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CANADA'S COMMUNICATIONS MAGAZINE

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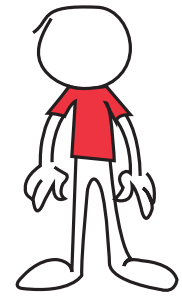

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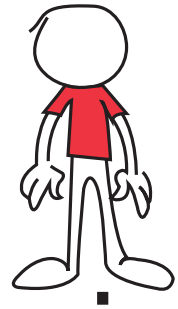


Synchronized Data

When the Shirt Should Be Red, Not Yellow

Managing Metadata in the M&E Industry

BY FRANK HUERTA

Frank Huerta, CEO, TransLattice

Imagine you are an animator in Japan. Your job is to design the characters for an upcoming film, while your counterpart in India is designing the background where your characters will live and breathe. While you are working diligently at your craft, other artists around the world are also working on pieces of this very large puzzle, perhaps producing the dialogue or score for the film, while executives in Los Angeles or New York are waiting anxiously for ongoing updates.

But what happens when the director decides that his character should have a red shirt, instead of a yellow one? As you make the appropriate changes to your character, additional artists may be rendering or making edits to your yellow-shirted character, resulting in hours of lost production time. How do you synchronize petabytes of data being generated on a daily basis?

In today's data-centric world, these types of data-synchronization issues can make or break a film. It is important to ensure that all parties on a project are working with the most current files, from anywhere in the world.

Managing metadata – or the data about data – in multimedia and film production environments has become a task of epic proportions. In the fast-paced entertainment industry, animators, designers and production crews working in remote regions, such as Japan and India, are often faced with data synchronization issues when creating, rendering and editing large files within the confines of remote production offices.

Content developers are generating terabytes of data, all of which has attached metadata. The metadata allows computer systems to match up iterations of the project. With multimedia demands increasing and film steadily shifting to digital, many organizations are looking to the cloud to help store their data, therefore, securing, managing and providing immediate access to cloud data is becoming an area of critical concern.

Data, Data Everywhere

According to a new market report by Transparency Market Research, the global big data market was worth $6.3 billion in 2012; and is expected to reach $48.3 billion by 2018. With a CAGR of 40.5 percent, that's a lot of data that must be managed, stored, made available and secured. This growth is primarily due to the exponential growth of data generated by games, images, videos, and streaming music and movies.

Content developers have been dealing with this data explosion for years and have used metadata to help manage their data. The associated metadata stores the important descriptors of the larger data sets, including file name, path, size, data and encryption keys, the computer that created it and ownership information. This metadata is crucial to controlling the data that comprise photos, music, animation and movie files as they are created. Without metadata, it would be extremely difficult to manage the workflow of these creative endeavors. The industry is ripe for a mechanism to simply and easily manage the surging volumes of unstructured data while providing the access needed.

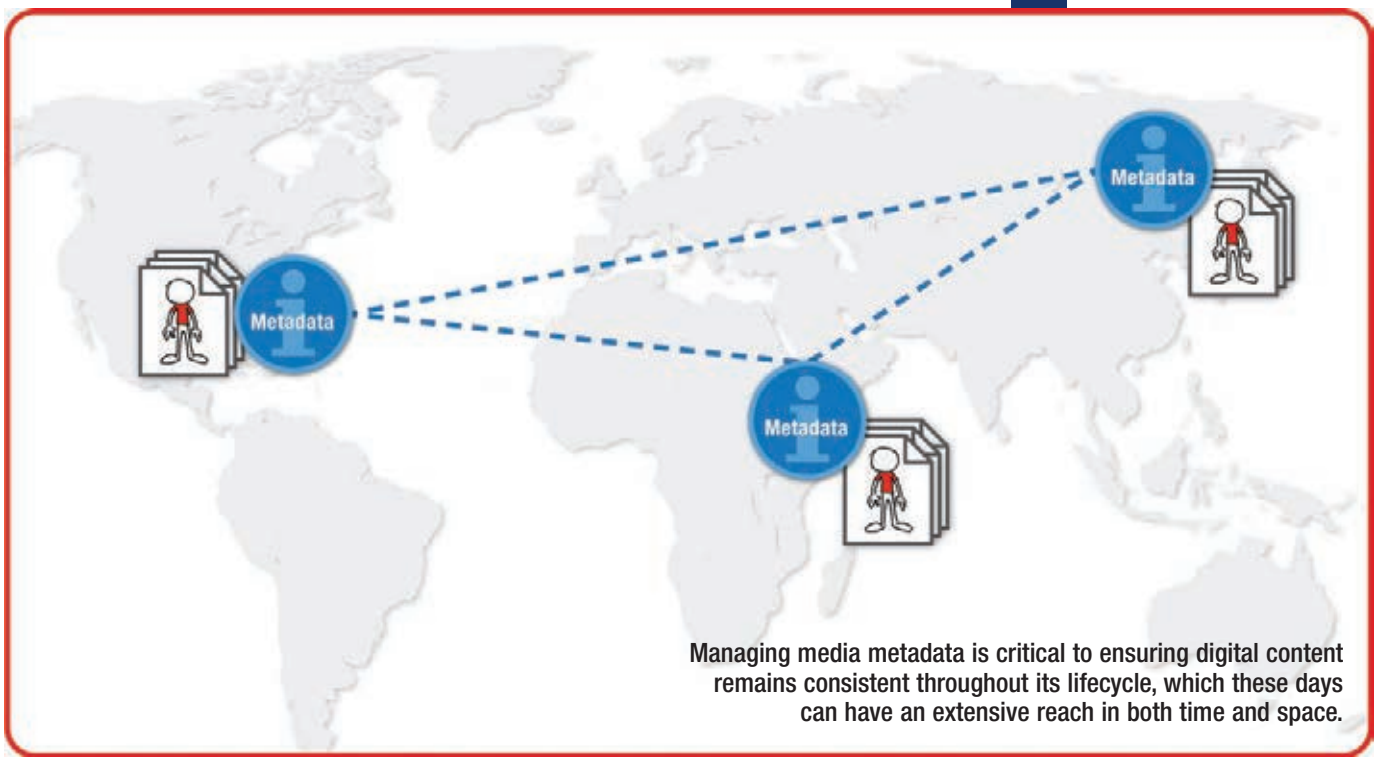
It is critical that enterprises faced with this ever-growing need to manage metadata take a look at how and where this data is stored, accessed, protected and managed.

