

L'Institut national de l'audiovisuel: Free Content and Rights Licensing as Complementary Strategies

Bry-sur-Marne and Paris, France

www.ina.fr and www.inamediapro.com



Since its founding in 1974, L'Institut national de l'audiovisuel (INA) has undergone a profound shift in its role, from protector of the audiovisual heritage of France to a more dynamic position of manager of diverse media assets reaching a variety of audiences, including the general public. Today INA is deeply committed to its mission to enhance and communicate the value of its holdings to end users, and it supports these efforts through a range of economic models. This case study will examine two divisions of the organisation responsible for providing access to and monetising the collection in different but complementary ways: the public website, www.ina.fr, which offers free access while serving as a laboratory for experimentation with online revenue models; and Inamediapro, an audiovisual licensing service for professionals. Both function as entrepreneurial efforts at the heart of this large not-for-profit organisation. This case study will examine ina.fr and Inamediapro in light of the business models they employ, their focus on understanding users, and the necessary balance between generating revenue and fulfilling the broader missions of the organisation.

Introduction

The National Audiovisual Institute (L'institut national de l'audiovisuel, or INA) possesses a rich collection of French television and radio recordings from the past 70 years. It is among the largest audiovisual archives in the world, with 1.5 million hours of video and sound archives from France's public radio and television stations dating back to the 1940s. Included in the archives alongside the television, radio and newsreel content are substantial collections of photographs, music videos and print materials, ranging from trade magazines and monographs to materials documenting the daily business of television stations, including screenplays and programming grids.

INA was founded in 1974, when the Office de radiodiffusion-télévision française (ORTF), which until then was responsible for producing all French radio and television programming, was disbanded and split into three public television stations, a public radio station, a production company and a broadcasting transmission network. Once those entities were spun out, the hodgepodge of functions remaining – the archives, a research and production division and a training department – was reconstituted as the organisation now known as INA. Today, INA still performs a variety of functions: in addition to preservation and archiving, the organisation includes divisions for professional

training and education, research, and production and publishing of films, DVDs, CDs and more.

In terms of content, INA holds two major but distinct categories of material. First, the organisation holds the audiovisual archive of France's public stations, dating back to radio broadcasts from the 1930s and filmed news footage starting in 1940. This archive continues to receive new material from the public stations each year. Second, INA holds France's legal deposit archive, consisting of an additional two million hours of broadcasts from nearly 100 television stations and 20 radio stations, private as well as public.¹ As the national depository for this content, INA captures 24 hours of programming a day for both public and private stations, a collection that grows at a rate of 500,000 hours per year. While the content that enters INA through legal deposit is kept strictly separate and is only available to scholars for research purposes, INA is authorised to exploit the archive of the public television and radio stations in a variety of ways, whether to generate revenue, for educational purposes, or to share freely, as a public service. These holdings are rich in French political, social and cultural artefacts, from national news broadcasts and popular talk shows to coverage of local town meetings and ribbon cuttings. The arts and letters are well represented, with videos of artists, thinkers and performers, from singer Serge Gainsbourg giving an audacious interview on live television, to artist Salvador Dali speaking about love and paranoia, to footage of journalists interviewing Jean-Paul Sartre and his neighbours when he refused to accept the Nobel Prize in 1964.

INA has sought to develop the value of its public television and radio archive in many ways: by monetising its holdings through rights licensing both to professionals and to the general public; by using the material in the archive as the basis for original video productions and films that INA sells online and through traditional retail channels; and by leveraging the deep knowledge amassed by those working at INA as the basis for an ambitious menu of degree-granting, vocational and continuing education programmes in France and around the world.

This study will focus on INA's strategies regarding two of its units: the marketing and sales division that licenses video and audio content to the professional market via www.inamediapro.com, and the public website www.ina.fr, which provides to the general public 25,000 hours of content online. While both units create value from INA's archives, they accomplish this in distinct but complementary ways. The commercial licensing group operates as a professional service, using the base of 500,000 digitised hours of content to license content to the professional market, with the goal of increasing sales year to year. The mission of the public website is primarily to provide broad access to a smaller pool of rights-cleared content, and in doing so to build audience and recover costs through a variety of revenue strategies including fee-per-download, customised services and advertising.

This case study was researched and written by Nancy L. Maron as part of the Ithaka Case Studies in Sustainability project.

¹ Emmanuel Hoog, *L'INA, Que sais-je? 3716* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2006), p. 43.

Sustainability model

Overall goals and strategy

From the time INA was created in 1974, it was understood that the organisation would generate a share of its budget through its own commercial activities, though the specific proportion of its budget it is responsible for generating has changed over time.² With the introduction of privately owned television stations in the 1980s, INA's commercial receipts at one point covered as much as 70% of its costs, while a decade later, as INA solidified its role as guardian of the nation's audiovisual heritage with the addition of a legal deposit service, its reliance on public funds increased significantly.

