

BXF 3.0 Aims To Save Time With Automatic Data Entry

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The newest Broadcast Exchange Format (BXF) will allow traffic and billing operators at TV stations to say goodbye to the days of manual data entry when it comes to the scheduling of spots.

Next month, The Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers is going to unveil Broadcast Exchange Format 3.0, the latest traffic and billing file format for broadcasters, advertisers and advertising agencies, that will automate scheduling data entry at the station level.

“This is one of the last frontiers of manual data entry that’s left, in terms of large data entry,” says Christopher Lennon, president and CEO of MediAnswers, and one of the developers of BXF 3.0. “It’s kind of appalling that, here we are in 2013, and this data is still flowing across in the form of faxes and emails.”

Lennon and Angela Tietze, president of Entertainment Communications Network, are set to present about BXF 3.0 at next month’s SMPTE annual conference.

Up until today, the scheduling of commercials has been a manual process. With BXF 3.0, when agencies schedule the commercials, they’ll be able to use a BXF XML-based file that will transfer in a format that’s going to be ingestible right into a broadcaster’s traffic system.

Rather than someone typing in that information, the system would detect it and automatically input that scheduling information.

“The agencies and the broadcast media have really focused for the last 30 years on the order and invoice, and for obvious reasons,” says Tietze. “We’re trying to move the industry forward, in terms of automation, so those people can focus on actually reviewing, managing and approving the instructions before it’s ingested into their system, versus being in the data-entry business.”

Lennon says it’s embarrassing that it’s taken the industry this long to get to this point, but says it was clear that this type of technology was needed.

“The motivation to solve it now is that the sheer volume is going through the roof,” he says. “People are delivering content to various platforms. We’re beyond the days of when broadcasters have just a single channel.”

TVNewsCheck reported on [traffic and billing technology](#) earlier this year.

Lennon and Tietze spent 18 months with a working group made up of industry professionals, including the major traffic and billing vendors, to come up with BXF 3.0. Both anticipate a quick rollout.

“I’d expect some news around NAB about vendors beginning to support this,” says Lennon.

Vendors, Like WideOrbit and Harris Broadcast, will have to update their software to support BXF 3.0.

