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Quarterly Newsletter of the Entertainment Merchants Association (EMA)

Digital Media Pipeline Offers Growth Through Collaboration



The 2012 Digital Media Pipeline will be held on October 3 at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles.

Digital Media Pipeline is EMA's one-day conference focusing on business-to-business opportunities in the digital delivery of home entertainment to the consumer. This conference offers an opportunity for digital retailers, content owners and aggregators, and technology and service providers to share learnings and experiences in the business of retailing digital entertainment.

This young industry is growing quickly, and new technologies and new business models are developing and testing almost weekly. Networking, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration, therefore, are key to success in the digital entertainment market, Digital Media Pipeline provides a forum for those activities.

Conference topics will explore emerging technologies and business models as well as content anticipated for distribution. In addition, the latest findings and projections from the industry's top research companies will be revealed.

Last year's attendees included representatives of leading content providers, retailers, technology suppliers, hardware manufacturers, researchers, and analysts.

EMA's fifth annual "Digi" award winners will be announced during the conference.

The conference's locale, the Skirball Cultural Center, is conveniently located on the westside of Los Angeles, just 15 miles from Los Angeles International Airport.

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.

Hollywood Is the Venue of Fourth Annual Independent Product Market



The renowned Hollywood Walk of Fame is just outside the glamorous Renaissance Hollywood Hotel, where independent studios will be meeting with key industry retailers and distributors June 20-21 at EMA's Independent Product Market. The market is celebrating its fourth year and is once again sold-out.

The Asylum, eOne Entertainment, GAIAM, Image Entertainment, Magnolia Home Entertainment, Millennium Entertainment, MPI Media Group, NCircle, PBS, Phase 4 Films, Questar, Screen Media, Virgil Entertainment, WEA, and Well Go USA will be meeting one-on-one through pre-scheduled meetings with key buyers.

Hosted buyers include Anderson Merchandisers, Alliance Distribution, Baker & Taylor, Blockbuster/DISH Network, Costco, Hulu, Ingram

Entertainment, MovieStop, NCR, Netflix, Rentrak Corporation, Super D, Trans World Entertainment, VPD, and WaxWorks.

"The Independent Product Market continues to be a key event for EMA and the independent product community," noted EMA President and CEO Bo Andersen. "The efficiencies of the event allow buyers and product providers to meet with a large number of their key customers over the course of two days."

Due to the event's unique two-day, pre-scheduled meeting format, meeting participation is capped, but there are sponsorship opportunities for companies wanting a presence at the event. Companies interested in learning about sponsorships should contact EMA's Carrie Dieterich at cdieterich@entmerch.org or 818-385-1500 ext. 227.

Digital Initiatives

Digital Media Pipeline Salons

What beats an evening of networking and hanging out with old and new friends in the business? Only a night of networking with complimentary refreshments and hors d'oeuvres, capped with 60 to 90 minutes of stimulating roundtable discussion.

EMA has presented, along with TAG Associates, two such "salon" events so far – one on March 6 in the Los Angeles area and the second on April 23 in New York City. Between 30 and 40 individuals participated in each of these salons, representing companies including Amazon, BBC, ConstellationTV, ContentBridge, Dish, GoDigital, Google/YouTube, Image Entertainment, New Video, Rentrak, Rovi, and Warner Brothers.

At each event, TAG's Ted Cohen engaged participants in thought-provoking discussion focused on "search and discovery," with perspectives ranging from indie producers to retailers and distributors.

These first two salons were sponsored by West 10 Entertainment and Fans.tv. Additional salons are anticipated this year on both coasts.

Digital Video Supply Chain Committee

EMA's Digital Supply Chain Committee convened for the first time on April 19 to set priorities and get started. And it "hit the ground running."

Two initiatives were kicked off by this committee: establishing a standard for mezzanine files; and identifying common standards for image files.

Mezzanine files (the content file provided to retailers and distributors) are often requested in standards proprietary to each retailer and distributor, causing the studios and post-houses to create an individual version for each. Not only is this costly, but it encroaches on the workflow that could be redirected to making more content available in a digital format sooner. Having one standard that meets the needs of many retailers and distributors should not only reduce costs and reprioritize workflow, but also ensure better quality control, as with fewer files produced there is less chance of error.

A workgroup was established and held its first meeting in late April. At that meeting, the first draft of a standard that each of these companies could support was established. As of this writing, the standard is being tested. Once finalized, the EMA Mezzanine File Specifications will be published.

The work group established to define a set of image standards will be meeting in early May.

Participating in the Digital Supply Chain Committee are BestBuy, Google, Microsoft, Netflix, and Vudu.



Discussion at the New York Digital Media Pipeline Salon

Metadata Work Groups

The Video Metadata Work Group, chaired by Best Buy's Kevin Matheny and including participants from Google, Microsoft, MovieLabs, Netflix, and Vudu, met in late April to review its current Spec and Core and to discuss deployment. Based on feedback from possible new adopters and supporters, a few tweaks were made. This work group plans to meet in New York during summer and will invite television content providers into the discussion.

The Videogame Metadata Work Group has completed its core set of metadata fields, and the XML is being tested by both Best Buy and Microsoft. The EMA Videogame Metadata Standard should be finalized by June 1.