Database Renaissance to the Rescue

To resolve these challenges, production companies and movie studios are looking to manage metadata in such a way that engineers, designers and crews that span multiple countries can access, update and store data while keeping all parties in synch.

While the Internet and affordable computing power have dramatically altered how applications look and feel, fundamental technologies, such as relational databases, have stayed relatively the same for decades. More recent advances have brought additional capabilities but also additional complexity, such as replication technologies that can be expensive and burdensome to manage.

Today, synchronization and data accessibility can be resolved



Managing media metadata is critical to ensuring digital content remains consistent throughout its lifecycle, which these days can have an extensive reach in both time and space.

> "As production facilities grow, the number of nodes can be quickly increased."

by storing certain types of metadata in a geographically distributed relational database management system, thus providing content developers and production crews with access to local data that is managed by a single database.

Scale Out, Not Up

Emerging technologies that fundamentally decentralize data greatly improve business resilience and provide users with the ability to stay "in synch" with each other. They are designed to handle less-than-perfect performance from all components of the infrastructure.

Unlike conventional infrastructures where scale, redundancy, and performance are increased by "scaling up" and adding additional tiers of components, these new approaches provide an architecture where additional capabilities are added by "scaling out" or simply adding additional, identical database 'nodes.'

These systems automatically store data across the nodes based on policy, usage and geography, and deliver information when and where it is needed. All information is automatically and intelligently replicated across multiple nodes to ensure availability. If a node fails, users are re-routed to other nodes so that productivity isn't affected. When the original node recovers, it resumes participating in the flow of data and applications and local users are reconnected to it. Organizations could choose to place nodes on-site or use local cloud nodes to ensure adequate response time for workers.

More importantly, for production scenarios in the entertainment industry, geographically distributed databases have the potential to automatically synchronize metadata thus enhancing the collaborative efforts of production teams.

Leveraging the Economies of Scale

Ongoing support costs would also be reduced because scaling in this way is much easier than with traditional deployments. As facilities are added in other locations, nodes can be easily added, either on-premise or in the cloud. Similarly, as production facilities grow, the number of nodes can be quickly increased.

As production companies, studios and video on demand companies look for ways to leverage the economics and efficiencies of virtualization and cloud computing, it is becoming painfully clear that the traditional database solutions available on current cloud offerings do not effectively take advantage of the potential flexibility of these new models.

Today, organizations are wrestling with ways to take advantage of cloud economics while maintaining control of their data and providing improved support for remote users. Now is the time for technology that enables options for deploying on-premise, in the cloud or a combination of both.

Engineers and designers require solutions that provide teams of professionals with access to the most current data, when and where it is needed. In order to accomplish this, fundamental IT architectures will need to include technologies that are resilient and that prevent critical data from becoming segmented and out of synch.

This is the next phase in truly enabling developers to deliver content that is consistent and highly available to global workers, while maintaining an elastic and robust infrastructure within the constraints of tight budgets.

Frank Huerta is CEO, TransLattice, a U.S.-based software company for the management of databases and applications for enterprise, cloud and hybrid computing environments.

Citytv Opens in Montreal

Flexibility Brings More Options to New Studio

They are new kids on the block; new kids in the building, and new kids in a competitive Canadian media market.