The five-year agreement signed by INA and the French government establishing its budget for the period 2005 to 2009 requires that approximately 34% of INA's total budget be generated through earned-revenue activities. In 2008, for example, INA's operating budget of €120 million came from two sources: 66% (€79 million) from the French government via the audiovisual tax (an annual flat fee levied on all households owning a television set),³ and 34% (€41 million) from a variety of commercial activities, including:

- Commercial rights licensing through Inamédiapro (to be discussed in detail below): €14.5 million
- Archiving services provided to the public television and radio stations: €12.3 million
- Continuing education courses and degree-granting programmes: €8.2 million
- A production and publication unit focused on the public website www.ina.fr (also discussed in detail below) with a variety of revenue streams from the general public, including publication and sale of DVDs produced or co-produced by INA staff, download fees for rental or purchase of video clips, advertising and more: €4.1 million
- A research division licensing INA software and providing consulting services: €1.6 million⁴

While Inamédiapro generates the most revenue (35%) through rights licensing to professionals, www.ina.fr generates the most exposure and broadest access, serving as the public face of the entire organisation. Its contribution to the bottom line is more modest (10%), but its role in developing an audience for INA and as a sandbox for innovation and experimentation to test new revenue models has been very important. We will discuss these two units in detail in the following sections.

Inamédiapro: rights licensing for the professional market

From the start, one of the key functions of INA was to preserve the French audiovisual *patrimoine*, or national heritage, while also providing content to television stations and others who required it. While the enormous expense of restoring, digitising and cataloguing the material would be subsidised by state funds, the commercial activities, including the rights-licensing operation, were expected to at least cover their costs.⁵ In the late 1990s not only was this

not the case, but according to Emmanuel Hoog, current president and general director of INA, the clients themselves – the public television and radio stations – were complaining, finding the prices too high and the level of service inadequate.⁶

Marketing Manager Stéphane Cochet, who has been with INA for over ten years, outlines several steps that were taken at the time to clarify the mission and implement it. The first involved understanding how INA's clients perceived the organisation's value, a step that was accomplished through customer satisfaction surveys. The answer was a revelation: customers felt the content was 'a treasure' – but that this treasure was, as Cochet put it, 'locked in a chest, which is lying at the bottom of the ocean, with everyone sitting on top of it'.⁷

To address this issue, the first challenge was to speed up the pace of both the digitisation of INA's content and the development of metadata and other editorial materials, such as transcriptions of speeches, that add value to the collection by helping users more easily discover content of interest. Eight additional digital workstations were added at INA's Paris location in 2001, making it easier for producers to come in and select the materials they needed. A dedicated sales team was developed, so that customers could now have the name of someone they could reach out to for assistance. Next, the Inamédiapro platform was conceived of and developed as an extranet where external clients could conduct research and place their orders. In the past, clients had expressed a lack of confidence in the service due to long, unexplained delays and unavailable material; the platform now includes a workflow tracking tool so that customers can see the status of their order and better understand the many steps involved in licensing the video content, from restoration, to digitisation, to rights clearance. Cochet reports that since INA began doing a better job of managing expectations and educating clients about the complexity of the process, customer satisfaction ratings have risen considerably.

Officially launched in 2004, www.inamediapro.com is INA's client-facing interface for archival content, providing user tools and the ability to navigate among the vast holdings of INA's audiovisual archives, including those materials yet to be digitised, as organised and described by INA's staff of over 100 archivists. More than a professional sales website, it is the layer that provides a 'window' into the complete body of content for INA staff as well as for external users: all of INA's digitised content is visible through www.inamediapro.com, and the tools that www.inamediapro.com users have access to are the same ones used by INA staff to navigate the archives. The content is browsable by over 400 thematic topics and searchable by keywords in the metadata, descriptions and other documentation, such as any transcripts that accompany the audiovisual files. In addition, longer video clips can be quickly viewed as storyboards in pre-set time intervals, and can be edited to create shorter clips of just the material that is desired.

The marketing and sales division, responsible for licensing video footage to commercial clients, has a total staff of 67 responsible for client relations (20), back-office sales administration (20), rights licensing (20), marketing (5) and project management (2). In 2008 INA's rights-licensing business processed over 8,000 orders, generating €14.5 million, up from €7 million in 2001. The website www.inamediapro.com has over 8,000 registered users representing over 6,000 companies from France and around the world, about one-third from outside the country. Of these, 800 companies are considered active customers, having placed an

² Created as a type of government entity known as an EPIC (établissement public de l'état à caractère industriel et commercial), INA has a specific legal standing under French law that, while establishing a public service mandate, also allows it to engage in commercial activities.

³ This tax, called the 'redevance audiovisuel', was €116 per household in 2008.