DigitalEMA.org

EMA launched a new website this year to support its digital community: www.digitalema.org. It houses pages describing and supporting our digital committees, as well as the EMA metadata standard and glossary. An updated "repository of research and data," which catalogues publicly released metrics and research studies related to digital audiovisual distribution, has been added.

EMA Welcomes New Members



EMA is please to welcome the following to membership in the Association:

- The Asylum, Burbank CA
- ContentBridge Systems, LLC, Santa Monica, CA
- Screen Media Ventures, LLC, New York, NY
- Square Enix, El Segundo, CA
- Udmand, Inc., El Paso, TX
- Virgil Film & Entertainment, New York, NY

June Is Entertainment Ratings and Labeling Awareness Month

The Digital Media Association (DiMA), Entertainment Merchants Association (EMA), National Association of Recording Merchandisers (NARM), and National Association of Theatre Owners have declared June to be “Entertainment Ratings and Labeling Awareness Month,” as they have done annually since 2004. As part of “Entertainment Ratings and Labeling Awareness Month,” the organizations are encouraging all movie theaters and retailers of movies, music, and video games to emphasize the motion picture and video game ratings and music labeling systems, as appropriate, to their customers.

“Entertainment Ratings and Labeling Awareness Month” is sponsored by the four trade associations through their Coalition of Entertainment Retail Trade Associations (CERTA). It is declared annually to promote the use of entertainment ratings and labels by encouraging retailers to review their ratings and labeling education and enforcement policies, reemphasizing those policies to their employees, and educating their customers about the movie and video game ratings and music labeling systems and store policies.

“Today’s consumers have more entertainment choices than ever before, and that can make choosing the right entertainment for young people a challenge,” CERTA noted. “While parents are the final authority about which entertainment products are appropriate for their children, retailers play a vital role in providing information – the music labeling and motion picture and video game ratings – that can make those choices easier.”

Consumers and retailers can learn more about CERTA and the entertainment industry’s ratings and labeling systems at www.ERLAM.org.

The Coalition of Entertainment Retail Trade Associations (CERTA) represents approximately 1,500 retailers and exhibitors, who operate more than 35,000 theatres, video and video game stores, music stores, online music and media services, and other retail establishments that offer entertainment products and who employ more than 750,000 people. CERTA is comprised of the Digital Media Association (DiMA), Entertainment Merchants Association (EMA), National Association of Recording Merchandisers (NARM), and National Association of Theatre Owners (NATO).

IDEA Offers Monthly Webcast for Independent Video Stores



Each month, the Independent Dealers of Entertainment Association (iDEA) division of EMA offers the VideoRetailer.com Webcast. The webcasts features experts and successful store buyers participating in a discussion of upcoming releases. The panels review each title, show box art, and provide details on the releases. A lively debate often ensues,

during which the panelists discuss the benefits of purchasing each title.

The webcast also features “Hidden Gems” titles in every discussion. “Hidden Gems” are titles that might otherwise be overlooked, but offer significant profit potential. Titles are selected by an anonymous panel of knowledgeable video buyers. So far this year, 49 titles have been selected by the panel.

The VideoRetailer.com Webcast (including informational slides) is recorded and made available to retailers via the iDEA website. The most current webcast may be viewed at www.entmerch.org/idea/videoretailercom/webcast.html.

Redbox’s Mark Achler Joins EMA Board of Directors

Mark Achler, Senior Vice President of New Business, Strategy and Innovation at redbox, has joined EMA’s Board of Directors. At redbox, Achler manages the Company’s long-term planning and expansion into new business opportunities.

Prior to joining redbox in 2009, Achler co-founded one of the first personal computer retail stores in the country and participated in the launch of the IBM PC in Boca Raton in 1981. He then moved to Apple, where he was the worldwide introduction manager for the Apple IIc.

Upon leaving Apple, Achler co-founded and served as chief executive officer of the Whitewater Group, a company that specialized in development tools and programming languages and shipped the second application for Windows

1.0. After building and eventually selling the Whitewater Group, he co-founded the video game company, Kinesoft Development, where he served as president. Kinesoft was instrumental in developing the technology that allowed Sega and Nintendo scrolling action arcade games to be played on Windows 95.

After leaving Kinesoft, Achler served as a founding general partner in Kettle Partners, an early-stage venture capital fund.

Fueled by a lifelong passion for building new businesses, Achler also has helped to co-found Emmi Solutions, a provider of patient education, where he first served as president and later became chief executive officer.



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EMA and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation To Present Los Angeles Entertainment Summit

LOS ANGELES ENTERTAINMENT SUMMIT



The home entertainment industry, including its video game, DVD/Blu-ray, and digital sectors, will unite on July 16 for the most-significant home entertainment charity event in recent history. The Los Angeles Entertainment Summit to support Cystic Fibrosis, an invitation-only event, will bring together home entertainment divisions of major studios, video game publishers, and key retail and distribution companies for one-on-one meetings, a charity golf tournament, and a studio lot celebrity poker tournament.

The event was organized to aid the fight against cystic fibrosis by Warner Home Entertainment's Mark Horak, whose two daughters suffer from the disease. The event is almost fully subscribed, with more than 17 retail companies and a like number of content providers gathering for strategic business planning, networking, and fun. The proceeds from the event will go to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

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