Late last year, the CRTC approved the acquisition of CJNT Montreal by Rogers Communications, along with plans to convert the multicultural channel to an English-language outlet; the new channel began carrying a full Citytv schedule in February.

Now, Citytv Montreal has more than 15 hours of local content each week, spearheaded by its daily three-hour morning show, *Breakfast Television*, and the weekly half-hour sports program, *Montreal Connected*, both of which originate from new production facilities in the heart of downtown Montreal.

When Bob Babinski, Executive Producer & Local Content Manager, first saw the proposed space back in January (he was the station's first employee), it was a floor of offices and conference rooms – eight stories up!

"I thought, 'Wow, are we going to turn *this* into a studio?'," he recalls, looking at lots of windows, relatively low ceilings and a space he first thought was, well, a little small.

Now, roughly two months into its operation, Babinski says the studio is "a modern, vibrant space with a variety of options to present engaging content to viewers. We have a lot of space here for what we do."

The studio is 2,800 square feet, surrounded on three sides by glass. Outside, different views of the Montreal cityscape; inside, Babinski describes five different studio areas that can be lit separately and used as required, starting with the home base where anchors sit at a main desk.

Off to their left, at a 90 degree angle is a 'play area' in front of a giant video wall made with nine NEC 55" screens. Another set features a 65" interactive touchscreen, often used to provide a unique view of the news through the lens of social media.

There's also a kitchen set with granite counter tops and stovetop burners, an

BT Montreal's co-hosts Alexandre Despatie and Joanne Vrakas survey their brand new studio home!

area for group interviews with stools or sofa seating, as well as space for musical performances, dance routines or exercise segments.

Citytv Montreal's Operations Manager Murray Corbett pointed out there was "no before" – no previous facility to adapt or build upon – so they started from scratch, with new space, new staff and new equipment.

Corbett joined the station in June, so a lot of decisions were already made, but he fully supports the emphasis on making things as easy as possible for a staff as small as possible. In total, about 25 people work on BT, either in front of or behind the camera.

"All broadcasters are looking for efficiencies, for ways to do more with less," he said.

Corbett itemizes a flexible and powerful fully HD line-up with a number of production tools that represent the latest – often Canadian – technologies.

There's a Vision switcher and Overdrive studio automation system from Ross and its R&D facility near Ottawa. Overdrive talks with and triggers other gear and content events, including XPression 3D HD CG & Motion Graphics and Quantel editing systems.

Rogers has long used Quantel technology for Citytv, OMNI and Sportsnet, including Qedit plus, Qnews newsroom and one of the first QTube systems.

Two Lawo V pro8 video processors, an NK Router and lots more gear are now fully integrated in the Montreal workflow, which includes WSI weather and traffic visualization systems.

Babinski explained that, due to the studio's open configuration and multiple shooting locations for the Sony in-studio cameras (and often a roving camera on its way to or from the street, eight levels below), he was convinced "real, live camera ops" were needed, that robotics would not do.

"For me it was a priority: I knew we could do so much more by moving around and being flexible."

The giant video wall, too, was part of the original planning for the studio design, Babinski added. Often used in entertainment shows, he sees the video wall as a dramatic way to put people in the middle of a breaking story, right there on location with a field reporter. It gives a tangible visual link to the news.

Corbett begins to describe the importance of those reporters in the field, and

> "The technology is supporting us in what we do, not forcing us to do it."

the fact that Citytv Montreal "embraced" the portable wireless transmission system from Kitchener, ON-based Dejero to link them, when Babinski joins in:

"That was probably my biggest stress factor in the roll-up and rehearsals, but my fears were totally unfounded," he admitted.

"We designed our morning show around 10 to 12 interventions, hits from reporters in the field. It's important for us to be out in the community, so that's 18 – 20 minutes of airtime to fill," he explained: obviously dependability was crucial.

Having heard only anecdotally that the system (which bonds together multiple cellular signals to create a single channel big enough to deliver live HD video) could be depended on, say, 80 to 85% of the time, he felt some production plans could be jeopardized.

But in rehearsals, and now a couple of months into actual on-air use, Babinski says they "maybe once" encountered a dodgy signal – and even then, they used the system's 'store and forward' feature to do the spot and deliver it later.

That example marked the second or third time that Babinski and Corbett described how the BT show and the Montreal studio were designed to get the best possible content on-screen, and not just to use the latest technology for the sake of using it.

"One hundred per cent," Babinski agrees. "The technology is supporting us in what we do, not forcing us to do it."

He framed his remarks by noting that, as a part-time university instructor over the past several years, he's developed and delivered courses on broadcasting, and the history of broadcasting.

"In my research and review of existing material, I saw that the type of programming on TV was often forced there by new technology: 'Oh, we have a satellite, we'd better change things and get some satellite programming.' The industry often changed the way it did things just for the sake of the new technology; here, we did it because we feel the show will be better."