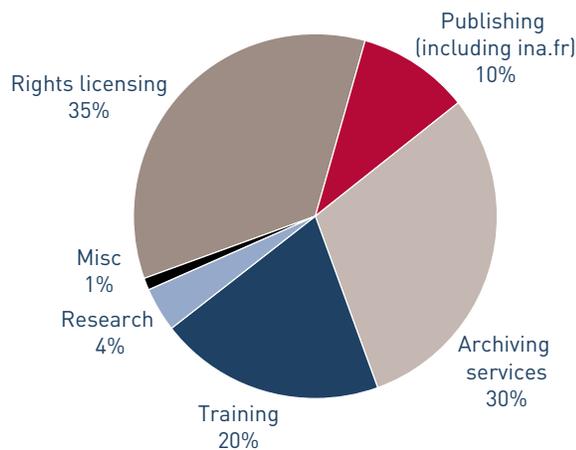
⁴ All financial data were either supplied by project leaders or drawn from external sources cited in the text. For further detail on the financial data presented in this report, please see Appendix B: Summary of revenues and costs.

⁵ Cour des Comptes, 'Annual Public Report, 1 February 2001', 218. Available at www.ccomptes.fr

⁶ Hoog, pp. 34–35.

⁷ Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from staff members and other individuals knowledgeable or associated with INA are drawn from interviews conducted as part of this case study between December 2008 and February 2009. A full list of interviewees is included in Appendix A.

**INA's Sources of Earned Revenue
(€41 million per year)**



order within the past 12 months. According to Cochet, digitisation and the automation provided by the web interface have allowed prices to drop by 20% from 1999 to 2006, and delivery time has dropped from three weeks to 48 hours.⁸

About 75% of Inamédiapro's customers are companies that use video footage, including broadcasting companies, producers, advertising agencies and internet sites. Another 10% of its customers, mainly television stations, are interested in licensing full programmes, and about 15% are video and music publishers, looking for interesting footage to include in DVDs, 'bonus' DVD clips and DVD/CD packages. At least 10% of annual revenue comes from the international market, and so www.inamediapro.com includes an English-translation feature. The field is competitive, and Inamédiapro management is aware that it must communicate the value of its services to its audience. The launch of the Inamédiapro website in 2004 was a significant event, with advertisements, mailings and banners at the annual industry trade fair for audiovisual content at Cannes (MIP TV). A great deal of care has been taken in developing communications campaigns to describe the features and benefits of the service to its target audience.

Ina.fr: providing public access and experimenting with revenue models

Part of INA's mission to 'open, share and transmit' the content of its collection, as stated in the five-year agreement with the government, is to 'build an offer for the general public'.⁹ Well into the internet age, INA's archives were largely inaccessible to anyone except professionals licensing rights and scholars viewing materials on site at the National Library in Paris. The original www.ina.fr website offered some videos free to visitors, but it was primarily a corporate homepage, and functioned as little more than a public relations tool managed by the office of communications, according to Michaël Swierczynski, ina.fr's marketing manager.

In April 2006, INA launched the 'Archives for All' campaign, unveiling an Open Access site where anyone could view a selection of videos from the archive. Since its launch, the new

www.ina.fr website has put 25,000 hours of content online, and 5,000 new hours are to be added each year. This content – about 100,000 separate audio and video clips, ranging from a few seconds to over an hour in length – consists of rights-cleared videos organised in thematic categories to facilitate browsing. As of November 2008, www.ina.fr was recording about four million page views, 1.5 million videos streamed, and one million visits per month from 600,000 unique visitors. The site serves as the public face of INA and has two principal aims: to build audience by finding ways for people to engage with INA's content, and to generate revenue by monetising both the content itself and the value of INA's audience.

Roei Amit, the publisher of the ina.fr website, joined INA just before the site launched the Archives for All campaign, and he is responsible for the site's strategic development, including the content it provides and the various revenue streams it creates. He describes its revenue target as 'ambitious but grounded in reality'. The ina.fr group is expected to cover all project-based (variable) costs and to contribute to fixed costs as well. On the other hand, they are not accountable for several significant categories of costs, such as digitisation, creation of metadata and the legal department that handles rights-clearance issues.

Several types of revenue generation are facilitated by www.ina.fr, including annual advertising revenue of €300,000, revenue from downloading and rental of video clips of €300,000, and as of 2009, a newly created DVD on Demand programme (€25,000 per month to date). In addition, the website includes an e-commerce boutique which sells DVDs, CD and books developed by INA based on the content of the archives.¹⁰ The total revenues that the website generates are approximately €1 million per year. Amit is the first to admit that the group has not yet found an economic model to cover the costs of the website. As he points out, 'If I don't count seven years of digitisation, and I don't count 35 years of metadata creation or the legal expense [intellectual property documentation]...if I only count current operational costs, we still don't cover our expenses.'

