



Inside this issue:

EMA Metadata Standardization Closer to Implementation	2
EMA Website Relaunch	2
EMA Announces Suite of Committees To Support Digital Home Entertainment	3
Scholarship Applications Now Available	3
EMA Contact Info	4
2012 EMA Conferences and Events	4

Quarterly Newsletter of the Entertainment Merchants Association (EMA)

EMA's 2011 Year in Review

In 2011, EMA advanced its mission through conferences that allowed industry members to share knowledge, effective public policy advocacy, committees and councils that developed solutions to industry challenges, research that provided valuable information about the industry, public relations activities that raised awareness of the industry and its products, and awards for products and companies leading the industry.

**EMA's Mission:**

To protect the right to sell and rent entertainment products and content; promote the sale and rental of entertainment products and content; and provide a forum for all those engaged in the sale, rental and/or commercial delivery of home entertainment to consumers.

Conferences

EMA's conferences brought together industry members in business-to-business settings that facilitated deal-making, knowledge-sharing, and networking.

**Independent Product Market**, held in June in Santa Monica, California, hosted two-days of pre-scheduled meetings and networking opportunities for leading independent studios and many of the industry's key buyers. Seventeen independent studios met with 15 buying companies at the event.

The second annual **GamePlan Summit** brought together 15 top video game retailers and 19 video game publishers for three days of industry conversation and business meetings. The Summit featured an Executive Forum, in which attendees participated in a research-centered session that analyzed the current state of the video game industry and examined future challenges and opportunities. The Executive Forum was followed by two days of retailer-publisher meetings. GamePlan Summit was held in Chicago in September.

Approximately 150 industry executives attended EMA's third annual **Digital Media Pipeline**, held in September in Los Angeles. The one-day conference focused discussions on business-to-business opportunities in the digital delivery of home entertainment to the consumer. Retailers, content owners and aggregators, and technology and service providers utilized this forum to share learnings and experiences in the business of retailing digital entertainment.

EMA and the Media & Entertainment Services Alliance again presented "**GameSupply: The Supply Chain Academy for Interactive Entertainment.**" More than 150 executives managing the video game supply chain participated in GameSupply. They discussed current industry metrics, changing business models in the video game industry, the fast-growing digital delivery channel, the future of physical products, 3D technology, and ways to promote efficiency in retail shipments. Game Supply was presented in Burbank, California in February.

Committees and Councils

EMA's committees and councils allow industry members at various levels to come together to discuss and devise solutions for strategic and logistical industry challenges.

In 2011, EMA's committees and councils developed a best practice standard for video game carton labeling, conducted research on and disseminated information about EAS tagging of home entertainment products, produced a shrink metrics and practices report, evaluated benefit denial technology that would activate or unlock product at the point of sale, released a video metadata "core" set of recommended data points for digitally delivered video entertainment and an updated video metadata standard, developed a video game metadata standard, and endorsed EIDR as a unique ID for audiovisual content and encouraged its use.

EMA also established a council of video game publishers to address common issues in that sector.

(See page 3 for information about EMA's new digital committees.)

Public Policy Advocacy

The highlight of the EMA's year in public policy advocacy was undoubtedly its resounding Supreme Court victory in the **Brown v. Entertainment Merchants Association** case, which invalidated a California video game restriction law. The victory culminated more than a decade of advocacy fighting laws that would infringe the First Amendment rights of the businesses that produce and sell video games, and the Supreme Court's decision provides important protection for both retailers and content producers.

EMA also advocated on behalf of laws to curb online piracy of motion pictures and video games, the preservation of reductions in debit card interchange fees, ensuring that secondhand goods laws do not unreasonably impair the buy/sell/trade business model for used DVDs and video games, and other measures that would impact the home entertainment industry.

Research and Awards

EMA's annual report on the home entertainment industry, **D<sup>2</sup> Report: Discs & Digital – The Business of Home Entertainment Retailing**, continues to be an authoritative compilation of industry statistics and analysis of the home entertainment market. It is widely used by industry leaders, market analysts, and the news media.

In 2011, EMA recognized outstanding achievement and leadership in home entertainment through its Home Entertainment Awards, Video Game Awards, Video Game Supply Chain Awards, and "Digi" Awards for digitally delivered entertainment.