With morning shows now in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary and Winnipeg (Toronto has both a morning show and local evening news), Citytv in Montreal is taking its cue from an established strategy, and presenting with a fresh new face.

MLSE

Ready for Added Exposure

The sports and media conglomerate has an impressive new management team. It has inked major new sponsorship deals. It's recently upgraded its broadcast facilities, and there are signs that the teams themselves are, well, undergoing changes, too.

What else could Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment hope for? 'A championship, of course' everyone replies!

The regular NHL season is underway, and in addition to a title or three, officials at MLSE are planning at the very least for exciting coverage from its TV production and broadcast outlets, LEAFS TV, NBA TV Canada and GOLTV Canada.

New broadcast production equipment is ready to capture and convey the anticipated excitement, including audio consoles, loudness monitors, real-time scoring and game status displays and audience engagement tools that integrate with popular social networks and mobile media devices.

MLSE worked with the Hughes Integration team, led by fibre optic project manager Chris Hermiz, to refurbish the main production control room with a new Solid State Logic audio console, a new monitor wall system and remote CCUs for control of the cameras at the Air Canada Centre; the HD upgrade of the in-house RF system; and the installation and termination of fibre in the ACC for broadcast signal transport over long distances in an arena of that size.

The SS C10 HD Compact Broadcast Console is used mostly for live pre- and post-game shows, as well as in-house productions that are pre-taped for later broadcast. C100 consoles have been used in OB vans hired for live game coverage, and the MLSE production and engineering team liked the familiar interface and feature set.

"On game days we share a lot of production assets (across fibre links) with the scoreboard, the control room, the mobile production trucks and the pre- and post-game show that we produce with the SSL console," described Ed Holmes, director of engineering for MLSE, at the time.

> **"MLSE is embracing new ways to enhance the game broadcasts, but it wants to enhance the fan experience, too."**

When time came for the transition to 5.1 audio, operators wanted a device that could not only analyze levels in 5.1 but also measure loudness, several TM7 touch screen audio monitors from RTW were chosen to help keep audio levels in check during live event coverage, in addition to monitoring broadcast feeds to and from locations around the world.

Again, familiarity with the equipment, gained when MLSE rented an OB van, was key to the decision, described Alain Siodlowski, MLSE's senior broadcast engineer

"The system is so user-friendly," he said. "You can move stuff around, you can set it up the way you want and if there is something you don't need, you just don't put it up or make it smaller. It's so easy to manoeuvre with the touch screen.

"In the control rooms, when we are mixing, we are basically in front of a blank canvas, saying, 'How do we want to create this?'" he continued. "There are certain sound-placement rules: You put your announcers here, your rink sound here and your audience here, but then you have to really work on how to create the mix and still make it sound good in stereo. And that is where RTW's vectorscope comes into play-it gives you nice visual feedback."

Sure, sports needs to sound good (and to meet

John Hunter, audio engineer, Maple Leaf Sports Network, using the RTW TM7 TouchMonitor.

Photo courtesy CNW Group/FGL Sports Ltd.

NEW SPONSORS IN THE LINE-UP AT MLSE

Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment has announced important new sponsorship deals, including a significant ten year partnership with Canadian Tire and its brands, such as SportChek and Mark's warehouse. In addition to extensive branding opportunities on-ice and elsewhere, the retail giant gets digital and media content rights, a new sporting and apparel store in Maple Leaf Square, exclusive consumer promotions, and, for the 2014-15 season, it will provide official uniforms for MLSE event staff at Air Canada Centre.

BlackBerry will become the official mobile computing partner of MLSE, and it intends to release fan applications for its BlackBerry 10 smart phones, and to develop a BBM Messenger channel hosted by Leafs and Raptors personalities.

Recruitment and HR services company Randstad will see its logo and advertisements appear on rink boards, LED signage and the penalty box during Maple Leafs games as part of its sponsorship, while students from the Universtiy of Windsor will get placement and co-op opportunities at MLSE under terms of their new agreement.

ABOVE: When Canadian Tire Corp and MLSE announced a long-term partnership deal, athletes, celebrities and senior executives were on hand, including Danny Koevermans, TFC; Dave Poulin, Marlies; Tim Leiweke, President and CEO, MLSE; Michael Medline, President of Canadian Tire Sports; Masai Ujiri and Jamaal Magloire, Raptors; Wendel Clark and Darryl Sittler, Maple Leafs (L-R).

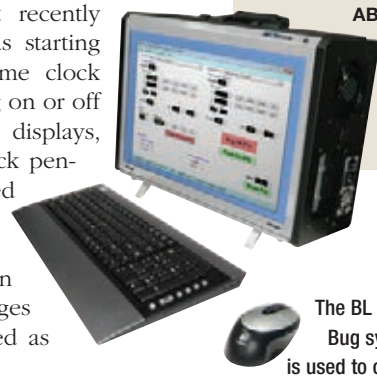
new regulatory requirements), but surely visual displays of the score and game status are paramount.