Yet the activities of this group cut right to the heart of INA's mission to provide access to the public and to present INA not simply as a site of conservation, but as a dynamic 'centre for media assets' which have a value that can be developed and shared. '*Patrimoine* [national heritage] by itself means nothing,' says Amit. 'To give content meaning...we need to think of what kind of relevance it can have for someone, somewhere, at some time.' While the volume of original and exclusive content INA holds may be impressive, 'The public doesn't have a fundamental need for this...Offering [access] is in itself not enough.' To that end, Amit's team of web-content producers works to find ways to forge new ties with www.ina.fr users. Internally, the site is considered very important as the public face of INA and is closely followed by INA's president.

To keep the site's content up to date, Amit's online publishing team of 25, including four editors, develops three types of content for the site:

- Current events: Working in close collaboration with the archivists, the editors track the news and quickly load content that provides context or commentary on current events. This can range from seasonal celebrations and holidays to current happenings in politics, culture and sports
- Longer programmes: A selection of films and documentaries are published on the site regularly

⁸ Pricing of the videos is based on several elements including the type of content (news clips, fiction and documentary, entertainment and live performances), the length of the piece, and factors relating to the type and frequency of its intended use.

⁹ Contrat d'objectifs et de moyens entre l'Etat et L'Ina, 2005-2009, p 12. The full text of the Contract of Means and Objectives can be found here: http://ina.fr/sites/ina/medias/upload/ina-en-bref/DP_Ina_COM2.pdf

¹⁰ The ina.fr website team is a part of the Production and Publications group. The work of this group also includes developing films and video compilations, which are sold both through the INA online boutique and through traditional retail channels. The combined revenues for the entire Production and Publication division were €4.1 million in 2008, or 10% of INA's total earned revenue.

- Short-format uploads: Each month, the editorial staff creates or supervises the upload of 400–500 hours of programming based on the content of the archives
- Short-format productions: The editorial staff compiles and edits archival content into short video formats, a new activity that they expect will generate approximately 150 new video clips per month

The site also serves as a test bed for experiments with new online revenue models and audience-building initiatives. 'As for revenue models,' says Swierczynski, 'we are trying almost everything.' Described below are three examples of recent initiatives that illustrate ina.fr's strategies of audience building and revenue generation, based on an understanding of users and their needs.

Paris Remix. Over the course of four months in 2008, the Paris Remix contest allowed registered visitors to www.ina.fr to make use of a predetermined collection of INA footage to craft their own videos. The goal of the effort was to encourage visitors to engage with the content on the site in a new way, to explicitly reach out to a younger demographic with something that felt new and innovative, and to create new original, rights-cleared content – the video contest submissions – for INA to monetise.

The contest was run in partnership with www.dailymotion.com, the popular Paris-based video-sharing site, which launched the contest by notifying its large base of registered users. The submitted videos are hosted on the Dailymotion site, which has a reach of 36 million unique visitors monthly. Dailymotion hosts commercial ads opposite the streamed videos, so there is the possibility for INA to share some incremental advertising revenue as well, though to date this has been negligible. The result of the campaign was 200,000 visitors and 100 submissions, which ina.fr staff whittled down to 20 finalists, out of which they will ultimately select two winners.

The costs of running this contest were modest: staff time to plan the contest and select the rights-cleared clips that contestants could use, negotiate the partnership with Dailymotion, and determine the contest winners, who will receive free tuition for two courses at INA. Benefits of the effort included increased exposure and the repositioning of the archives as raw material for people to use and engage with creatively.

DVD on Demand. DVD on Demand is another innovative experiment that the staff of ina.fr devised and launched this past autumn. Unlike Paris Remix, the goals of which were audience-based, DVD on Demand focuses more squarely on revenue generation, based on close observation of the users of www.ina.fr. Amit had noticed that while sales for videos on demand through the website had generally been strong, in 2008 they plateaued, despite evidence that more and more people were online and that more online users had access to high-speed connections. At the same time, sales of INA's DVDs in stores were up. Amit hypothesised that some obstacle must be preventing users from downloading video content from the ina.fr site. And, in fact, feedback from users suggested that some found the download process too technically difficult, that downloading from the site was not compatible with all software, and that digital rights management restrictions made portability an issue.

The solution consisted of taking what to some may have seemed like a conceptual 'step backward': offering to burn DVDs for visitors to the site who wanted to order compilations of digital video clips. The cost of outsourcing the programming for this was €20,000, plus three to four months of internal development time, relying on editorial and technology staff from INA. Running a little behind schedule and still untested, what was imagined as a 'soft launch' turned into a very public national launch a week earlier than planned, when the national daily *Le Figaro* ran a story

on it. The result was quite positive: despite some short-term pain from the high volume of orders to fulfil before the end of the year, the service generated €25,000 in sales its first month, and is now considered a permanent part of the website, with future campaigns planned to formally promote the service to new users.

