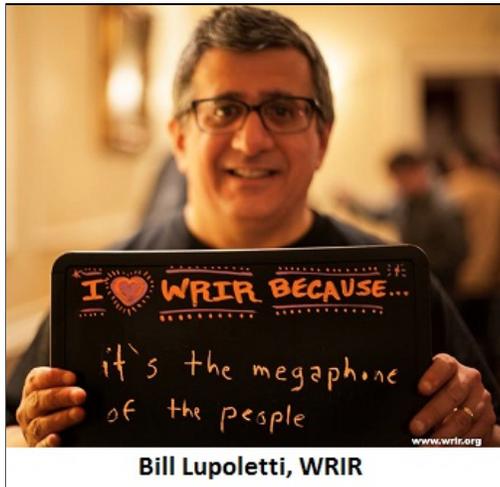
WRIR is a low-power FM community radio station founded in 2005, heard in Richmond, Virginia at 97.3 FM and web-streaming everywhere at wrir.org. The station is on the air 24/7/365, run entirely by more than 150 volunteers with no paid staff. The call letters include an acronym for "Richmond Independent Radio;" we also refer to ourselves as "the tower of low power," "the sound of surprise" and "low power to the people."

We carry 8 hours a weekday (3-6 AM, 8-11 AM and 1-3 PM) of nationally syndicated news and public affairs programs from a variety of distributors: PRX, WNYC, Pacifica and a host of independents. We also produce 2 hours a weekday (11 AM-1 PM) of our own news and public affairs shows. Evenings, early mornings and weekends feature 60 locally produced music programs covering pretty much every genre of music you can think of.

Our signal covers most of the city of Richmond; our service area is about 250,000 people. The station's budget is around $150,000 a year, with most of it raised in our twice-annual on-air fund drives. We have about 1,000 annual donors, so we figure our cumulative audience is around 10,000 listeners. We're also the official radio station for the City of Richmond's emergency services information, through an innovative contract which allows the city government to take control of some or all airtime in the event of a declared state of emergency.

Do you consider WRIR a LPFM station? Is that in any way a derogatory label or is it one you embrace?

We're absolutely an LPFM -- we embrace the label. The LPFM movement has created a whole new generation of citizen-broadcasters and citizen-journalists, doing things that traditional legacy media didn't, couldn't or wouldn't do. In the last 14 years, WRIR has demonstrated that giving the public access to the public airwaves is producing a superior level of service for the audience, precisely as Congress and the FCC intended. And many of our LPFM and full-power community radio colleagues around the country prove the same thing every day. Would we like to have more wattage? Hell yes -- wouldn't every radio station?

In what way do you and your team use ContentDepot? What are the most beneficial aspects of it?

ContentDepot is the primary distribution tool that we use for airing our national news/public affairs schedule (other tools are PRX and Audioport). We've been using ContentDepot for 14 years to air Democracy Now!, our most popular national program, live at 8:00 AM Eastern time. We also use ContentDepot to access a host of recorded shows from major distributors like WNYC and KCRW, and for independently produced shows like The Thomas Jefferson Hour, A Way With Words and Big Picture Science. If your station wants access to the best programs being produced in the public radio universe, ContentDepot is an indispensable tool.

One question we often have is, is ContentDepot worth the investment for stations that are on a limited budget? What would you say?

When WRIR went on the air in 2005, the very first thing we paid for after the rent and the electric bill was our membership in the Public Radio Satellite System; the two national programs we knew we needed to air live were Democracy Now! and NPR's Talk Of The Nation, and those two programs put WRIR on the map. Back then, PRSS was a huge piece of our budget. But what's more important than the programming you carry?

Do you ever take advantage of the free programming offered in ContentDepot?

Absolutely, in fact I just mentioned two free programs in my response two questions ago. And I can add a few more that we're currently running: Left Right & Center, Harry Shearer's Le Show and Making Contact.

In general, how do you feel about the health and future of public radio?

We're bullish on the future of public radio. Our station's membership and audience continue to grow every year, and the average age of our volunteers is probably younger than it's ever been. We're amazed at how many folks in their teens, twenties and thirties want to be a part of WRIR -- and many of them want to host or produce news/public affairs programs. The podcast revolution is turning the latest cohort of listeners, donors and volunteers on to old-fashioned audio. Remember those forecasts that radio was going the way of the dodo bird? Not looking so prescient from where we sit.

Melissa M. Vaughn

Volunteer Coordinator

Board Operations Manager

From a hands-on user perspective, how is it using ContentDepot? Is it easy to use?

ContentDepot is actually the easiest distribution system we use for the shows we air. It is also the most modern. Board operators don't actually have to search for their shows. All the most updated shows are right there when you log in. No muss, no fuss.

Do you have experience using other distribution systems and if so, how does ContentDepot compare?

We also use Audioport and PRX exchange for some of our other national shows, though the bulk come through ContentDepot. Audioport's website is incredibly out of date. It's clunky and confusing to

Melissa M. Vaughn, WRIR | some. It's appearance is more like a chat forum on the internet of the early '00s. You even have to delete the word "Search" in the search bar before you can type your query. UGH. And PRX recently "upgraded" but they made it less user friendly, which is... odd. When you search for a show on PRX the newest episode is jumbled amongst all the other episodes from past years. The board op has to make sure to also refine the search by "newest first" so we get the correct episode. Anyway, all of that is to say that ContentDepot's function is far superior to any other distribution method we use at WRIR.

Have you had challenges teaching staff or volunteers how to use ContentDepot?

