

Subject: EsPRSSo

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From: PRSS ContentDepot

To: Kelly Fuentes

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-Today's Blends-

Opening Shot | The News | Tips 'n' Tricks | Stay in Touch

Opening Shot

The banner for the PREC19 event features a collage of images related to public radio engineering: a globe with the APRE logo, a radio tower, a control room, a clock, and a server rack. The text below the images reads: 'ADVANCING THE ART AND SCIENCE OF PUBLIC RADIO ENGINEERING THROUGH RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND PUBLIC SERVICE'. The event title 'PREC19' is prominently displayed in large, bold, red letters with a black underline. Below the title, the dates 'April 4 - 6th' and the location 'Tuscany Suites & Casino, 255 East Flamingo Road, Las Vegas' are listed.

APRE
Association
of Public Radio
Engineers

ADVANCING THE ART AND SCIENCE OF PUBLIC RADIO ENGINEERING
THROUGH RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

PREC19

April 4 - 6th

Tuscany Suites & Casino
255 East Flamingo Road
Las Vegas

NPR Distribution to Share Big News Updates at PREC

This year's PREC in Las Vegas is going to be particularly high-profile for NPR Distribution and the PRSS this year, with multiple projects being detailed for attendees, including details on the Future Systems project as well as an initiative to create a new engineering certification for public radio engineers.

Distribution Vice President Mike Beach will be on-hand Thursday morning to discuss a new program for certifying public radio engineers, with three different levels of curriculum on offer. Mike will then join members of Distribution's senior leadership team to provide a two-part overview of the Future Systems project.

Thursday night, Mary Birchler and Doug Bevington will present a case study on business continuity, reviewing an exercise that Distribution participated in October 2018.

On Friday morning, a group of Distribution staff will talk about metadata and the latest developments with the PRSS MetaPub feature. Joe Schifano, who leads the NPR Distribution Services team, will provide remarks at a lunch his group is sponsoring for PREC.

Below is a calendar with times and titles for all Distribution staff and their presentations.

THURSDAY

10:55 am

Professional Development for Engineers, w/ Mike Beach

1:30 pm

PRSS Future System Update, w/ Mike Beach, Ron Walker, Anita Ginyard-Rogers, Doug Bevington, Megan Williams and Jon Cyphers

- 1:30-2:20 pm Overview of the New Interconnection System

- 2:25-3:10 pm Deep Dive of the New Interconnection System

7:10 pm

Night Owl presentation "Business Continuity - A Case Study" w/ Mary Birchler, Doug Bevington.

FRIDAY

12:25 pm

NPR Distribution Services sponsored lunch, w/ Joe Schifano providing an update on NPRDS

SATURDAY

9:40 am

Serving Public Radio Listeners through MetaPub and Metadata, w/ Bruce Wahl, Jon Cyphers, Megan Williams, Anita Ginyard-Rogers

(PREC schedule may change before the event)

In addition, Joni Lupovitz of NPR's Policy & Representation office will speak at PREC on Friday morning at 8:55 am about her team's role in creating a legislative, regulatory and grassroots environment that enhances the growth of public radio.

NPR Distribution's Joe Schifano will also be speaking at the Las Vegas Country Club on Sunday afternoon at a reception hosted by GatesAir. Joe will deliver a presentation, How NPR Distribution Services and ContentDepot Utilize GatesAir Codecs Within Our Products and Services

If you have any questions about these presentations, or would like to set up a meeting with any of the NPR Distribution representatives, please contact Erich Shea at eshea@npr.org.

PRSS Survey Email Sent to All Interconnected GMs

The Business Affairs team at NPR Distribution has just sent out a survey to all interconnected stations asking them to confirm the contact information we have on file for them. This is being done in preparation for the Future Systems roll-out.

Once this process is complete, we will then be going back to the stations in mid-April to get them all to sign a user agreement for the new equipment we will be sending. In both cases, this outreach will require participation from 100% of the station community, so we wish to do everything we can to encourage them to provide the information in a timely fashion.

With IT security and phishing scams prevalent lately, some stations have contacted us to confirm the legitimacy of these messages. If you look below, you will see a copy of what is being sent with regard to the station survey. If the email you receive is a DocuSign document that references the PRSS and our attempts to convey a survey and/or an equipment agreement, you can be confident that it came from us and is legitimate.

If you cannot sufficiently identify or have deleted the email or lack details of it, please reach out to Earl Johnson at ejohnson@npr.org and he will work with you. You may send any other questions you have about the email and/or the survey to Earl as well.

NPR Distribution plans to send out another notice in April reminding stations of the forthcoming message concerning the equipment user agreement.