Advertising. When Amit joined INA just months before *Archives for All* went live in April 2006, he put out a call for proposals from advertising agencies and subsequently hired France Television Publicité (FTP), the agency responsible for placing advertisements on all the public TV stations and their websites. In 2007, www.ina.fr earned €300,000 in ad revenue and was particularly pleased with the performance of the pre-roll video ads (online video advertisements that run before the content the viewer has selected to watch) which commanded higher ad rates than other formats. Yet in 2008, President Sarkozy's announcement of a ban on television ads on public stations during the peak evening broadcast hours resulted in advertisers defecting from FTP, and www.ina.fr revenues suffered as a result. While Amit is still in the process of finding a new ad agency for www.ina.fr, some elements of the experience so far are instructive.

At first, the website needed to be reconfigured to allow for standard ad sizes and formats. These elements had not been considered earlier, in part because those designing the site were mainly from IT and in part because few in the organisation imagined that site traffic would be as high as it is today, with one million visits per month. Without the necessary ad sales expertise in-house, INA chose to hire an agency, which sold ad space through three main channels: in 2007, 35% of ad revenue came from advertisers who specifically chose to place their ads on www.ina.fr; 35% came from advertisers who purchased space on www.ina.fr as part of a bundle including other, similar sites; and 30% came from video pre-rolls, both direct and as bundles. FTP's strategy of bundling was necessary since while the profile of www.ina.fr's users – 60% male, 60% over age 35, and 70% of 'high professional standing' – is appealing to advertisers, according to Amit, the volume of traffic is still considered too low to appeal to the larger ones. Among the advertisers choosing to place ads on www.ina.fr have been the public television station ARTE, Editions Montparnasse and Cahiers du cinema. For special promotions, such as one focusing on the Cannes Film Festival, large consumer companies have participated, including Café carte noire (coffee) and Jacques Dessange (hair products).¹¹

Key factors influencing the success of the sustainability model

Balancing Open Access with revenue generation

From INA's earliest days, licensing content has been one of the primary means the organisation has used to support its activities. Since rights licensing is such an important part of INA's revenue strategy, when planning to make some content freely available to the public through www.ina.fr, several controls were put in place to ensure that the offer of free content would not cannibalise Inamédiapro's business of licensing rights to professionals:

- Legally, the public content on www.ina.fr cannot be used for commercial purposes, and those who download a file must agree to terms of sale specifying this restriction

¹¹ Because most advertisers on www.ina.fr tend to find it useful for building brand affiliations rather than for triggering online sales, the ads are priced using the standard cost per thousand (CPM) model, which charges advertisers a fixed price per thousand page views. In 2007, video pre-roll ads sold for €40 CPM; now the average price is €20 on www.dailymotion.com, a site with 36 million viewers per month, and €10 CPM on www.allocine.fr, with 5.5 million unique visitors per month. For a more detailed discussion of online advertising models, see Ithaka's *Sustainability and Revenue Models for Online Academic Resources*, pp. 39–46 www.ithaka.org/strategic-services/sca_ithaka_sustainability_report-final.pdf.

- All images coming from www.ina.fr are digitally watermarked
- Images on www.ina.fr are in a format of insufficient quality for professional use
- The Open Access www.ina.fr site includes several navigational buttons and menus to re-direct professionals to www.inamediapro.com

This effort has worked to date; while the Open Access content on www.ina.fr is a subset of the full archive available through www.inamediapro.com, both the [ina.fr](http://www.ina.fr) group and the professional rights-licensing group have seen their sales grow since the 'Archives for All' initiative launched in 2006.¹²

Rights protection is a vital element of this system, and it was made possible by the activities of another division at INA. The research and innovation group is tasked with developing new technologies that can advance the quality and efficiency of work at INA and be commercialised outside of the organisation as well. One of its projects is software called 'Signature', which digitally watermarks each licensed image, whether from www.ina.fr or via inamediapro.com, identifying INA as its source of origin. As the stations transmit their broadcasts and INA records them, the Signature software reads the 'fingerprint' of the image, flagging those which may have been improperly used. INA reports that since the software has been in use, it has recouped €500,000 in licensing fees. The ability to protect this content in this way is very appealing beyond INA as well, and Signature has already been licensed to Dailymotion.