So MLSE has teamed up with Bannister Lake and NextComputing to acquire and utilize broadcast graphics workstations running BL Score Bug, a powerful real-time scoring and game status display system for live sports broadcasts.

MLSE is using the portable workstations to create and support its eye-catching HD graphic layouts, 3D animations and transitions, game titling elements, statistics, standings, scores, and on-screen time clocks.

All score bugs support remote operations over TCP/IP, allowing the score bug operator to control the score bug on an independent layer of the Ross XPression CG. With this workflow, another operator can be working on the same XPression unit but using the XPression interface to play out additional graphics.

Score Bug for hockey gives operators quick keys for most recently used activities such as starting and stopping the game clock and animating the bug on or off air. Oft-used graphic displays, such as those that track penalties, can be accessed through predefined 2 or 5 minute buttons, and one- or two man power play advantages can be easily displayed as required.



The BL Score Bug system is used to create animations, transitions and on-screen displays.

There are many types of coverage going on at MLSE, and so Bannister Lake hardware, which can be configured for multiple sports, was an easy choice to make. The systems also connect to third-party scoreboard controllers and automated sports update services like Whiteway, Daktronics and OES, among others.

So MLSE is embracing new ways to enhance the game broadcasts, but it wants to enhance the fan experience, too, be they at home or in stadium.

New Bannister Lake technology helps MLSE in the Twittersphere, with social media tools that integrate affiliated accounts, such as @Raptors or #gamenight, while offering followers instant updates, team promotions and special prizes.

The system also moves an approved social media playlist onto the main video board at ACC, and it can simplify content reuse across broadcast CG platforms.

MLSE also hopes to capture and increase fan interest by expanding Twitter coverage across additional MLSE accounts, including Fan Services, Ticket Sales & Service, Team Up, and Community.

Breaking Barriers – Getting Access to Latest Technologies at Lower Costs

BY DORON REVIVI

For smaller or start-up broadcasters, mediacasters and content delivery companies, setting up and establishing a TV channel is an expensive operation with many factors that have to be taken into consideration.

One of the biggest challenges facing these companies is how they are going to financially afford the infrastructure and equipment needed so that they can effectively compete with many of the larger and more established players.

There is a growing trend among smaller broadcasters and content providers to make use of cloud-based managed services and offerings from specialist providers.

The cloud, an overarching term used for services that are managed by a third party provider over the Internet, is effectively lowering the financial entry barriers to smaller and start-up broadcast and content providers as well as levelling the playing field in terms of giving smaller players access to leading edge technology that would previously have been available only to large multinationals.

Another key factor that providers are increasingly considering in selecting those partners – both smaller ones as well branch offices of larger operations – is the requirement for a one-stop-shop that can provide them with all the services, ranging from content pick-up, manipulation, transcoding, storage to playout and distribution from a single provider.

Content Critical; Lower CAPEX Costs, Too

Of course, a key priority when launching a new TV service is ensuring it has interesting, newsworthy and high quality content. But it's not just about having the content but how you are going to manage it and distribute it to your target audience. To begin with, there will be a checklist of all the infrastructure and software required to allow you to effectively compete with the more established players. This can seem like a daunting, and more importantly, expensive list of equipment that, more often than not, you may not utilise to full capacity at least initially.

This is where specialist providers of end-to-end media delivery services can come into play and add real value to start-up channels, by removing many of the financial and management headaches they are faced with. The saturation of cloud solutions – made available via a 'pay-as-you-use' basis – now offers an appealing alternative. By accessing solutions and services via the cloud, content providers have a viable alternative to buying and maintaining

Doron Revivi is COO of SatLink Communications, a Global Content Distribution service provider for television, radio and data channels.

costly in-house infrastructure allowing them full accessibility their content and applications whenever and wherever they need them.

Big broadcasters, with their vast resources and bigger budgets, are better able to purchase and maintain costly in-house solutions such as Traffic Management and Media Asset Management systems. However, smaller broadcasters still want access to these higher grade technologies, but without the associated issues of cost, complexity and risk. Today, smaller broadcasters can access the latest technologies without having to finance and pay for them in the traditional way.

Growing with the Broadcaster

One of the biggest benefits that many broadcasters are recognizing today is the potential scalability that a third party managed provider can offer. Many of the smaller and start-up broadcasters and channels will not require the full functionality of all of the broadcast equipment from the outset. Therefore by working with a cloud provider you only have to pay for what you need and you don't need to worry about managing the service as this is all included within the offering. Take for example a Traffic Management system. This type of system is a highly expensive piece of equipment, used for the effective management of multiple channels, yet many broadcasters don't need the full level of functionality and options that are provided within the system.

