

# **Higher Education and Digital Learning Assets**

## **Summary of June 2006 Meeting in Salt Lake City**

### **Issue**

This paper summarizes creative dialog regarding public television's role in meeting the digital needs of higher education and adult education services. Higher education's inquiry-based nature relies on academic discourse supported by a variety of content sources. Public television stands uniquely poised to provide content to higher education through a convergence of resources, delivery systems, and people creating valuable learning experiences. Partnering with content professionals and related national organizations, public television recognizes a window of opportunity and recommends increased focus and momentum to this important work.

### **Background**

In January 2006, The National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA) convened a meeting of Public Television and Content Providers to discuss service for higher education. PBS' Adult Learning Services was dissolved in September 2005, leaving questions about the role of PTV and higher education. Higher education has shifted away from semester-long video courses delivered over television. Meeting participants agreed there are new opportunities to collectively create a forward-thinking vision to make video and other multimedia assets available for faculty and students

Representatives from public television stations with learning objects services or strong higher education ties along with content providers and national leaders met in Salt Lake City in June 2006. The 35 participants had a very substantive conversation regarding how public television can best serve higher education in a changing digital world. Public television has strong community connections, public trust and partnerships. It also has a viable digital infrastructure to deliver high quality content. Public television station leaders provided direction to help inform and work with content providers on developing a learning objects service for higher education.

At the meeting, Teachers Domain, Thinkport, eMedia, and Open Media Network developers demonstrated their projects as successful digital asset services. Participants conducted a SWOT analysis and discussed metadata, content and licensing issues. The management of digital rights becomes complex as content and context are combined. While the rights to an image may be relatively straight forward, managing the entire learning object becomes challenging. There are not only rights connected with the content objects but also authorship rights of the assemblers and aggregators of the learning object components. All participants recognized a changing role for PTV stations and service to higher education constituents. The SWOT analysis revealed eight weaknesses and threats, with recommendations for action items. The recommendations build on PTV's strengths and are outlined below:

<b>Weaknesses &amp; Threats</b>	<b>Opportunities for Action</b>
<p><u>Lack of Interoperability among Digital Asset Services</u></p> <p>Good digital asset models exist, but they aren't readily shared, since many projects are very focused on meeting the needs of funders and local constituents.</p>	<p>Incent sharing of best practices - The Digital Services Fund grant with Teachers' Domain, KQED and WPSU from CPB is a good example.</p> <p>Develop frameworks for interoperability as well as findability and encourage their use across the system, <i>e.g.</i> PBCore Metadata Project. Crosswalk case studies may include: Teachers' Domain, Maryland's efforts with Library of Congress and Marco Polo, Maryland's efforts with PBS TeacherSource.</p>
<p><u>Lack of Rights-Available Content</u></p> <p>A lack of rights-available content provides a barrier to meeting faculty needs.</p> <p>Examine UEN's eMedia and other relevant platforms within the system to determine additional opportunities for creating rich media databases</p>	<p>Develop a clearinghouse of content that can be shared among PTV stations.</p> <p>Set up UEN's eMedia framework to allow stations to upload their content metadata and match providers with acquirers in a web-based "marketplace." The database would include bartered and fee-based content. Contract negotiations would be between the two parties (<i>i.e.</i> a system-wide "Craig's List" for educational content).</p>
<p><u>Unclear Marketplace to Identify or Acquire Content</u></p> <p>Unlike K-12, there is no existing marketplace for reviewing and acquiring higher education content.</p>	<p>Encourage NETA to set up a group buy process for higher education content, based on successful K-12 models. Tie in with other national buying conferences where feasible.</p> <p>Need more extensive exploration of business model/underwriting including funding for the initial R&amp;D phase.</p>
<p><u>Varying Digital Asset Needs</u></p> <p>Higher education is rapidly changing to more asynchronous digital instruction. With Blackboard's acquisition of WebCT, and the increased prevalence of web-based conferencing for courses, knowing our constituents and their digital needs is increasingly critical. Faculty and students vary greatly in their knowledge and use of digital assets.</p>	<p>Conduct a needs assessment with higher education faculty, students, academic librarians, etc. to make sure our new models match their priorities and needs. What is the urgent need? Who is the audience and what does PTV bring to the market? The needs assessment should draw on the needs of not only four year and two year institutions but also adult and continuing education in order to determine the target audience.</p> <p>Working with CPB, build on national higher education relationships and needs so our efforts work in tandem.</p>

