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## -Today's Blends-

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## Opening Shot

### PRSS Plans Big Presence at PREC & NAB

The 2018 Public Radio Engineering Conference (PREC) and National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) show in Las Vegas are literally right around the corner, and there will be a strong PRSS presence at both shows.



At the PREC, which will be held at the Tuscany Suites & Casino on April 5-6, 2018, there will be several presentations involving NPR Distribution staff.

**Thursday, April 5:** Mike Kirk, Sr. Satellite Engineer, will participate in a panel titled "Remote Content Insertion" at 1:00 pm.

**Friday, April 6:** Michael Beach, NPR Distribution VP, and Ron Walker, Sr Director of Information Systems, will give a presentation "PRSS Future System Update" at 8:15 am.

**Friday, April 6:** Sr Solutions Architect Bruce Wahl, Product Manager Megan Williams, and Broadcast Systems Engineer Jon Cyphers will give a presentation "Emergency Alerting," which will involve the PRSS MetaPub system.

At the larger NAB Show, the PRSS will have a booth set up in the exhibition hall (Booth #SU2821) and will have staff on-hand to discuss initiatives involving both the PRSS and NPR Distribution Services.

In a conversation with EsPRSSo, Sr Director of Business & Fiscal Affairs Joe Schifano talked a bit about the shows.



**Joe Schifano**

**What initiatives are front-of-mind for you this year at the PREC?**

At the PREC, we're going to be talking about a couple very big items. For one thing, Mike Beach and Ron Walker will be giving the latest details on where we are on the future system of distribution for public radio. We've been closely evaluating several vendors, and we are close to selecting the one that will be designing and providing the technology for all of public radio in the very near future.

We will also make a presentation on MetaPub and how to implement new channels for emergency alerting. This ties into our work with CPB to outfit more than two dozen stations with the hardware, software and training to set up MetaPub at their facilities for purposes of emergency

communications. This presentation is from Distribution's Megan Williams and Jon Cyphers along with this year's APRE Engineering Achievement Award winner Bruce Wahl.

**What will be the focus of your presence at NAB?**

When we attend NAB, we typically are there to share the word on NPR Distribution Services, formerly known as NPR Satellite Services. Obviously, one of the primary things we want to discuss this year is the fact that we have changed our name to NPR Distribution Services. This was a move we made because we feel like NPRDS describes what we do better. We aren't just a provider of satellite delivery anymore. We've got the Hub @ NPRDS, which offers content delivery via satellite, terrestrial or a hybrid of the two, and we're doing more with disaster recovery services for our clients. We're looking forward to talking to people about how much we've grown in the past few years.

**There always seems to be a strong NPR Distribution presence at these shows. Why are they such a priority for you?**

Well, PREC is easy because it just might be the best opportunity all year for us to see and catch up with our station engineering friends from across the system. There's not that many opportunities to have so much experience in and knowledge of public radio in one place, so we really look forward to this annual gathering. And NAB is great for our NPRDS business due to the sheer magnitude of the show. It's a chance for us to see our current customers and potential prospects all under one, very large roof. It's also an opportunity to see what other industry players are doing.

**Will you have a booth set up in the NAB Exhibition Hall?**

We sure will. Please come visit us at Booth #SU2821. We'll be on-hand to talk about our services and answer any questions you have, and we're planning to give out some of our NPRDS tchotchkes and we're holding a couple drawings for an Echo Dot smart speaker.

If you would like to set up a meeting with a representative of NPR Distribution, please send an email to [PRSSBusiness@npr.org](mailto:PRSSBusiness@npr.org).

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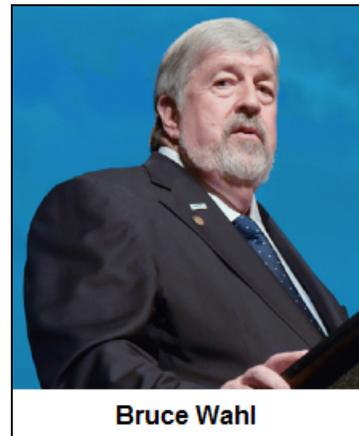
## Longtime Engineer Wins Prestigious Award

NPR Distribution's Bruce Wahl has been honored by the Association of Public Radio Engineers (APRE) with the 2018 APRE Engineering Achievement Award. Bruce will be formally honored at the PREC Meeting to be held in Las Vegas on April 5-6, 2018.