This is why global content providers are now turning to companies such as SatLink to provide and manage these systems for them. Additional services

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Atwood, Hadfield Join with Factual TV Producers at World Congress

Margaret Atwood and Colonel Chris Hadfield are noted participants at the upcoming World Congress of Science and Factual Producers in Montreal, organizers have announced.

Photo Credit: George Whiteside

Margaret Atwood

Photo Credit: NASA

Colonel Chris Hadfield

They will both speak as part of Sparks of Inspiration, a series of mini-sessions where groundbreakers from a variety of disciplines will offer glimpses into their worlds, discuss their innovative projects, reveal the sources of their creativity and speculate on what the future will bring.

Margaret Atwood, whose work has been published in thirty-five countries and adapted into several digital media properties, is a multi-award winning author of more than forty books of fiction, poetry, and critical essays, many of which paint a disturbing yet realistic picture of how technology can affect society over the next century. She's also the co-inventor of The LongPen, a remote signing device.

Atwood will be in conversation with Stephen Hunter, VP of Production and Development, National Geographic Channels International (USA).

Since blasting off from Kazakhstan in December 2012, Colonel Hadfield has become a worldwide sensation, using the power of social media to make outer space accessible to millions. Hadfield is the pioneer of many 'firsts' in Canadian space history, most notably, he served both as commander of the International Space Station (ISS), and, while there, as a space-bound musician, singing for and with Earthbound audiences and other performers.

WCSFP brings together international broadcasters, science documentarians, digital content managers and industry commentators for four days of workshops, networking events and panels that will reveal emerging content trends and highlight important industry issues.

Canadian Paul Lewis, President and General Manager of Discovery Networks in Canada, is one of a select few international TV executives to sit on the WCSFP Board of Directors. Lewis is responsible for all day-to-day operations, including programming, production and marketing, as well as business and strategic planning. In addition to Discovery Channel, he oversees operations for four additional channels – Discovery World HD, Animal Planet, Investigation Discovery, Discovery Science and their associated websites. Lewis is also responsible for a production company, Exploration Production Inc., which makes and distributes award-winning documentaries for the international market.

Attendees include representatives from Discovery and Exploration Production, Inc. (the two are this year's Host Broadcasters); CBC/Radio Canada, Explora, The Nature Of Things, PBS, NOVA, PBS International, ARTE, ABC, BBC, CBC, Channel 4, National Geographic, NDR, NHK, WGBH, and ZDF.

The 21st annual Congress is managed by Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival on behalf of the WCSFP. The WCSFP Editorial Director is Alison Leigh.

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The Funny Thing About Satire

Parody and Satire Added to Canada's Fair Dealing Defence

Since Canada's new and improved Copyright Act came into being on November 7, 2012 one of the amendments that's garnered a great deal of excitement (mostly, at this stage, in the form of legal articles singing its praises) has been the addition of parody to Canada's fair dealing exceptions to copyright infringement.

And the hoopla is more than justified. After all, unlike their US counterparts whose courts had long recognized a defence of parody to copyright infringement, parodists in Canada had to desperately rely on the too-limited exceptions afforded them of "criticism" and "review". Their creative powers were spent arguing how parody should fit into those categories, specifically criticism.

And certainly, the Supreme Court's 2004 decision in *CCH Canadian Ltd v Law Society of Upper Canada* had opened the door to such arguments by finding that the enumerated purposes shouldn't be interpreted restrictively. But more recent decisions like the 2008 B.C. case of *Canwest v. Horizon* (which relied on older case law to find that parody was not a defence to copyright infringement) had demonstrated that parody was far from being a shoe-in when it came to fair dealing. So, to the extent that the express inclusion of parody in the Act has now removed the uncertainty for Canadian parodists as to whether the courts will even consider it a valid defence, its addition is a great step forward and should be applauded.

Inclusion of Satire

The bigger news however, which has been given very little coverage, is the express inclusion in the new Act of "satire" alongside parody. To some, "parody and satire", like "Laurel and Hardy", "Wayne and Shuster" or "Key and Peele", may sound like two sides of the same coin in that we usually associate both of them with comedy and with poking fun at something or someone. Satire is generally defined as attacking a broader target than parody (ie. an entire industry, social movement or genre). Since they both usually involve exaggeration for comedic effect, the drafters could be excused for feeling obligated to add parody's equally caustic, but slightly more nebulous brother satire to the mix.

But what may have seemed like a small step, perhaps even an afterthought for the legislators, was in fact a giant leap for Canadian copyright law. You see, even though its defences to copyright infringement are open-ended, the US has been loath to recognize satire as one of them and, in fact, the US courts have gone out of their way to distinguish satire from parody and explain why satire is rarely, if ever, deserving of protection. So, in one fell swoop, in a move lauded by would-be satirists and condemned by many copyright holders, Canadian copyright law has now gone farther than the US ever has and maybe ever will in this area.