Understanding users

As part of the sea change at INA in the late 1990s, providing access to its content was to become a central element of the organisation's mission. To accomplish this, according to Cochet, management identified four main types of audiences INA would need to address:

- Academics and researchers, via the legal deposit, accessible at the National Library
- Students and teachers, through special subscription and Open Access web-based programmes
- Professionals, via www.inamediapro.com
- The general public, via www.ina.fr

All of these audiences are quite different, and the staff of both [ina.fr](http://www.ina.fr) and [Inamediapro](http://inamediapro.com) regularly study their audiences in several ways. A major audience survey was undertaken before the launch of the new www.ina.fr in 2006; in addition, types of assessments the [ina.fr](http://www.ina.fr) staff now conduct include:

- Monthly audience analyses, provided by their advertising agency
- Online surveys (the most recent one reached over 3000 users)
- Monitoring and assessment of feedback from the website and website forums

The editorial staff of www.ina.fr are responsible for developing new ways to interest viewers in the INA content, and they have noticed that the clips that are placed in editorial context tend to be downloaded more frequently. Some editorial features the group has developed include Archive of the Day, a word cloud showing the most frequently searched terms on the site, and a feature that allows viewers to look up video and radio clips of news broadcasts for the day of their birth. Since the archival footage is no longer 'news', the staff looks for ways to find connections with the present, to offer what Amit describes as a 'historical perspective on breaking news'. During the height of the American presidential

campaign, for example, www.ina.fr featured original footage of a young wounded American soldier in Vietnam speaking to a French reporter from his hospital bed: John McCain.

In addition to devoting staff to focusing on customer relationships, [Inamediapro](http://inamediapro.com) regularly conducts client satisfaction surveys, and in late 2008 began conducting a series of in-depth interviews with clients. It is well aware of the different market segments it serves and the types of content they require. This is also reflected in the range of targeted marketing materials [Inamediapro](http://inamediapro.com) creates, and in user-oriented features such as the workflow tool and English-translation feature.

Organisational scale and internal synergies

Amit describes a true 'synergy' among the activities of the archive and both the business-to-business and business-to-consumer divisions. For example, the [Inamediapro](http://inamediapro.com) platform was developed as an interface for INA's commercial customers, facilitating rights licensing to clients by allowing them to conduct their searches and place and track their orders via the web. But this platform is also of vital importance for the publishing group. The structure of the interface allows [ina.fr](http://www.ina.fr) staff (as well as others throughout the organisation) to easily browse and search the archives to identify new content to present on the public website. And while the main audience for www.ina.fr is the general public, its frequently updated content and branding efforts draw a great deal of attention to the site, which serves as something of a portal, helping to re-direct professional users to www.inamediapro.com.

Partnerships

Sharing INA's content through partnerships is a key part of INA's strategy to reach a much greater audience than might visit www.ina.fr directly. 'It doesn't make sense for our videos to only be seen on [ina.fr](http://www.ina.fr). So, we have made our archives available to partner sites...*Libération*, *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*,' according to [ina.fr](http://www.ina.fr) publisher Roel Amit. 'Each site is free to embed the videos as suits their audience, and INA benefits, as well. The videos are still hosted on the INA site, but can be seen everywhere by an embedded "INA Player."¹³ For the viewer, the experience is seamless; for INA, the benefit is twofold: it vastly expands the audience and awareness of INA's archive, while simultaneously increasing INA's traffic statistics, which helps raise advertising revenues. In the future the INA Player could become a direct source of revenue, displaying integrated ads generating revenue that would be shared with the partner sites, a model similar to the one used in the Paris Remix contest with Dailymotion.

The professional rights-licensing group sees partnerships as a critical part of its future success, but for them the goal is to attract new sources of content to license to their client base. 'Partnership is the future for us,' according to Cochet. 'If we do not follow this strategy, we will not have enough content to offer our clients.' The rights-licensing team has found this particularly important in areas such as sports, where clients prefer a catalogue that includes every year of an event such as the Tour de France. Since 2007, the team has signed up 45 partners, including the French Open tennis tournament, the Olympic Games, the Tour de France, private television station TF1 and Agence France-Presse. Building up content through partnerships has become a business priority, and in 2008 revenues from licensing partner content totalled nearly €500,000.

¹² Cochet reports that providing Open Access on www.ina.fr does not threaten the professional licensing side of the business, but he does stress the importance of framing the offer as 'allowing access to' rather than giving away 'free' content, which he contends gives users the false impression that the content is of little value and that they can do whatever they like with it.

¹³ 'L'avenir de l'audiovisuel passe-t-il par le web? Interview with Roel Amit', 12 December 2008. See www.ina.fr/observatoire-medias/dossiers/avenir-av-web/article-7.html

A culture of innovation and experimentation

The public site www.ina.fr exemplifies the need to 'constantly learn and upgrade as needed', according to Amit, whose team will launch an upgraded version of the site in June 2009. And the experimentation taking place on www.ina.fr serves as a testing ground for new revenue models. The team that manages the site has tried a wide variety of models, including pay-per-download and advertising. While generating revenue is not the group's primary goal, this strategy has been beneficial. For example, this year, as web advertising is likely to continue to plummet, the new DVD on Demand initiative at least offers the hope of covering some of the loss.