Wahl serves as the Senior Solutions Architect for NPR Distribution, which manages the PRSS. He has been either an employee or consultant for NPR since March 1, 1971, and he was the 18th person hired by NPR.

"Since the 1970s, Bruce Wahl has been a major contributor to public radio engineering and is highly respected in our field," said Steve Johnston, president of the APRE board. "What a great choice for APRE's annual Engineering Achievement Award!"

"I am very honored and humbled to have been selected for this award," Wahl said. But he added that despite receiving the honor, he had no plans to close his career with it. "After 47 years, I'm going to stay here as long as they will have me and I'm still having fun!"



## The News

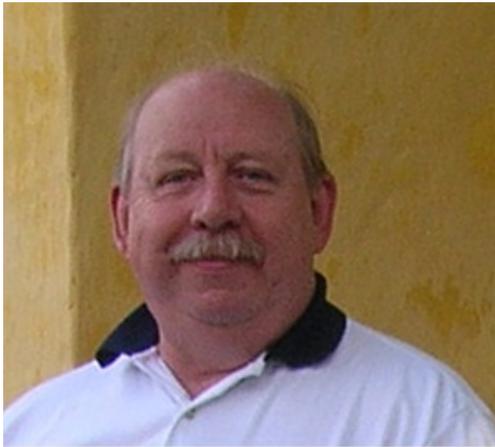
### Arctic Palm Chief Talks Up New Software Version

As the PRSS MetaPub system continues to evolve and grow, so do the options that a station has for the middleware component of the system. MetaPub requires more than producers uploading images with their audio and stations broadcasting the two together. There also exists the applications that sit between these two sides, which are called middleware. This software, which is applied at a station facility, connects the facility's automation system to other tools such as HD encoders, NextRadio receivers, RBDS receivers, and more.

There are multiple providers of middleware providers, and [a list of the more prominent ones is available here](#). It should be noted that some of these applications are in varying stages of development and may not yet align with MetaPub.

In an interview with EsPRSSo, Stu Buck, the creator of Center Stage Live by Arctic Palm, talks about how his application has been developed. As the creative force behind Arctic Palm, Buck has worked very closely with the PRSS and member stations to ensure each iteration of Arctic Palm syncs with MetaPub. With the recent release of a new "Version 2" of Center Stage Live by Arctic Palm, Buck talked a bit about how his application has grown.

**What are the primary differences between Version 1 and the newly released Version 2?**



**Stu Buck, Arctic Palm**

There are several new features in V2 but the main difference is how we capture metadata from MetaPub. In V1, it was a continuous poll based on the program name and time.

This would return the active event based on the request. In V2, we do not have to poll nearly as often and we get the entire day for all programming as well as a list of available programs.

The advantage is we now have easy access to next events so we can pre-stage artwork for HD systems, and since we have the entire day we can continue to post metadata should the link to the metadata service be lost. Other changes include:

- Program Name filtering for a better listener display. (1A

instead of 1A 1100-1200)

- We added a Re-Send option should you need to restart CSPRM or CSRDS so it no longer waits for the next event.

- Automatic Re-Send for long-term programming. Some devices will use default messages should a new message not be received in a specified period. This will keep the current event in the display.

- We download metadata for the previous and current day and have added a Schedule Event view so you can see all programs and segments [also known in ContentDepot as "pieces"]. This includes the program name, segment info as well as the times. Using the times shown, it simplifies scheduling for other time zones, time shifting or joined in progress.

### **Can you explain what the "entire day" means in this context: "We get the entire day for all programming as well as a list of available programs"?**

When we make the request to metapub V2, all programs and program segments are included in the returned. We can then create a "metapub log" for the entire day which can be viewed in the V2 version. In V1 we just got the current event.