Satire Rarely "Fair Use" in the US

Why do the US courts have a problem with satire? The US Supreme Court in *Campbell v. Acuff-Rose Music*, 510 US 569, 114 S. Ct. 1164 (1994) tells us that the parodist has a right to quote from another author's material because the parodist is creating something that, "at least in part, comments on that author's works." This is contrasted with a satirist whose commentary has "no critical bearing on the substance or style of the original composition, which the alleged infringer merely uses to get attention or to avoid the drudgery in working up something fresh". While parody "needs to mimic an original to make its point", satire can "stand on its own two feet and so requires justification for the very act of borrowing."

In other words, since a parody is poking fun at a particular work (or its author or some other element of the work), the parody can't help but use a healthy portion of the original to make its point. But since a satire has bigger fish to fry (ie. current trends, politics) rather than a particular work, how does it justify which work(s) it uses to effect its purpose?

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Please visit www.broadcastermagazine.com to read the continuation and conclusion of Doug Murray's article, The Funny Thing About Satire.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are not meant to substitute for legal advice, which should be sought in each particular instance.

Miramichi) wondering what it would be like to meet the man who had achieved so very much in his lifetime: he was then reported by Forbes as the world's 14th richest man (Roy Thomson was 15th)!

Born and raised in the small New Brunswick town of Buctouche, he launched his quest to achieve when at age 25 he built a garage and service station in Buctouch and began importing gas and oil from the U.S.

As an astute investor he saw the future of broadcast and publishing early on when in 1944 he purchased New Brunswick Broadcasting [CHSJ Radio] and Saint John publishing from Howard Robinson. Let me quote from the excellent book "On Air...in the Maritimes since 1928" published by Acadia Broadcasting. "No public announcement was ever made of this sale…it is believed that even employees at the papers and radio station were not aware that ownership had changed. But CHSJ management soon noticed a change in the vision for the station even if they didn't understand where the change came from. The new owner K.C. Irving was prepared to reinvest company profits back into the operation. What a difference this would make for CHSJ's future .In the early years the company reinvested its profits in equipment and facilities."

As I reported in my book, 'K.C went up against the giants and soon became one himself.'

At his death in 1992 the Irving Empire included radio, TV, newspapers, hundreds of gas stations, refineries, pulp mills, and retail stores. He was not reluctant to take risks and reinvesting seems to have been his mantra. It's no coincidence that his holdings grew beyond imagination.

John F. Irving. President of Acadia Broadcasting stated in the book I just quoted from: "*My grandfather saw the potential of broadcasting and became its financial supporter while insuring the operations were left in the hands of skilled professionals*."

I met K.C. Irving at the pre presentation reception. He was then 90 years of age. When my wife Aline and I shook his hand we were both taken aback by the firmness of his grip. It was as firm and strong as the will and determination that forged his success. We shook hands again on stage when I presented him his Achievement Award. And again later as he was leaving the post presentation reception. My hand size is #10. My hand almost disappeared each time he clasped it. The firmness of his grip is something I will never forget. It said that even at 90 years of age, he was still in charge.

On a lighter side, two day earlier while driving into St John to visit **Bob Henry**, then program director of CHSJ who broadcast my Canadian Achievers program daily. I called Bob for directions, telling him I was in a phone booth near an Irving gas station – this was 1989 folks, pre-celphone and GPS!

Bob replied "Dick, when you're in New Brunswick you are always near an Irving station."

I told that story during the award presentation. Mr. Irving and the audience laughed.

Earlier this summer Aline and I visited his statue in Buctouche. We drove around the city wanting to get a feel for his greatness. Where did it come from, how did he get it. We met with Buctouche Mayor Aldeo Saulnier, a Division Manager at Kent Construction, an Irving owned company. Mayor Saulnier shared several interesting stories with us about this giant of a man who came from their small community. And who, as an industrialist/ broadcast owner left a huge footprint in the broadcast development of the Maritimes. His monument insures he will not be forgotten. He was indeed a monumental Canadian Achiever.

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can easily be added to their current contracts with the providers, such as the distribution of content via fibre, satellite or over IP, to every corner of the globe.

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Monuments to Monumental Broadcast Owners

BY DICK DREW

Buctouche Mayor Aldeo Saulnier [left] sharing K.C. Irving stories with Aline and Dick Drew

The Canadian broadcast industry can take pride in being the catalyst for the fortunes of a number of Canadian achievers who have become industry legends. **Roy Thomson**, Lord Thompson of Fleet, began with one radio station in North Bay, ON. The family recently re-entered the Canadian broadcast industry as owners when their investment arm, Westerkirk Capital, acquired the shares of Vista Broadcasting. **Jack Kent Cook** bought the ailing CKEY, Toronto, turned it around, sold it, then went on to own the Los Angeles Kings and the Washington Redskins. Similar story for **Alan Waters**, CHUM, Toronto. **Dr. Dick Rice**, CFRN, Edmonton. Ken Soble, CHML Hamilton. The list goes on and on.

