

Media Asset Management for Provincial Radio Stations in the All-Media Era: A Case Study of the Radio Audio Media Asset System Construction at Hubei Radio and Television Station (Post-print)

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Abstract

Media asset management systems are of significant importance for reducing audio media asset management costs, enhancing the value of radio stations' intangible assets, serving reproduction, and supporting the integrated development of all-media. Audio media asset management for radio stations in China remains in its nascent stage. Provincial radio stations should, when establishing media asset management systems, leverage their distinctive characteristics, seize opportunities presented by the Internet era, fully utilize all-media platforms, courageously ride the wave of the big data era, transform "materials" into "assets", and achieve value upgrading of audio media assets.

Full Text

Preamble

Exploration of Media Asset Management in Provincial Radio Stations in the All-Media Era: A Case Study of Hubei Radio and Television Station's Broadcast Audio Media Asset System

Abstract: Media asset management systems play a crucial role in reducing audio media asset management costs, enhancing the value of intangible assets, supporting reproduction, and facilitating all-media integration development. China's radio broadcast audio media asset management remains in its infancy. Provincial radio stations should leverage their distinctive characteristics when building media asset management systems, seize opportunities in the internet

era, effectively utilize all-media platforms, and position themselves at the forefront of the big data era to transform “materials” into “assets,” thereby achieving value upgrading of audio media assets.

Keywords: radio station; audio media asset management; all-media; cataloging; copyright

The concept of “Media Asset Management” (MAM) was introduced by IBM in 2000 when designing content management solutions for various industries. It refers to the digital management of vast historically accumulated materials and newly added video, audio, image, and text assets each year. The industry generally recognizes that, in the narrow sense, media assets primarily comprise content assets of media organizations, including historically accumulated programs and materials, as well as large volumes of newly produced text, images, or audio-visual content. In the broad sense, media assets encompass all tangible and intangible assets, including media brands, human resources, audiences, market share, information flow, logistics, and capital flow. Therefore, “Media Content Asset Management” narrowly refers to the storage, management, mining, and reuse of digital media content assets through technical means, while broadly it involves maximizing media content asset value through technical, administrative, market, and capital operations.

In the current era of comprehensive “all-media” development, various media forms with diverse expressive capabilities—including text, graphics, images, animation, sound, and video—have converged to meet segmented audience demands. All-media platforms crave detailed, creative, rapid, and opinionated “content,” which provides an excellent opportunity for media asset management to demonstrate its value. Most provincial broadcast media in China have only recently initiated media asset management work, with all-media operations at radio and television stations still in their ascendancy. Exploring how to leverage the thriving all-media platform to manage broadcast-specific audio media assets and transform “materials” into “assets” is a topic worthy of discussion.

1. Current Status of Broadcast Media Asset Management

Broadcast media asset management employs leading information technology-based storage and internet technologies to manage various audio materials through processes including digital conversion, cataloging and storage, publishing and sharing, retrieval and querying, and downloading and utilization. This revitalizes broadcast media resources, making them permanent, resource-based, and production-ready to achieve value appreciation. Since the 21st century, major Chinese media organizations have gradually deepened their understanding of media asset management. Organizations such as China Central Television, Shanghai Media Group, Hubei Radio and Television Station, and Hunan Broadcasting System have established media asset management systems according to their specific circumstances. However, regarding audio media

asset systems, only China National Radio and Shanghai Media Group have corresponding systems in place, while most provincial and municipal radio stations remain in the exploratory stage.

Unlike text and video, sound possesses characteristics of originality, materiality, and objectivity that cannot be replaced by any other form of material. However, the sudden rise of television in the late 1980s and early 1990s dealt a massive blow to radio stations, causing audience numbers to plummet and operational difficulties. Institutional changes and talent departures also led to severe loss and damage of various audio materials. On one side, historical radio audio materials faced imminent danger; on the other, radio's linear broadcasting characteristics caused programs to vanish instantly without proper preservation and application. Consequently, establishing a massive "database" with data processing capabilities became urgent. Radio stations urgently needed such a system to both meet preservation and application needs and better leverage big data technologies and platforms for value recreation of audio data, enabling radio to secure a position in the fiercely competitive all-media era.

2. Value Creation Through Media Asset Management

2.1 Preserving Rapidly Growing On-Air Programs and Pushing Quality Content to Various Terminal Platforms

Currently, Hubei Radio's eleven channels broadcast approximately 258.5 hours of live programs daily. Popular programs such as *Focus Time*, *Hubei News*, and *News Broadcast* have large audiences across the province and have repeatedly won China News Awards. However, due to limited storage space, these quality programs cannot be completely preserved and updated, nor can they be extracted whenever needed, and resources cannot be shared between channels. A media asset management system can utilize computer technology to upload and catalog various programs, safely and completely storing them in a database for retrieval and extraction when needed, and pushing them targeted to Hubei Radio and Television Station's homepage, Changjiang Cloud APP, Jitouniao Radio APP, and even other platforms such as Ximalaya FM and Inke Live. Compared with previous bulk or automatic pushing, media asset systems can provide detailed information including program introductions, current content, keywords, hosts and guests, and even questions audiences hope to have answered, better guiding users' on-demand listening habits.

2.2 Categorized Management Serving Reproduction and Improving Utilization Efficiency Through Sharing

Media asset management can not only break down communication barriers and resource sharing obstacles between different channels but also provide audio materials for video and web use. By adding authorized users, the system can be extended to radio stations across the province's prefecture-level cities, further improving audio media asset utilization and reducing acquisition costs while

enhancing audio value.