<b>Weaknesses &amp; Threats</b>	<b>Opportunities for Action</b>
<p><u>Unclear Terminology for Content</u></p> <p>Understanding the difference between digital learning objects that include the full educational context and raw digital assets has resulted in confusion over licensing, rights, and stakeholder use of content.</p>	<p>PTV should work on delivering both digital assets (raw content) and framing those assets in a learning object context – confirm with needs assessment. One opportunity is to create learning object templates around common higher education pedagogical models, such as the case study method. As rights become available, digital assets could be “plugged in” to these templates by faculty. <i>Frontline</i> is an example of content well suited to case study method and highly in demand by faculty. Pilots with PTV stations, higher ed, and other key partners are critical.</p>
<p><u>Higher Education Does Not Realize Public Television’s Digital Asset Role</u></p> <p>There is a rapidly closing window. Many constituents don’t realize that PTV could play an important content role for digital assets and are looking to textbook or commercial providers.</p>	<p>Maintaining momentum for this effort will require leadership at the national level and coordination between CPB, PBS, PTV stations and NETA. University Licensees are particularly poised to continue this effort. Regular conference calls, listserv, meeting times, and leadership are key.</p> <p>PTV needs to use its storytelling skills to better market its digital assets. It also needs to establish joint marketing and co-branding efforts among stations and partners.</p>
<p><u>Ongoing Rights Issues</u></p> <p>Rights issues continue to present barriers. The digital rights working group, convened by CPB, is developing a tiered approach for rights. Willingness to allow experimentation with delivery models and licensing options in the future will be increasingly important. Focus on digital rights at the outset, rather than repurposing older content will be important for growth.</p>	<p>Participants at the Salt Lake City meeting were encouraged by the preliminary work done by the digital rights working group. In particular, recognizing the need for delivery over multiple platforms will be critical for higher education.</p>
<p><u>Prioritization of Educational Needs</u></p> <p>Lack of focus has caused confusion across the PTV system and our national organizations. Now, more than ever, we need to identify the critical educational needs facing our nation and demonstrate the unique role that PTV plays in addressing that need.</p>	<p>Encourage APTS and CPB to identify and communicate pressing educational needs that PTV stations are uniquely poised to address. By convening our efforts around common, targeted issues, our impact will be demonstrated more effectively.</p>

## **Recommendations and Next Steps**

NETA will lead a planning team that will work with various constituent groups, including CPB, PBS, PBS stations the University Licensee Association, the National Media Market, The National Association of Media & Technology Centers, and the Consortium of College and University Media Centers to implement the recommendations.

**The initial key steps resulting from the opportunities for action include:**

- 1) Generate a list of sharable PTV content.**
- 2) Generate a list of available vendor content.**
- 3) Conduct a needs assessment and assess the gaps or opportunities in the marketplace. Determine which educational needs PTV is uniquely qualified to fulfill, and which ones we can reasonably shoulder.**

**Higher Education and Digital Learning Assets  
June 2006 Salt Lake City Attendees**

First Name	Last Name	Organization
Kyle	Anderson	Utah Education Network
Michael	Aubin	Maryland Public Television
Frank	Batavick	Films Media Group
Marta	Bechtol	Wisconsin Educational Communications Board
Paul	Burrows	Media Solutions/Univ of Utah (KUED, Utah Education Network)
Mark	Caldwell	LearnKey
John	Chambers	NETA
Lynn	Dahnke	Coast Learning Systems/Coastline College
Andrea	Downing	PBS
Richard	Goodrow	Gallaudet University
Nancy	Hill	Alabama Public Television
Ryan	Hines	KUED
Rachelle	Howell	Dallas TeleLearning
Laura	Hunter	Utah Education Network
Gens	Johnson	Open Media Network
Dan	Jones	Coastline Community College
Susan	Knoble	WHYY
Michele	Korf	WGBH Educational Foundation
Gail	Long	Maryland Public Television
Kathy	Manwaring	LearnKey, Inc.
Laura	Orsetti	KET
Mike	Petersen	Utah Education Network
Allan	Pizzato	Alabama Public Television
Ronald	Plummer	Univ. of NC-Television UNC-TV
Terry	Rinehart	Iowa Public Television
Chris	Seifert	Montana PBS
Amy	Shaw	KETC
Larry	Smith	KUED
Nate	Southerland	Utah Education Network
Cory	Stokes	Utah Education Network
Carolyn	Wapnick	CPB
Bill	Weber	WHYY
Detmer (DJ)	Wells	Governors State University
Alison	White	Corporation for Public Broadcasting
Renee	Willemsen	Utah Education Network