Other

In 2011, EMA identified 105 videos as "**Hidden Gems**" for video retailers as part of its Rental Profits Program. "Hidden Gems" are new release videos beyond the major box office hits that may be overlooked but present strong profit potential. The titles are selected by an anonymous team of experienced video retailers.

EMA's public relations activities led to at least 580 stories in 338 different media outlets. The stories promoted, and raised public awareness of, the industry.

## EMA Metadata Standards Closer to Implementation

Nearly 50 participants in the digital supply chain for audiovisual content met in Las Vegas during the Consumer Electronics Show to review EMA's Metadata Standard and discuss the development of a data repository to facilitate the standard's effective communication between content providers and retailer and distributors.

Danielle Loesch of Microsoft's Zune team described the supply chain benefits of adopting a metadata standard, including a more-efficient supply chain where content providers do not producing multiple versions to support individual retailers and distributors and where smaller retailers and distributors are not receiving multiple formats from a variety of suppliers. Loesch also noted that, the more versions produced, the greater the potential for errors in the metadata.

EMA's Metadata Structure was endorsed by Microsoft. Loesch noted that the structure was specifically created to meet the needs of content providers and retailers in the digital space, is consistent with other industry



**Craig Seidel of MovieLab, is the technical architect of the EMA Metadata Standard**

standards (such as Ultraviolet), and handles both feature and episodic content in one structure. Loesch encouraged broad adoption of the structure by retailers and content players because "[i]t was built specifically for our needs and *it works!*"

MovieLab's Vice President/Digital Distribution Craig Seidel, the technical architect of the EMA Metadata Standard, walked through the scope of the structure, written in XML, including a description of the "manifest" (what is being delivered), the "metadata" (everything one would ever want to know about the media and how it is encoded and delivered), the "transaction" (what one can do with it), and all the other information that can be delivered through the structure, including the actual media files, cover art, and other associated collateral.

Kevin Matheny, Senior Ebusiness Architect at Best Buy, followed by describing the "core" (mandatory) fields within the EMA Metadata Structure, including the minimum information that a retailer needs to promote and distribute a piece of content, which is to be common across retailers. He noted that the 34 "core" fields provide factual, objective information and do not grant a competitive advantage to any retailer.

Matheny then described the need for a single data repository to house this "core" data. Such a repository would hold "core" metadata and would be provided by EMA for access by its members. A repository would eliminate the need for each retailer to implement a custom connection with each content provider, and vice-versa, reducing both implementation and operational costs and speeding implementation. The repository will be intended to complement the offerings of licensed data providers. Matheny solicited members of the digital community to get involved in EMA's Digital Council and to participate specifically in the development of this data repository.

The EMA Metadata Structure and its "core" are available at [www.entmerch.org](http://www.entmerch.org). There are no licensing requirements to utilize the structure. Content providers can start simply – just providing "core" information. EMA encourages all retailers, content providers, and service providers to support the standard.

## EMA Website Relaunched

The EMA website was recently relaunched to better serve the needs of members. The site features a number of new enhancements, including drop-down menus that help facilitate direct navigation through the site.

In the "About EMA" section, visitors will find EMA's strategic plan and mission, Association bylaws, contact information for EMA staff and board members, a summary of EMA's history, and archived editions of *EMA fyi*.

In the Government Affairs section, members will find regular updates, EMA position statements, and background on ratings education and enforcement.

Information on EMA Events is offered on the site and, in some cases, members may register directly online.

The Industry section is regularly updated with information that may be of interest to members such as Top Ten Reports, Movies on TV announcements, and facts about the industry.

The Programs/Initiatives section offers details on many of the initiatives spearheaded by EMA, including the EMA Metadata Structure, as well as other standards and recommendations. Details and application forms for one of EMA's most-enduring benefits, the EMA Scholarship Foundation, can also be found here.

EMA's independent retailers may also gain access to the [idealink.org](http://idealink.org) site from the main EMA site for information more-specifically designed for the independent retailer.

**[www.entmerch.org](http://www.entmerch.org)**

## EMA Announces Suite of Committees To Support Digital Home Entertainment

EMA has launched an initiative to support digital distribution of audio-visual content, and a new committee structure is being introduced to support this effort. Collectively, the suite of committees will be known as "Digital EMA."