We appreciate your help with this project, and we ask that you reply to our email as quickly as you are able.



PRSS Contracts sent you a document to review and sign.

[REVIEW DOCUMENT](#)

content PRSS Contracts
depot. prss_contracts@npr.org

Dear Station,

Please carefully read the attached cover letter from Michael Beach and complete the survey as requested. PRSS needs to have the most up to date technical contact(s) and your physical address in order to ship equipment to your station. Please verify and/or correct the information we have on file for your shipping address.

Thank you,
Sophya Chapson
NPR, Distribution

The News

NCPR's Ellen Rocco Looks Back on Long Career

The public radio community received a shock earlier this year with the news that Ellen Rocco of North Country Public Radio is planning to retire this year. Rocco joined the station in 1980 as Development Director and in 1985, she became the station manager.

EsPRSSo spoke with Ellen about her legacy in the industry and her plans for what comes next.



Was there any particular impetus for you in retiring in 2019?

I could easily work forever-I love my job and the people I work with and serve in the North Country. But I believe it's time for the very talented next generation to take over. We have an exceptionally good team at NCPR. I'm excited to see where they take the station. And there are other things I'd like to do before I'm too decrepit.

One thing that you're well known for is your innovative way of approaching pledge drives and not interrupting programs. Do you see this



Ellen Rocco, North Country Public Radio

becoming a trend?

Oh, I certainly hope this is a trend across our system. We are raising money at the same rate as other stations-four years of not interrupting programs to do so. I think that speaks for itself. We

can't imagine going back to the 5-10 minute pledge break style of fundraising and, for sure, our audience would not stand for it.

Given your experience and tenure in public radio, what advice would you pass on to somebody looking to lead a station into the next decade or longer?

Never forget we serve the American people, and our communities of license specifically. Our job is to make and distribute great content. Our audience always comes first.

NCPR was known for its local programming. Do you think more stations should try and produce their own regional content?

Why bother being in public radio if you're not doing broadcast and digital stories about the people you serve? Either fire everyone and become a national program repeater station or dig in, raise money, and produce good stuff about the place where you live.

Radio technology, broadcasting, and consumption are perceived by many to be in their twilight years. Do you think this is true?

Funny, about 10 or 12 years ago I was asked to write a thought piece on what I thought public media would look like in 2020. My answer back then: I haven't got a clue, so all we can do is prepare our staff with the tools and training necessary to keep bringing important content to our public.

I still don't have a clue. But, audio is rocking, streaming is exploding, so as far as I'm concerned, public radio -- as in, audio content produced, curated and distributed by a community service-oriented entity -- ain't dead yet. The transmitters may go but there will be new distribution platforms, like smart speakers. And out here in the rural hinterlands, broadcast radio is still going strong.

Are there any features or functions or trends that you see lacking in public radio that more station folks should pursue?

Do everything possible to produce local and regional news and stories. Do everything possible to develop projects that put you out in your community-creating events and content for multiple platforms. For example, at NCPR we do North Country at Work (www.ncpr.org/work) and the Howl, a local version of the Moth (www.ncpr.org/howl). Do projects with wide open doors so everyone feels welcome to participate.

Do you have any concerns about the future leaders of public radio? How might public radio replenish its talent pool?

Future leaders need to remember the mission of public radio/media is to bring strong news, information and cultural content to the American public. Our leaders must abide by rigorous principles of journalism and adhere to strong ethics in all station activities, from fundraising to news gathering.

So what happens with you now?

Wouldn't you like to know? No, just kidding. I'm available informally to counsel small and medium stations through helicopter-in sessions. However, I'm working on developing an artists/writers retreat at my farm, finishing two books, a novel and a memoir of a family in the 20th century, and figuring out how to make a new meaningful contribution to my north country community.

Producers Urged to Keep Evergreen Piece at Ready

This is a reminder that NPR Distribution strongly encourages all producers to ensure they have a current evergreen program at the ready in ContentDepot. This can ensure that despite any adverse weather, technical or otherwise conditions at their facilities, a producer's subscribing stations will still receive a program that is suitable and appropriate for broadcast.

An evergreen is a pre-recorded program that isn't tied to any current event and can be aired whenever necessary. A suitable topic for an evergreen might be "A Look Back in American History" or "Exploring the Works of Günter Grass" not "What's in the Mueller Report?" or "Will the Boston Red Sox Repeat As Champions?" We have found that some producers have nothing in the way of an evergreen show loaded into the ContentDepot, and we're also aware that some of the evergreen shows that do exist are more than a decade old.

The PRSS NOC has seen numerous occasions when customers have gotten locked out of their network, lost their internet connection, experienced severe weather issues, had a security hack, or suffered other events that resulted in them not being able to upload their latest program, resulting in no audio available for subscribed stations.

