

## **Video Active - European Television heritage online**

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The greatest promise of the internet as a public knowledge repository is to create seamless access for anyone, anywhere, to all knowledge and cultural products ever produced by mankind. Mainly due to increased bandwidth availability, web sites offering online video material have managed to mature and in a short period have become extremely popular. Web sites like YouTube, MySpace, Revver and many others show how the idea of making and manipulating images (once mostly the preserve of professionals) has been embraced as a way of broadcasting who we are to anyone prepared to watch. It is evident that the potential for releasing material from audiovisual archives online is enormous. However, from the many millions of hours in these archives online a few percent can be found online. Many of the existing online services are based on user generated content. And if professional content is offered (i.e. Joost, Miro, Blinkx) the focus is rather on recent material. Audiovisual archives need to overcome several obstacles before they can set up meaningful online services. These include: managing intellectual property rights, technological issues concerning digitisation and metadata standardisation and issues related to the way the sources are presented to users. The main challenge of Video Active is to remove the main barriers listed above in order to create multilingual access to Europe's television heritage. Video Active achieves this by selecting a balanced collection of television archive content, which reflects the cultural and historical similarities and differences of television from across the European Union, and by complementing this archive content with well-defined contextual metadata. Video Active is invited member of EDLnet. Video active will be made available through the Europeana.eu portal. This paper provides an insight into the background and development of the Video Active Portal ([www.videoactive.eu](http://www.videoactive.eu)) which offers access to television heritage material from 14 archives across Europe. The Video Active project is under the eContentPlus programma, and has used all the latest advances of the Semantic Web technologies in order to provide expressive representation of the metadata, mapping heterogeneous metadata schema in the common Video Active schema, sophisticated query services, interactive presentation modes (e.g. timeline). Using these technologies, Video Active is fully compliant with the Europeana's interoperability specifications. The Video Active system comprises of various modules, all using web technologies. The whole workflow from annotating, uploading material, transcoding material, key frame extraction, metadata storage and searching is managed by these components. Video Active provides multilingual annotation, search and retrieval of the digital assets using the ThesauriX technology. ThesauriX is a web-based multilingual thesauri tool based on the IPTC standard. The metadata have been represented using the Resource Description Framework (RDF) and the Simple Knowledge Organizational System (SKOS) and are stored in the Sesame semantic metadata repository. Additionally, relational databases have been used to speed up some processes where semantic processing is not required. Finally, the Video Active metadata are public and ready to be harvested using the OAI-MPH technology.