

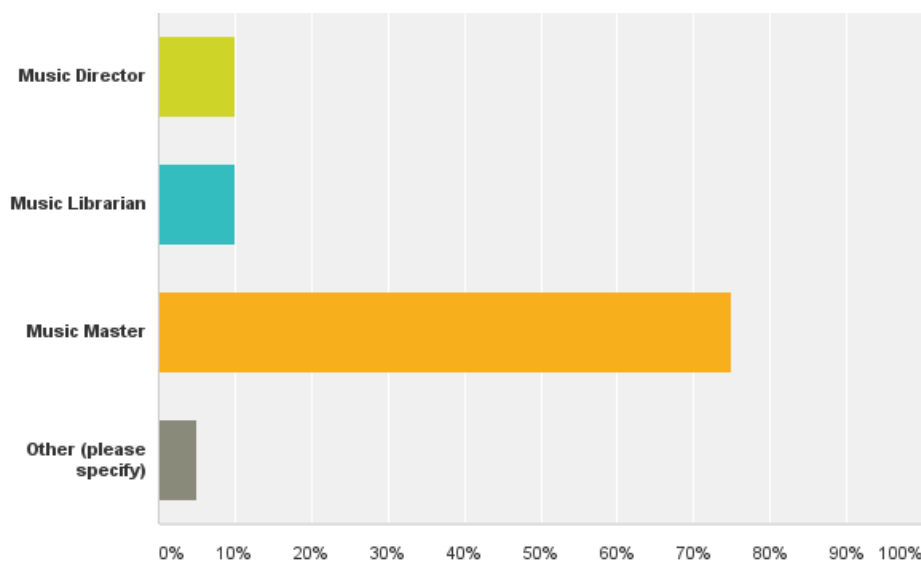
Nuts 'n' Bolts

May 2017

What tools do classical music stations use to perform some key content tasks? Here's what we learned from Classical Music Rising partners. Thanks to everyone who responded.

What music programming system do you use?

Music Master is the overwhelming favorite, used by 75% of our 20 responding stations.



Music Master also had the highest satisfaction score, an average of 4 on a 5 point scale.

Stations offered these comments about Music Master:

Generally, we are satisfied with Music Master. We are still in a long term data conversion project and have had to do quite a bit of customization of the system to meet our needs.

Music Master is a very powerful tool that we have been using for jazz since its DOS days. We've only been scheduling classical for the last decade or so. After automatically

scheduling classical we do end up doing quite a bit of manual tweaking to get our desired sound. We plan to refine our programming rules and methods of coding/categorizing to get better initial results when auto scheduling. We will be consulting our MM rep for suggestions.

Our uses are more complex than most stations. We're using it for two classical services and a triple A station.

We don't use much autoscheduling, so we are not using all the capacity of the program.

A recent upgrade to CS has been quite painful and huge waste of time, but other than that unusual hurdle (we don't often upgrade) the software is flexible for our needs and the customer service is generally excellent.

Works, but is slow.

We worked closely with Music Master about fifteen years ago to adapt their system, designed for pop music stations, to the needs of a classical format, and have always been very satisfied with it.

Music Master is so flexible and conformable that it can be intimidating to organize a database in a way that works for my individual needs. However, its greatest weakness is also its greatest strength. You can make it do anything you want, but sometimes figuring out what you want can be tricky.

Like all of these systems, classical has to be tweaked to work in this, but it has improved. A large library causes some challenges which make it a slow program. We have more than 180,000 performances. Next version includes more options for user generated fields. MusicMaster generates playlist reports for SoundExchange, and it works OK. Requires some manual editing, but not too bad.

Stations using Music Director had this to say:

Don't like that it's proprietary and lacks station-level control of interoperability with other systems.

Fairly good on detail but very old software.

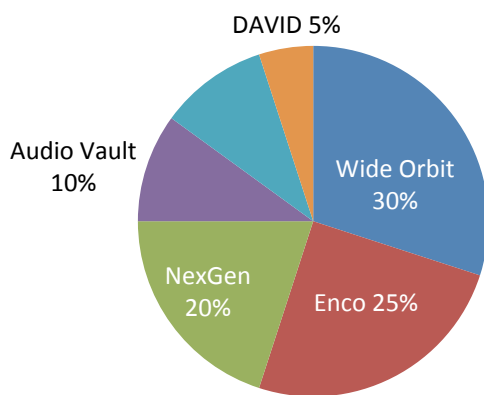
One of the two stations using Music Librarian said:

The company - Broadcast Data - has very few employees, so getting support and/or training is difficult. I know Music Librarian can do more than we know how to do, but there is really no one there to help us. This could make a great classical session sometime.

One station uses Selector, and said:

It's not really designed for classical stations.

What automation system do you use?



Automation choices are a bit more scattered. The leading choices are Wide Orbit, used by six stations, ENCO, used by five, and NexGen used by four.

Wide Orbit and NexGen had the highest satisfaction score, 4.3 and 4.25 respectively. Dalet received a solid 4 in satisfaction from its two users. ENCO scored 3.8 on a 5 point scale.

Here's what users had to say about these systems:

Wide Orbit

We're very interested in using WO to deliver playlist data via our streams as well as to NPR's Composer product and would like to know if anyone else has accomplished this.

We installed Wide Orbit about a year ago after more than a decade of using Audio Vault and getting frustrated with its increasing inconsistency and virtually non-existent customer support.

It fully integrates with Music Master which means that I can maintain and update two databases with one program.