2.3 All-Media Interaction Highlighting Intangible Asset Advantages

Regardless of how the media industry develops or how internet tools upgrade, the core remains “content.” Taking Hubei Chutian Traffic Radio’s *Foodie* program as an example, program production and broadcasting can be shared across radio, television, and the internet, while leveraging the program brand to interact with the catering industry to produce food e-books, food APPs, and other products. This vertically extends the program’s brand value across various media forms, allowing intangible assets to appreciate and generate profits.

3. Challenges in Media Asset Management

3.1 Massive Workload from Scratch

Since 2014, building upon more than a decade of video media asset management system construction, Hubei Radio and Television Station has comprehensively launched its broadcast audio media asset management system. It took a full year to complete the digital conversion of over 11,000 hours of historical audio media assets stored on outdated media. The subsequent cataloging work has proven even more massive. Since audio only has sound without images, it requires twice the program duration or more for cataloging and organization, with multi-level segmentation cataloging consuming substantial time.

3.2 Multiple Considerations for Archive Selection

Determining which currently broadcast programs merit inclusion in the media asset library requires continuous communication and consideration with various channels regarding standards, evaluating aspects such as secondary development potential, historical significance, and local characteristics.

3.3 Cataloging Standards and Scarce Experience

In media asset management, material cataloging is the most critical step. Audio cataloging refers to using cataloging software on computer platforms to segment, classify, describe, and index audio materials according to specific requirements, recording textual information to summarize program content and extract keywords. This process itemizes audio material information and stores it in corresponding categories, facilitating not only rapid and accurate queries but also enabling reuse of audio materials.

4. Creating Further Value Through Broadcast Media Asset Management on All-Media Platforms

Continuous scientific and technological development and management improvement have driven media asset management to evolve step by step from initial

“information management” of media resources to “content management,” and currently to “asset management.” Broadcast audio media asset management should leverage all-media platforms with “content” as the core competitiveness, allowing intangible and tangible assets to complement each other and develop comprehensively.

4.1 Establishing Themed Archives for Different Users

Drawing on big data development approaches, themed archives can be established within the massive audio media asset library based on elements such as keywords in each audio catalog entry, download frequency, search popularity, and event importance. These can then be categorized for different media platforms or users, such as “National Two Sessions,” “Flood Control and Disaster Relief,” “Belt and Road,” “Two Circles and One Belt,” “Hubei Enterprises,” “Tourism,” and “Hubei Masters.” This approach not only facilitates convenient searching and extraction for programs but also provides creative ideas and content support for platforms including radio, television, online video, and even WeChat official accounts.

4.2 Screening Exclusive Audio for Authorized Broadcasting

Relevant statistics indicate that in developed countries, media content asset industry development already accounts for 20%-30% of total revenue—for instance, the UK generates approximately £400 million annually from media asset content development, while France generates €2 billion. In contrast, China’s media asset industry development accounts for less than one percent of total revenue, and this comes solely from video and images, with audio having no presence whatsoever. Provincial radio stations should seize this opportunity to overtake on the curve by excavating exclusive audio rich in local characteristics and history, repackaging and independently cataloging it for targeted utilization. For example, Hubei Radio has preserved interviews and live performances recorded at the station by heavyweight opera masters such as Chen Bohua, Ma Jinfeng, and Hong Xiannv from the 1960s to 1980s. Most of these veteran artists have passed away, but their voices are unique and can be re-edited and developed, either fragmented or as complete albums, and pushed to various online platforms and APPs, allowing value to create more value.

4.3 Fragmented Audio Media Assets Meeting All-Media and One-Cloud Multi-Screen Needs

“One-cloud multi-screen” truly enables content to be everywhere at any time and any place, providing a new platform for audio media asset development. Valuable media assets can be cataloged, segmented, and tagged to give them unique identities, with fragmented audio shared across all-media platforms beyond radio or television to achieve one-cloud multi-screen interconnectivity. For example, when Wuhan-Xiaogan intercity railway opened on December 1, 2016, a reporter from Hubei Radio’s Hubei Voice could conduct on-site interviews

with live connections to Hubei Voice or any other channel, and make video reports via mobile phone through Hubei Radio and Television's Changjiang Cloud. The recorded news piece could air on Hubei Voice's *News Broadcast*, while the backend cataloging team could fragment the audio portion into segments such as opening operations, riding experience, transfer routes, fare regulations, and public response, creating individual audio clips and text information to push to other radio frequencies and refresh information interactively through Changjiang Cloud APP, Hubei Network Radio and Television webpage, Jiutouniao FM, Weibo, and official accounts. This could even extend to broader-reaching media such as The Paper, NetEase, Toutiao, and corporate official accounts, achieving value appreciation of audio media assets.

4.4 Copyright Services Appreciating Intangible Assets

The British BBC Company, with CCTV's consent, purchased *The Forbidden City* and segmented the footage into different themes such as "roofs," "doors and windows," and "pillars" for sale on an "art gallery" webpage at more than ten times the price of the finished program. This represents a highly successful case of media asset content copyright value appreciation. Therefore, brand programs of various radio stations, or their signature radio dramas, storytelling programs, and recitations, can be vigorously pushed to popular APPs such as Lazy Listening, Sleep Aid, and Poetry China official accounts under copyright protection, creating substantial marketing opportunities.

In conclusion, while technology drives media evolution, content assets remain the core competitiveness regardless of media format changes. Although broadcast media asset management started relatively late, it will gradually improve through all-media platforms. From initial systematization of audio materials to scaled collection and organization, and ultimately to datafication of materials, it will achieve value-oriented data application, further promoting the development and value upgrading of provincial radio stations' audio media asset work on all-media platforms.

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Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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