Establishing a clear mission and measurable progress towards goals

While INA's status as a public enterprise in some ways limits the ways in which its commercial groups can conduct business – for example, in terms of setting prices for download fees – other by-products of this status, particularly the need to adopt and deliver on an agreed-upon set of clearly stated objectives and measurements, seem to have contributed to INA's success.

The five-year Contract of Means and Objectives between INA and the French government does not just spell out the expectation that INA's commercial activities will account for 34% of its annual operating budget, it also outlines specific targets and metrics by which their success will be measured. The sales and marketing staff who run Inamédiapro's commercial licensing operation understand the need to set and reach targets related to sales volume, customer satisfaction and efficiency of the service. The management of ina.fr understand that while seeking to cover as much of their operating cost as possible is a clear goal, they also deliver considerable value to the organisation and its brand through their efforts to attract and engage the audience of the public website. The clearly established goals and mission, in turn, help to ensure that neither group risks compromising the efforts of the other.

Benefits and challenges

There is sufficient differentiation between the free content provided on www.ina.fr and the professional rights-licensing business so that both markets operate without detriment to the other. By devising the Archives for All programme in such a way that it would not threaten the sale of commercial video rights, INA has been able to develop revenue streams on www.ina.fr via pay-per-view and other customisable downloads, while still building the professional market for video programmes and footage. Customised tools and services and access to the full archive directly address the needs of the professional market for video content that Inamédiapro serves.

The www.ina.fr website uses its open content as a way to build both audience and revenue. The free content is editorialised and promoted to attract visitors, which in turn drives advertising and download revenues on the site. By developing partnerships that share INA content via the INA Player on other high-traffic websites, the organisation benefits from an additional channel to increase awareness and drive traffic to the INA site.

In turn, the robust activity on www.ina.fr makes it a good place to test a wide range of financial models to see what works best. The team's willingness to experiment with different strategies for both audience-building and revenue-generation has led to some strong new programmes such as DVD on Demand, a viable new revenue stream. In other cases, projects that do not yield the desired results can be abandoned.

An inherent challenge of trying to monetise the content of the archive is that the content is quite rich but also quite out of date, and is often incomplete due to a range of different arrangements with private versus public stations (depending on dates of

broadcast and other legal restrictions). A complex legal template for each audiovisual document means that it is still difficult and time-consuming to clear rights on much of the content INA holds.

Finally, the crucial step of transforming INA's raw content into something useful to the professional market and of interest to a general audience of users has taken a great deal of time and money. Teams of people in editorial and archiving functions, working over many years, have helped to create the metadata and subject groupings that all users of the sites rely on, and the legal staff spend time clearing rights for use of content on the public website and by professional clients. Without this investment, however, the content would be much less valuable to its users.

Broader implications for other projects

The value of content often lies in how it is used, not simply in the content itself. Not many archives may have access to the depth of content that INA has, but INA's history demonstrates that having rich content is not by itself a guarantee of success. INA's transformation from an inefficient government department to a dynamic enterprise engaged in managing its 'media assets' was not a foregone conclusion but the result of years of strategic planning, market research and constant experimentation with revenue-generating initiatives.

A coherent mission with measurable targets helps unify an organisation and keep it focused on achieving its goals. In the case of INA, a clearly defined mission of providing access provides a framework for understanding and setting priorities throughout the organisation, even in divisions dealing with very different audiences and activities. In particular, this clear mission has helped INA staff to conceptualise the different groups of users of INA's content in such a way that the content provided by one division need not negatively impact the business interests of another. INA's official contract with the government sets out clearly defined objectives, and all divisions are keenly aware of what they are expected to deliver. Each division has a clear set of quantifiable targets to reach in each year of the contract; while some goals concern costs and revenue, others address content and audience.

Free content can be instrumental in driving revenue. So long as the markets for free and paid content are clearly delimited and needed controls are put in place, it is possible for free content to generate traffic without cannibalising sales. On www.ina.fr, short excerpts of videos are shown at no charge to permit viewers to sample content prior to purchase, and partnerships encourage content sharing that helps to increase interest in the INA archive.

Setting up a low-risk environment for experimentation helps foster innovation. INA has benefited by having a place to experiment with revenue models without too much up-front expense or risk. The revenue strategy of ina.fr itself could best be described as 'experimental'. And this has served it well. Paris Remix and DVD on Demand are just two examples of how an organisation can find ways to support experimentation without the pressure to launch something perfect, and can give itself the time to see where a new idea can go.

A deep understanding of users is critical to developing new products and services. INA has invested in a variety of strategies to understand its users, both of the professional services and of the public website, and has used this understanding as a tool to shape new offerings and to reach out to secondary audiences through new products and services specifically geared for them. By carefully shaping each offer to the audience for which it is designed, both the rights-licensing business and the public website have been able to drive revenue and build audience, strengthening their services.