Digital EMA will be led by a **Steering Committee** appointed by EMA's Board Chairman. This committee, which will include retailers, distributors, content providers, and service/technology providers, will set overall objectives and prioritize EMA's efforts in the digital space, while overseeing the various programs managed by all other Digital EMA committees. Recommendations for investment and funding will be submitted by this Steering Committee to EMA's Board of Directors for review and approval.

A **Digital Supply Chain Committee** will seek solutions to optimize the delivery of digital content and its associated components from content providers through service providers and then through retailers and distributors and to the consumer. Opportunities to improve and standardize the consumer experience will be explored, as will new technologies to bring speed and improved efficiencies to this supply chain.

EMA's **Video Metadata Work Group** has already been active for a few years. Having released Version 2 of its EMA Metadata Structure for the communication of metadata related to the retailing and digital distribution of audiovisual content and its "core" requirements, the Work Group will continue to promote and manage this structure as well as to explore topics like commitment to unique IDs, the development of a data repository, and standardization of usage reporting back to content providers. Companies active in the Video Metadata Work Group include Best Buy, Deluxe Digital, DSB Consulting, Microsoft, MovieLabs, and Netflix.



The **Digital Research and Analysis Committee** will identify the research and analytical needs of our digital distribution community. The committee will determine what information is already available in existing research results and, when information is not available, investigate opportunities to scope and/or conduct research. The best means of communication will be evaluated.

EMA's **Digital Marketing Committee** will brainstorm and evaluate opportunities to market both audio-visual content and retail/distribution brands in the digital environment. Social marketing will

be evaluated along with "tried-and-true" website placement advertising. When needed, "white papers" and best practice documents will be developed.

The **Digital Suppliers Committee** facilitates discussion among content providers from both small and large studios and aggregators around non-competitive issues and opportunities to effectively grow a healthy digital distribution business.

**Events Advisory Committees (East Coast and West Coast)** are being established to guide the development and operation of EMA's Digital Media Pipeline conference, smaller salon "Think-Tank" roundtables on both coasts (and possible between coasts), and new events to provide opportunities for brainstorming, networking, and education.

All EMA members participating as part of Digital EMA are welcome to have representation on the Supply Chain Committee, the Metadata Work Group, the Research and Analysis Committee, and the Marketing Committee, and participating content providers are welcome to join the Suppliers Committee. Members of the Steering Committee and in the Event Advisory Committees are appointed by EMA's Chairman. Committees will meet regularly, both in-person and via conference calls.

The digital committee structure exists in addition to EMA's current standing committees, including its Game Publishers Operations Committee, Game Publishers Sales Council, Game Retailing Council, Government Affairs Committee, Loss Prevention Committee, Retail/Distributor Operations Committee, Video Game Metadata Work Group, Video Retail Advisory Council, and EMA Scholarship Committee.

### Scholarship Applications Now Available



The EMA Scholarship Foundation is now accepting applications from eligible students within the EMA-member family. Academic scholarships will be awarded to undergraduate and graduate students who will be attending college on a full-time basis. Awardees will receive up to \$6,000 total, which will be issued in annual increments. Scholarship applications, which are available at <http://tinyurl.com/EMAScholarships>, are due by March 1, 2012.

EMA's Scholarship competition is open each year to high-school seniors who will be entering college as freshmen in the following year, undergraduates currently attending a four-year college institution, and graduate students. Employees, and children and spouses of employees, of EMA regular and associate member companies are eligible. To be eligible for awards this Fall, employees must have completed at least six months of full or part-time employment by March 1, 2012. A child or spouse of an employee is also eligible if the employee has completed at least six months of full-time employment by March 1, 2012. Scholarship awards are limited to persons attending colleges and universities in the United States and Canada.



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**GameSupply**  
June 4, Burbank CA  
([www.GameSupplyAcademy.com](http://www.GameSupplyAcademy.com))

**Independent Product  
Market**

June 20-21  
Hollywood, CA

**2012 EMA Conferences and Events**

**Los Angeles  
Entertainment  
Summit**  
July 23-25  
Los Angeles, CA

**Digital Media Pipeline**  
October 3, Los Angeles, CA  
([www.DigitalMediaPipeline.com](http://www.DigitalMediaPipeline.com))