### **How did you come to make these changes?**

This goes back to my roots as a Senior Systems Analyst at a multi-media company where I worked for over 36 years. I was involved in developing in-house computer systems for newspaper, radio and television. When we implemented a new system, the users were not a voice on the phone, an e-mail or trouble ticket, but real live people you see in the halls, had lunch with, met at company functions and were more friends than users. It also became obvious these people knew a lot more about their jobs than I did and listening and working with them resulted in very good systems.

In 1997, I founded Arctic Palm and this philosophy came with me, and I still look at our clients as partners. Having worked with Bruce Wahl on various metadata option, when Megan Williams and Bruce introduced me to MetaPub it was a natural fit for us and they made Arctic Palm a part of the process right from the start and continue to do so.

### **If I'm a station who's unfamiliar with CSPRM and MetaPub, what kind of time and financial investment am I looking at to acquire and install your application?**

CS Public Radio Metadata (CSPRM) is an-add on to our Center Stage Live package. The package includes all of our Data Casting functions that will capture metadata from over 70 sources and send it to any combination of RDS\RBDS Encoders, HD Radio, Streaming services, web sites and web services such as TagStation/Next Radio, TuneIn, or other applications.

If you already have Center Stage Live, you can add CSPRM for a one-time cost of \$250 per station and support is included in your Center Stage Live support license. If you do not have Center Stage Live, it retails for a one-time cost of \$950 and is good for up to 2 stations at the same installation. Additional stations can be added to the installation for a one-time cost of \$260 per station. 90 days support is included with the purchase, and on-going support is available for an annual fee of \$140 per year plus \$40 for each additional station at the site. And as long as the support license is continuous, it includes free upgrades. We do not sell directly but the software is available from most broadcast suppliers which can be found on the sales page of our web site at [www.arcticpalm.com](http://www.arcticpalm.com).

### **What kind of time investment will it be?**

The time it takes to install and configure the system will depend on the station's existing network. If the computer we are using can communicate with the Internet and the internal systems (Automation, RDS Encoders, HD Hardware, etc), we can normally have everything running in less than an hour.

### **I'm a station running version 1 of CSPRM, how do I upgrade to version 2?**

If you have an active Center Stage Live support license, you can update using the CS Live Updater. As a new product, you will need to update your updater which can be found on the News and Downloads page of our Web Site at [www.arcticpalm.com](http://www.arcticpalm.com). Run the CSUpdate Installer and install the update in the Center Stage directory.

Once installed, exit all Center Stage Live programs and run the Updater, accept the terms and Start the update. The CSUpdater will verify your support license then check for updates, when found the program will back up your existing version, then download and install the new versions. When completed, restart the Center Stage programs and you will have the new versions.

If you do not have a Center Stage Support license, you can purchase the upgrade at 25% off the retail rate.

### **If I upgrade, will I have to setup my CSPRM program schedule again?**

Generally no, the existing configurations will be fine. The only exception is 1A and Market Place. In the current release of CSRDS, you will need to select the new XML file 1A\_XXXX.xml instead of 1A1000-1100\_XXXX.XML and 1A1100-1200\_XXXX.xml. However, we are about to release a new version for NAB and that will no longer be necessary.

### **What's next on the horizon for ArcticPalm and the CSPRM?**

We have a lot on the table with some coming as early as NAB, which includes a simplified CSRDS connection to MetaPub, including MetaPub programs in the web playlist, and support for Hybrid Radio, to name a few. Of course, we have several features we cannot talk about but as always we take advantage of the newest technology to capture and send metadata to more sources.

For more information about ArcticPalm, please visit their website: <http://arcticpalm.com/>

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## PRSS Announces Stations in Tornado Alley Project

The PRSS has announced the 27 stations that will participate in a project aimed at helping them improve and expand their local emergency-messaging capabilities on mobile devices and other digital platforms.