Appendix A: Interviewees

Note: An asterisk (*) denotes a primary contact.

***Roei Amit**, Head of Publishing and Assistant Director of Production and Publishing, 1 and 2 December 2008 and 8 January 2009

Christophe Barreyre, Director of Production and Publishing, 2 December 2008

Lydia Boutot, Communications, 1 December 2008

Max Benoît, Finance and Strategic Planning, Special Advisor to the President, 1 December 2008

Hélène Bettembourg, International Sales, Training and Education Division, 2 December 2008

***Stéphane Cochet**, Marketing Manager, Inamédiapro, 2 December 2008 and 17 February 2009

Stéphanie Godbert, International Affairs Manager, 1 December 2008

David Hivet, Sales Manager, Training and Education Division, 2 December 2008

Xavier Lemarchand, Hypermedia Studio, 2 December 2008

Eric Rault, Technical Systems Manager, Legal Deposit, 1 December 2008

Michaël Swierczynski, Marketing and Development Manager, ina.fr, 2 December 2008 and 5 January 2009

Appendix B: Summary of revenues and costs

L'Institut national de l'audiovisuel (INA): ina.fr

Revenue Category	Description	Approx. amount
Advertising		€300,000
Video downloads		€300,000
DVD on Demand programme	Projected revenue in 2009	€200,000
Hypermedia partnerships		€300,000
Total revenue		€1,100,000

Cost Category	Budgeted Costs			In-kind/volunteer contributions
	Description	FTE	Approx. cost	
Personnel			Included in budget?	
Management	1 project manager	1	yes	
Content selection & production	4 staff work on content for the public site; 5 staff work on 'Hypermedia studio'	9	yes	
Sales & marketing		5	yes	
Technology	10 total, but only 6 are charged to the ina.fr budget	6	partial	5 webmasters & 5 programmers are assigned to ina.fr; 4 in IT unit are not paid for by ina.fr
Total personnel costs		21		€1,050,000
Non-personnel costs			Included in budget?	
Administration & overhead*			no	Provided by INA
Scanning, metadata, etc.			no	Costs related to scanning, metadata creation and transcriptions, and legal research regarding rights holders are not charged to this division.
Hosting & technology infrastructure			no	Costs related to hosting and technology are not charged to this division.
Marketing	Marketing costs, including advertising on Google AdWords		yes	€300,000
Royalty payments	Royalty payments to rights holders, based on advertising and downloads		yes	not available
Total non-personnel costs				€300,000
Total budgeted costs	Note: does not include royalties			€1,350,000

*For the purposes of this analysis, costs have been broken out for ina.fr, though it is part of the INA Publications and Production Department. Some of these shared costs, such as administration, were not available, since this is not the way they are generally accounted for.

Appendix C: Summary of revenues and costs

L'Institut national de l'audiovisuel (INA): Inamédiapro

Revenue Category	Description	Approx. amount
Rights licensing		€14,500,000
Total revenue		€14,500,000

Cost Category	Budgeted Costs			In-kind/volunteer contributions
	Description	FTE	Approx. cost	
Personnel			Included in budget?	
Management	Project director	1	yes	
Content selection & production	Researchers	3	yes	
Sales & marketing	Sales and marketing staff	67	yes	
Technology		0	no	
Total personnel costs		71		€3,700,000
Non-personnel costs			Included in budget?	
Administration & overhead			yes	€200,000
Marketing materials			yes	€200,000
Scanning, metadata, etc.			no	Costs related to scanning, metadata creation and transcriptions, and legal research regarding rights holders are not charged to this division.
Hosting & technology infrastructure			yes	€480,000
Royalties	Royalty payments to rights holders, based on advertising and download revenues		yes	€3,500,000
Total non-personnel costs				€4,380,000
Total budgeted costs				€8,080,000

Explanatory note

The information presented in this table is intended as a broad picture of revenues and costs associated with the project, not as a detailed financial report. The financial data, which are presented in the currency in which the project reported the information, were compiled as part of the interview process with project leaders and staff, and in some cases were supplemented with publicly available documents, such as annual reports. Project leaders were asked to review the information prior to publication. The column labelled 'Included in budget?' indicates whether or not the organisation includes that category of cost in its own definition of its budget. In many cases, the information was difficult for project leaders to provide because their institution does not record information in these categories, or because the project was combined with other projects in a larger department or unit. As a result, many of the figures are rounded or best estimates. Some leaders preferred not to offer figures at all, but suggested percentages instead. Frequently, certain types of costs are provided as in-kind contributions by the host institution. Although we did not attempt to place a value on these contributions, we felt it was important to highlight the significant role they play in many projects. Because of the variability in the way each institution estimated the various categories of revenues and costs, the information presented in the table is of limited value for detailed cross-project comparisons.