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**Media tracking API for anonymous monitoring of  
film, gaming, music and other forms of media**

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## Introduction

PricewaterhouseCoopers estimates the global entertainment industry to be worth \$2 trillion with new forms of digital media contributing to new industry growth.

In such valuable and competitive media markets, having a clear understanding of the buying and product usage habits of consumers is vital to allow new media to evolve, adapt and remain competitive.

Today, unit sales are the primary way of measuring product success with surveys and reviews providing feedback on how well received media has been by the public. Unit sales are driven by many factors including advertising, the quality of the media being sold, brand popularity and user experience of related past products to name just a few.

However, a more complete picture of product success should include the usage habits of consumers, perhaps media owners might ask the following kinds of questions.

How did consumers watch or play a film, album or video game? How many used specific consoles, standalone DVD or Bluray players, tablets or computers?

How many times did consumers switch off after watching 30 minutes of a film, how many hours were spent playing a game in one month or how many times did consumers play a music track or film within a month?

Do consumers in Europe use a particular type of media more during the week than weekends that their American counterparts or what time of day are people using specific kinds of media?

How many people watched a complete TV show compared to other shows and how many turned off within the first 5 minutes?

To answer these and other such questions requires direct access to consumer media usage habits while using media in the home or on the go. Today there is no single universal, independent and anonymous way of gathering this kind of information.

Red Skies Limited is working with partners in the film, video game, broadcast, marketing and manufacturing industries to develop a new single standard service which can be used to gather all media usage data in a single location that can then be accessed and used to research media purposes. Film, music, gaming and broadcast are all captured through a single service with the capability for organizations to then view trends from the level of specific pieces of media through to broader media trends.

Makers of film, music, TV and video games can then see how successful a product was in the home, spot trends and habits around a product and feed those results into future media production, ultimately leading to more popular products and increased profits. Advertisers can spot trends and improve future campaigns as well as identify popular products such as films and TV shows for product placement and advertisements. Chart organizations can use such data to present new ways of demonstrating product success.

### **Problem Statement**

Media is a product which is sold once but can be used many times in many different ways. Clear understanding of how media is used when in the hands of consumers is vital for understanding the true success of a product and how future media can be improved to generate increased profits.

Today, there is no reliable and independent way of measuring such habits in the home across the many devices used for accessing media. Identifying a product that sold well but failed to be used more than once or even watched end to end once might indicate a successful advertising campaign while indicating the risk of a follow on title without further consumer feedback. Equally, a product that sold fewer units but was viewed and listened to many times could indicate a popular title to invest in further.

Of course, the media itself is only part of the answer, understanding how people are accessing media is also of value when designing new media. How many consumers are using their games consoles to watch films and listen to music compared to standalone devices? Do consumers who buy digital download content generally use that content more or less often than physical boxed equivalents? Do people tend to play more games in the evenings and watch more movies at the weekend?

A broadcaster may ask similar questions about TV shows such as how many people watched a specific channel during certain times and how many people watched a new show and turned over within the first 10 minutes. Information of this type feeds into future TV show production and helps to



identify popular viewing trends and popular new shows.

Of course, the benefits of such information goes far beyond the media owners themselves, feeding into chart owners and advertisers interested in consumer trends when designing successful new marketing campaigns. Understanding what people are watching, listening to and playing and how they are accessing media will lead to improved marketing campaigns. Understanding consumer habits, what time and days of the week are media accessed and using what devices presents a more complete picture of how to reach the largest audience.

### **Solution**

Red Skies Limited is a software company with a history in data and web services as well as data management and presentation in industries including finance, space, media, retail and other business sectors.

Red Skies Limited has experience in applying distributed data management and web services for projects from tracking rockets in flight through to secure transactions for investment portfolio management.

We are applying our expertise from these very challenging markets to the development of an Azure based web service which can be called from any device in the world to log key device and media actions.

Such actions include media start and end actions with data associated to

the

media being handled as well as the device handling the media. As more devices become Internet enabled and begin to support the service, the coverage of viewing figures will increase leading to increased data resolution.

By building up a detailed record of consumer habits from the widest range of devices through simple stop/start service action records, organizations will be able to perform analysis at many levels from abstract market trends to patterns around a single product.

Since data is accessible immediately after its recorded, organizations can start to analyze trends without waiting for published batches of data. Organizations interested in how many viewers watched the first 5 minutes of a TV show will be able to access that information after 5 minutes of the show has been shown.

Red Skies will provide the web service API, SDK's for hardware manufacturers and client software for accessing data from the desktop, web and smart devices.

Red Skies can also help organizations to develop their own client software for utilizing available data or for integration service feeds into their own systems.

The Azure cloud platform has been chosen to host this service due to the rapid scalability of Azure services, the performance benefits of the platform and the widely trusted nature of the platform in many industries from banking to space.

### **Future**

The media monitor research service is still under development and we welcome feedback and support from any organizations interested in access to the



service when launched. Specifically, we are especially interested to hear of the ways organizations may use the service and the types of data which organizations would be interested in accessing through the service.

We are also interested in working with hardware manufacturers on adding support for the service to current and new devices.

This service is driven by the needs of media owners and advertisers and so we encourage such organizations to work with us at these early stages.

We anticipate running several specific requirements gathering exercises over the coming months both independently and with partnership from organizations such as the Technology Strategy Board and corporate partners interested in this new service. The Technology Strategy Board is a UK government funded organization which funds and supports the development of new technology.

We are also exploring pricing models and the most cost effective way to provide services to data consumers of all types.

### **Conclusions**

We anticipate wide adoption of the service due to the neutrality of the service and the business benefits to media and advertising companies seeking to understand the viewing habits of their clients.

The service will be further extended to take into account new user requirements and will continue to

evolve over time as industry needs evolve.

While the service will be run as an independent commercial service, the service will be very much driven by the needs of media owners and users including film and TV studios, DVD and Bluray manufacturers, record labels, video game houses and marketing companies.

We anticipate having a version of the service running before the end of 2011 to enable hardware manufacturers to begin testing with the service.