Sadly, these dynamic broadcast owners have all left us, often leaving nothing more permanent to remember them by than their business assets.

That is why it was so wonderful to see a monument erected at the Rogers Centre in Toronto for **Ted Rogers**. To my knowledge, there are the only two monuments permanently honouring the memory of Canadian business titans who trace their business roots back to broadcast ownership: Ted's monument and **K.C. Irving**'s monument in Buctouche, NB.

I am honoured to say that over the years I have had direct personal involvement with both men. As the old saying goes "Shake the hand that shook the hand."

Let me first share with you my personal involvement with K.C Irving. In the next issue of *Broadcaster Magazine* I will focus on Ted Rogers, each deserve their own dedicated feature column.

In 1989, through my daily syndicated radio program *The Canadian Achievers* I was invited to present the first annual Miramachi Achievers Award to K.C. Irving. I traveled to Newcastle N.B (now called

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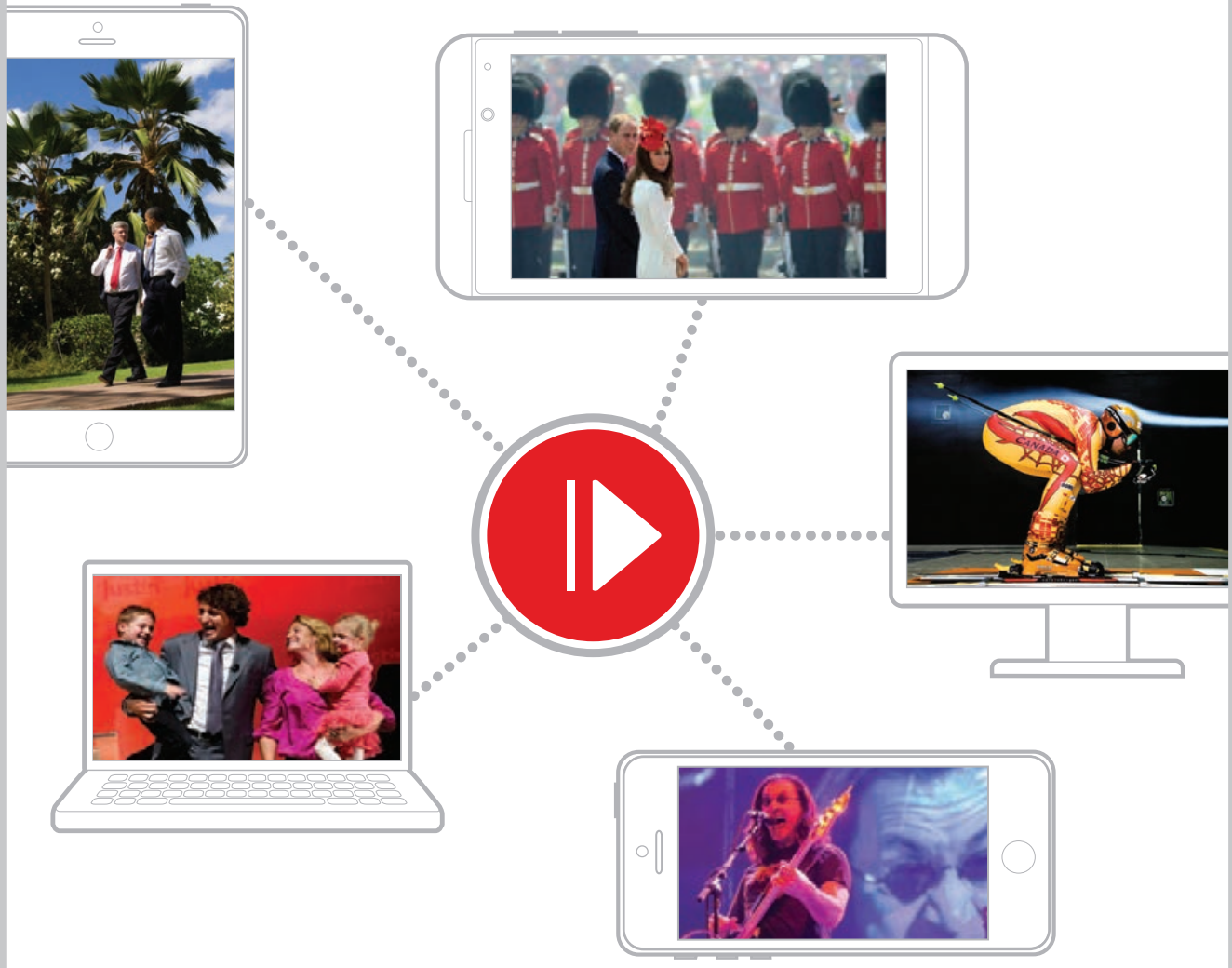

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