No. Absolutely not. The site and search functions are intuitive and modern. I appreciate the ease of use when training new board ops and the feedback I've gotten from my crew echoes what I've said here.

For more information about WRIR, visit their website at http://wrir.org/.

ContentDepot Upgrade Finalizes Drag and Drop

ContentDepot was upgraded again in mid-September, with the 'Drag and Drop' feature added to the 'Pieces' panel, making it easier for producers to upload their programs.

Adding Drag and Drop to the upload component is designed to make it easier for producers to add metadata at a specific time within a particular program. In order to add the Drag and Drop feature, the Upload page was rewritten to allow the ability for users to edit, save or delete pieces individually rather than in 'edit' view on the panel.

The upgrade also fixed several minor things in ContentDepot.

- The old Morning Edition clock configuration was removed from MetaPub.

- A bug affecting column text was removed from the Cut ID report.

- The character limit on additional episode links was fixed to allow users to add additional links of up to 1,000 characters.

Coming up in the next release, scheduled for November, is a function to allow producers to set up auto-schedule for file episodes. If a producer is going to be out of town or otherwise occupied, he or she can pre-schedule their file programs.

If you have any questions, please contact the PRSS Help Desk at 800.971.7677 or prsshelp@npr.org.

Tips 'n' Tricks

Last Call for Station Registration of C-Band Downlinks

The FCC issued a final reminder for existing unregistered C-band "earth stations" (including C-band

satellite dishes/antenna downlinks that receive programming from the Public Radio Satellite System and other state/regional networks) to submit applications by October 17, 2018. As has been reported, the FCC is freezing new registrations after this deadline.

Registration is especially important now, because the FCC is proposing to transition some or all of the C-band spectrum for wireless use and to protect only FCC-registered downlink facilities in this process. While most public radio downlinks are already registered, we highly encourage any remaining stations to register well before the deadline to avoid last-minute snafus.

Please find the steps below to learn if your C-band downlink antenna is FCC Registered and what else you must do.

First, you will need to know the Licensee Name or the FCC CallSign # (example E160079) of your FCC Registration. A station typically should have this information on-hand if they've had any dealings with the FCC in the past.

Next, go to the FCC web site and do a quick search for same: http://licensing.fcc.gov/myibfs/

If you find a valid FCC registration for your C-band downlink antenna, review all information to ensure it's correct. Also note the expiration date of the registration so that you're aware of when you will need to re-register.

If you don't find a valid FCC registration for your C-band downlink antenna, you should begin the process as soon as possible. To register a C-band downlink antenna with the FCC, we recommend you contact Comsearch, a company that can manage this process for you. The Comsearch point of contact is Tim Crutcher, who can be reached at 703.726.5665 or at tcrutche@comsearch.com. There is a fee for this service. If you are a PRSS interconnected station, you will receive a discount that lowers your fee to $695. If you are a non-commercial entity but not part of the PRSS, your charge will be $795. A commercial station will also pay $795, plus an additional $435 in FCC filing fees as well.

There is a technical datasheet that will help in the process of FCC registration of your C-band downlink antenna. Please fill in completely, as it's crucial to identify what's going to be required to do the Frequency Coordination and subsequent FCC registration. The form itself is not submitted to the FCC, but it serves as a necessary guide for a station to gather all relevant and required information to complete this process. This datasheet is available for download at http://www.prss.org/sites/prss/files/content-images/C-band-Downlink-Datasheet.pdf.

If you would like further assistance determining whether your C-Band downlink dish is already FCC registered, or how to register your dish if it is not, you may also contact the PRSS Help Desk at 800.971.7677 or prsshelp@npr.org.

What's New in the ContentDepot?

There are several new programs (both recurring and one-time-only) appearing in the ContentDepot this month. Listed below are details on a sampling of new regularly occurring programs that your listeners may enjoy:

Kavanaugh Recap and Look-Ahead - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **NPR** that provides a

recap of the news coming out of the Supreme Court nominee's Congressional hearing.

Chatham Baroque: A Jubilant Season - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **PRI** that features Baroque's dazzling technique and live interpretations of 17th and 18th century music played on instruments of the period.

NYE on Jazz After Hours 2018 - A four-hour, one-time-only special from **PRI** that takes listeners out on the town for New Year's Eve with fresh live recordings from musicians performing on the national jazz scene.

Christmas on Jazz After Hours - A four-hour, one-time-only special from **PRI** that presents music newly released for Christmas along with some well-loved classic Christmas jazz.

Selected Shorts Gift Set 2018: Shaken and Stirred - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **PRI** that features guest host Jane Curtin introducing some alcohol-infused stories.

KQED Climate Summit Special - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **KQED-FM** that climate change solutions that were discussed at the September 2018 Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco.

Definition of Resilience - A four-episode, 29-minute special from **Native Voice One** that documents Native American hip-hop MCs' contribution to modern music.

Stay in Touch

We Want to Hear From You!

EsPRSS-O welcomes and encourages your questions, comments, suggestions and ideas.

- Have you or your team developed a particularly unique and/or nifty technique in operating ContentDepot?
- Are you facing any new challenges and want to get the perspective of others who might be in a similar situation?
- Are you seeing any technology or business developments on the horizon that your pubradio colleagues ought to know about?
- Got a notion on your mind that you want to share with the PRSS?

If so, don't hesitate, write in today!

Send any and all correspondence to PRSSCommunications@npr.org along with info on the best way to get in touch with you.

Stay in touch! Send your questions, comments and ideas to PRSSCommunications@npr.org. As always, the PRSS Help Desk is also available 24/7 at 800.971.7677 or email PRSSHelp@npr.org.

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