If a producer has given the PRSS NOC a back-up evergreen program beforehand, the NOC can automatically switch to it at any time there is a problem. We operate under the theory that it's better to deal with this issue right now rather than at the moment when your internet connection has been knocked out by a hurricane. So if you haven't uploaded an evergreen program, please consider doing so as soon as possible to cover you in the event of an emergency.

If you have previously uploaded an evergreen show, it would be worth your while to check to ensure A) it's not too old, i.e. more than a few years since upload, and B) it's still topical and won't appear dated or inaccurate in this current time period. An episode revolving around the Obama Administration, for example, would likely not be useful to your audiences.

The PRSS NOC is happy to assist you if you have additional questions or requests on how best to ensure there is always a program at the ready. If you'd like to discuss this further, please start by contacting the PRSS Help Desk at 800.971.7677 or prsshelp@npr.org.

PRSS NOC Practice on LWSF File Deliveries

The PRSS Network Operations Center wishes to remind stations and producers regarding our long-standing practice for Live With Subsequent File (LWSF) programs. Over the years, we have communicated to stations that we will deliver a LWSF file within two hours of the conclusion of the live program.

In some cases, the NOC is able to execute a much quicker turnaround. However, it is important that stations realize that while the NOC may sometimes be able to send these files out immediately, in other cases, there may be some unforeseen event that delays the process. This two hour window also allows NOC staff to request changes, edits or corrections from the producer if something is found during the quality check process.

Stations should therefore assume that files can and will arrive at any time during this two hour window. The situation we wish to avoid is a station relying on an immediate turnaround time that we cannot meet for a variety of reasons. If you have any questions or comments on this subject, please contact the PRSS Help Desk at 800.971.7677, or via email at prsshelp@npr.org.

Future Systems Update

PRSS Project to Garner Attention Via Media & PREC

The Future Systems project gained some visibility in March with articles on the initiative in our two favorite publications, Radio World and Current. You can access the pieces with the links below.

Radio World: <https://www.radioworld.com/tech-and-gear/next-gen-prss-system>

Current: <https://current.org/2019/03/prss-plans-rollout-of-next-generation-of-satellite-receivers>

Distribution staff are also hard at work creating presentations for this year's PREC show, in which the project will be detailed by those working on it (see related story above).

The following also were accomplished in the previous month.

- NOC test interconnection system installed, configured and tested. Final site acceptance test sign-off in-process.
- Request for Station Primary and Secondary Technical Contact and contact info sent out (to ensure we know who to work with for the receiver roll-out)
- Beta Stations have been selected to test the new receivers and Equipment agreements have been sent out to the GM's of those Beta stations.

What's New in the ContentDepot?

There are several new programs (both recurring and one-time-only) appearing in the ContentDepot this month. Listed below are details on a sampling of new regularly occurring programs that your listeners may enjoy:

Political Breakdown SPECIAL: California's Death Penalty - A one-hour, one-time-only LWSF transfer from **KQED-FM** that looks at Governor Newsom's moratorium on capital punishment in California.

Brains and Losses: The Bottom Line on Aging and Financial Vulnerability - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **American Public Media** that looks at evidence that aging people are more vulnerable to financial exploitation.

Just Eat It: Why Food Waste Matters - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **American Public Media** that looks at the resources used to grow food and what people can do to make sure they're not squandered.

Rachmaninov's All-Night Vigil - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **American Public Media** that provides a performance of this classic work by the Moscow Region State Chorus.

Brains on Presents: Smash Boom Best - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **American Public Media** that presents two lively debates in a game show style that showcase logical arguments with humor and fun.

On Point Special Series - A one-hour, weekly special from **NPR** that is intended for stations that are interesting in carrying and/or sampling the program. No fees are required. The series will be recorded with subsequent file transfers that stations can air where they best fit into their schedule.

Stay in Touch

We'd Like to Hear From You!

EsPRSS-O welcomes and encourages your questions, comments, suggestions and ideas.

- Have you or your team developed a particularly unique and/or nifty technique in operating ContentDepot?
- Are you facing any new challenges and want to get the perspective of others who might be in a similar situation?
- Are you seeing any technology or business developments on the horizon that your pubradio colleagues ought to know about?
- Got a notion on your mind that you want to share with the PRSS?

If so, don't hesitate, write in today!

Send any and all correspondence to PRSSCommunications@npr.org along with info on the best way to get in touch with you.

Stay in touch! Send your questions, comments and ideas to PRSSCommunications@npr.org. As always, the PRSS Help Desk is also available 24/7 at 800.971.7677 or email PRSSHelp@npr.org.



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