

Genre and Show Type Classification

Documented and Updated by the On Demand Quality Committee

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This report is the property of CTAM, and its CTAM Corporate Initiative Partner companies and their employees. The purpose of this document is to improve and advanced the implementation and usability of On Demand products and services for cable providers and their affiliates.

Overview

The CTAM Advanced Cable Solutions Consortium (ACSC), formerly the On Demand Consortium, is a corporate membership organization committed to the support the growth of cable's advanced products and services. Cable companies, content providers and suppliers all working together to influence the design, development & delivery of cable products and services including Video On Demand, On Demand Advertising, Interactive Television and Multi-platform services.

The On Demand Quality committee has continued to focus on improving the delivery and usability of On Demand metadata. Timing was key as CableLabs and its members were collaborating on the next generation 3.0 VOD Metadata Specification. This new spec. will provide significant improvements in the implementation of VOD metadata as well as enhanced program guide usability and navigation.

The On Demand Quality committee decided to take this opportunity to review the 1.1 VOD Metadata Specification and compose a business case for change to certain fields within the 1.1 Spec as well as to the 3.0 Spec. A formal Engineering Change Request was submitted to CableLabs outlining the need for and benefit of making these changes.

Two key areas of focus for the committee were the Show Type Field (formerly called the Program Type) and the Genre Field. The changes were approved by the CableLabs engineering team. Descriptions of these changes are provided in this document to help content providers and content aggregators enter and select Show Types and Genres accurately when pitching On Demand content.

Show Types

Show Type, formerly called Program Type is different from the Genre field. **Show Type** describes the top category that the content should be classified. Every program asset being submitted for On Demand programming must be classified in a **Show Type** category.

The committee has updated the recommended **Show Types** to better accommodate the wide variety of programming available today and to better support advanced program guide navigation as well as more robust content descriptions which can be viewed on the web as well as the TV screens. A program can and must have a single **Show Type** assigned to it.

Show Types with Descriptions

Ad (Advertisement) – Programming that promotes products or services. Advertising Show Type content includes infomercials, product showcases, ad spots, classified ads, personal ads, movie trailers, etc.

Events – Programming that is defined as a one-time or promotional special event. Examples include concerts, parades, major political events, etc.

Kids – Programming that contains content for children. Not to be confused with Parental Ratings for TV, the Kids Show Type simply describes the show and intended audience.

Lifestyle – Programming that is based on personal preferences. Includes ethnic programming, hobbies, human interests and activities, holidays, culture, educational, DIY, etc.

Movie - Movies may or may have aired in a theater. Movie Show Types include feature films, independent films, documentary films, made-for-TV, straight to video, animated movies, etc.

Music – Programming that typically is audio only (music videos are the only exception of programming with video that is allowed in this Show Type). Includes Music Choice/DMS/FUSE songs. A general test is that the program can be described with a combination of artist and album / song. Musicals, music variety shows, live concerts or documentaries do not fall under the music program type.

Series - A recurring program that has the intent of being part of an ongoing series. Typically used for TV programming. Series only need to air regularly and are not necessarily episodic. A mini-series would be considered a series.

Sports - Sporting event, either live or tape delayed. Can be edited, but the content is predominantly a single game/match/event. A good test is whether or not the program has a score or winner. This does not include sports-related talk shows, news shows, highlights shows or movies. However, a program that is a short summary of a single game can be considered a sports program type

Genre Classifications

A sub-group of the full Quality committee comprised on MSOs only spent several months going through the Genre classification guide which was composed and submitted by the same committee several years ago. This sub-group also reviewed each MSO's user guides to identify how metadata was being displayed differently. Several actions came from this discussion as well as from the full-committee.

- The MSOs agreed that in order to best achieve an optimal and consistent On Demand user experience, MSO consensus on how to input data into the metadata fields was required.
- **At least one Genre Classification is required** for all On Demand content. This genre will be known as the main genre.
- The new 3.0 VOD Metadata in development by CableLabs and its members will offer more robust capabilities. As such, the committee agreed that having the **ability to include up to 4 sub-genres** would improve a subscriber's ability to search for specific programs with much more accuracy. The user can enter a second main genre as a sub-genre, but the first listed Genre classification will be considered the main genre.
- The committee agreed to develop a **On Demand Metadata Best Practices Guide** in how metadata should be pitched and presented. The guide will be published 3Q10.

Genre Recommendations

The committee reviewed the list previously published by this committee as well as genre lists from Rovi, Tribune Media Services (TMS), and several of the content providers to understand what current genre values were in use today. That aggregated list served as the basis for the list the committee edited for delivery to CableLabs. The intent of the list is that it can be used for linear or demand content spanning the entire spectrum of genres and program types. The committee recommends that metadata editors begin using the values in this list as required by business needs in the near term. CableLabs will be taking this list and will develop a process for publishing and maintenance of it.

Populating the Genre Field

Editors should populate the genre field with values from the list of genres generated by the committee. The main genre should always be listed first, followed by up to 4 appropriate sub-genres.

Tips and Hints

For those of you who have been pitching Metadata, you'll notice that several genres from the previous publication have been removed. The committee reached consensus on this list based on simplicity as well as consumer behaviors. It's important that the user guide navigation as well as the search and discovery functionality is easy to understand and use by our subscribers.

- In most instances where there were two word genres, the MSOs agreed to condense the genre to one word. For example, *When Harry Met Sally* might be considered both a Romance and a Comedy. We've removed the genre 'Romantic Comedy'. The content provider can select "romance" as the main genre and "comedy" as the sub-genre. Another example is Crime Drama. Crime Drama is no longer an approved genre. Content providers can select "crime" as the main genre and "drama" as the sub-genre. The main genre should always be listed first.
- There are still some instances where two words can be used in the genre field, such as "boat racing", "drag racing", "extreme sports", etc. which are specific names for genres fields.
- Not all Genres are applicable to all Show Types. For example, "all-star" is a genre only to be used in the Sports Show Type. "Calypso" is a genre only to be used in the Music Category. "Circus" is a genre only to be used in the Events and Lifestyle Show Types. Please refer to the guide for more detail.
- If the primary genre you are looking to assign is listed as a sub-genre, you should look for a higher level main genre to include first. For example, if you want to assign the genre of "sitcom" to an episode of *Two and a Half Men*, you'll see that it is listed as a "sub," so you should first list a main genre of "comedy," and also give us "sitcom." Same would hold true if trying to assign the genre of "courtroom" to the movie *A Few Good Men*. You should first list "drama" and also list "courtroom."
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