ENCO

Enco is quick and easy to learn. It has lots of power to do all you need it to do. Training and support are fabulous. Our Enco system (we have been told) is the largest set up in the U.S. running seven radio services both locally and remotely, and other than the fact that it is nearly 15 years old and needing to be updated, it's (knock on wood) working fabulously.

We are nearing the completion of a major hardware upgrade that will allow us to run the latest version of ENCO's DADPRO software. In recent years we have had many problems with ENCO. But this is due in large part to very old equipment that would not support newer versions of DADPRO. We're banking on the fact that our infrastructure changes will eliminate those problems.

NexGen

Adequate for our limited use, but it doesn't always feel like the best fit for our needs. Always open to other options.

Seems to be pretty bullet proof. Few errors. Can be adjusted to work for classical. Integration with MusicMaster is fine. Reliable. OK for announcers. Even OK for those announcers who are somewhat tech challenged. Being able to easily edit audio within it could be better.

AudioVault

We are about to digitize our music collection, but since we have not yet we are currently only automating the hours in which we air national content (Classical 24). So we haven't fully put AV to the test in terms of music automation.

Dalet

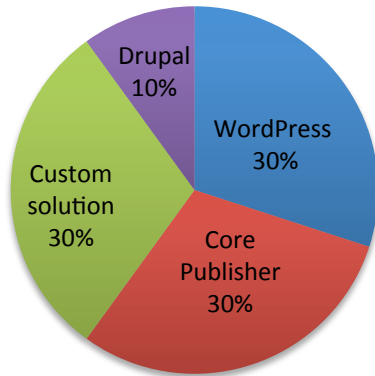
It's not as intuitive as we'd like, however, it's better than most.

We use Dalet for studio playback, ENCO at transmitters.

DAVID

DAVID is not designed for music programming. I'll be glad when we get rid of it!

What website solution do you use?



Core Publisher and WordPress are the two dominant choices, with six stations each. But the users of these two solutions are not overwhelmed. WordPress scores 3.33 on satisfaction and Core Publisher gets a 3 on a 5 point scale.

Two respondents use Drupal, not through Core Publisher, and it gets a 4.5 in average satisfaction. The rest

are a scattering of custom solutions, with which the users are generally satisfied – average score of 4.2.

WordPress

We wish we had the NPR bells and whistles, but we're not an affiliate, and it's too expensive.

Easy for non-web staff to use it. I don't manage the back end so I can't comment on that.

We use Intertech. It is rather turnkey, which means we don't have access to the backend like we would if we ran it ourselves. Relatively easy solution, but customization all has to be done by Intertech. Worked best for us when we didn't have time to get too fancy. Now that we want to do more advanced solutions we are looking at other options. Again, not bad for relatively easy solution, once set up. You really do need to advocate for your website with them, as their initial efforts aren't format friendly. In the end, they gave us close to what we wanted.

Core Publisher

Core Publisher works great for the news side of our organization, but it's frustrating for us in the music department. We operate two separate stations, but Core Publisher does not allow for us to have two "front pages" with full design flexibility that are tied seamlessly to the same "back office" portions of the website. It's frustrating to have to

pick one station's streaming as the default listening option, with no ability to tweak that so that the default is the music stream on the music portions of the website, etc.

We were one of the early classical stations to go to Core Publisher - mostly so we would be consistent with our News and AAA stations (we looked at WRTI a lot to get ideas). Core Publisher works great with pulling playlists in from Composer 2, so that is all automatic. Visually it looks great. The classical folks now have control over what gets highlighted and accuracy of content. It has changed our jobs a lot, but listeners and web visitors appreciate it. We've been thinking more and more digitally since moving to Core Publisher, because there's so much we can do there.

We wish we had more page layout options and control over publishing and unpublishing content automatically.

Drupal

Overall, Drupal meets our needs. Because we are a radio/TV joint licensee, Drupal gives us a certain amount of flexibility that works for us.

Custom solutions

Hope to move to cloud hosted.

It's been a long road but our web/dev team has taken this CMS that few people in radio had heard of and made it do the things we want it to do.

The new site looks great and will be terrific when all the functionality kinks are worked out. But the new firm definitely is understaffed and over-promised. As a result, getting it just right is taking much longer than it should have.

How are you tracking your streaming performance?

We received some overlapping answers on this question as some stations reported both the source of their basic data and the tools they use to analyze it.

Triton gets the most mentions with 7. Google Analytics is used at 4 respondents. Three stations look to StreamGuys data. Chartbeat, Wide Orbit, and Nielsen also get shout outs.

Here are some additional comments:

Through Triton as well as reports and real time monitoring from our service provider, Stream Guys.

So far that has mostly been by our Web team, since I haven't really had the time to get into the analytics part of this yet. But that data isn't hard to get to. I'm just not a data-driven person. I'll look for trends, but I don't get into watching day-to-day changes.

We use our own in-house analytics. It is not a very refined system, and we are looking to build in more functionality in the near future.

via CDN and 24/7 monitoring. Are we talking audience performance or technical performance?

Use data from Triton. Also number of play clicks from Google Analytics

Google Analytics and NPR Digital.

We use Chartbeat and Google Analytics

We get stats through our service provider. Nielsen also now tracks streaming as of the October '16 book. I have to request the report separately and it cannot be used externally without paying a hefty extra fee.

Stats through Wide Orbit. Mostly Total listening hours. Concurrent listeners. TSL. Total Listening sessions. I should add, there have been a few soundexchange reporting issues with Wide Orbit. Few, but a real pain when they do happen. It worked out, but we had to push them hard.