The stations, which are located across 10 Midwest, South Central, and Gulf Coast states, will be outfitted with the PRSS MetaPub delivery service. The goal of the project is to help stations generate locally produced tornado test alerts and to synchronize these alerts with their audio broadcasts. Stations involved in this initiative include:

- KASU - Jonesboro, AR
- KUAF - Fayetteville, AR
- KUAR - Little Rock, AR
- KUVU - Denver, CO
- KRCC - Colorado Springs, CO
- KUNC - Greeley, CO
- WOI - Ames, IA
- WVIK - Rock Island, IL
- KMUW - Wichita, KS
- KANZ - Garden City, KS
- KHCC - Hutchison, KS
- WRKF - Baton Rouge, LA
- WWNO - New Orleans, LA
- KRVS - Lafayette, LA
- KDAQ - Shreveport, LA
- KCUR - Kansas City, MO
- KWMU - St. Louis, MO
- KSMU - Springfield, MO
- KBIA - Columbia, MO
- KUCV - Lincoln, NE
- KGOU - Norman, OK
- KOSU - Stillwater, OK
- KWGS - Tulsa, OK
- KAMU - College Station, TX
- KPAC - San Antonio, TX
- KTTZ - Lubbock, TX
- KUHF - Houston, TX

As part of the CPB grant, the PRSS will ensure that all of these stations have the necessary hardware, software and training to enable the use of MetaPub, a system developed by NPR Distribution that allows local stations to issue text and graphic alerts synchronized with their over-the-air broadcast messages to be heard and seen on mobile phones, HD radios, "connected car" devices, Radio Data System (RDS) displays, and via online streaming.

"This is a particularly exciting project for us because not only does it continue our collaboration with CPB to improve emergency communications capabilities in the radio industry, it also lets us work with our stations to share and implement the MetaPub system," said Michael Beach, Vice President of NPR Distribution, which manages the PRSS. "Our goal is to capitalize on the power of MetaPub's use of metadata, and we are very thankful to CPB for continuing to work with us on making that happen."

**Tips 'n' Tricks**

## PRI's The World to Be Bundled Under One Title

There are changes afoot to the way that stations view and edit subscriptions to PRI's The World. On Thursday, April 19, 2018, the PRSS will make changes to ContentDepot so that this program will be bundled under a single program page titled "PRI's The World." Once this has occurred, stations will no longer see individual hours listed as unique program pages in ContentDepot. The intent is to streamline navigation for users, since all hours will be discoverable through one program.

Stations will not need to do or change anything on their end, however, it is recommend that stations log into the ContentDepot and review the changes after noon on April 19th. Subscriptions and receiver assignments will remain the same, but they will become visible and editable under the single program page.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact PRSS at [prsshelp@npr.org](mailto:prsshelp@npr.org) or 1.800.971.7677.

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## What's New in 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:

**Ocean Stories** - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **American Public Media** that tells the story of the people who make a living from the sea and its wildlife, from Mauritius to Alaska to the Philippines to Cape Town.

**Climate Cast** - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **American Public Media** that features an in-depth focus on solutions to the global climate crisis.

**After the Glass Ceiling, A Glass Cliff Women's History Month Special from Freakonomics Radio** - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **New York Public Radio** that explores the low percentage of woman at the upper reaches of corporate America.

**Trump Border Special** - A one-hour, one-time-only live with subsequent file special from **KQED-FM** that covers President Trump's visit to the California-Mexico border region to view prototypes of an expanded immigration wall.

**World Choral Spectacular** - A two-hour, one-time-only special from **American Public Media** that provides highlights from the 11th World Choral Symposium, a weeklong festival featuring some of the finest choirs in the world.

**Reconnecting with a Healthy Lifestyle** - A one-hour, one-time-only special from **Native Voice One** that focuses on traditional foods to improve the health and wellness of Native people.

**March for Our Lives Special** - A one-hour, one-time-only live with subsequent file special from **KQED-FM** that reflects upon the March 24 rallies and marches that occurred nationwide to lobby for stricter gun laws.

**The Opioid Crisis: The Ripple Effect** - A one-hour, one-time-only special from the **WXXI Public Broadcasting Council** that looks at the enormous impact opioids have had on the United States.

**Stay in Touch**

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## We Want 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](mailto: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](mailto:PRSSCommunications@npr.org). As always, the PRSS Help Desk is also available 24/7 at 800.971.7677 or email [PRSSHelp@npr.org](mailto:PRSSHelp@npr.org).**



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