# MediaValet

# Fred Rogers Productions

**Unlocking the Immense Hidden Value of 1,150 Television Episodes with Audio/Visual Intelligence (AVI)**

# Organization Statistics

## About FRP:

50-year legacy

1,150 episodes that air in nearly 200 countries

3 shows currently in production

4 live stage shows

10 mobile apps

60 online games

1 amusement park ride

## Use case:

- Locate specific episodes
- Locate exact video clips within assets
- Securely share full length, high-definition episodes, and clips in a branded workflow
- Make text within video searchable

## Features:

- Audio Video Intelligence (AVI): Auto tagging and audio transcription
- Secure share
- Optical Character Recognition (OCR)
- Branded Portals

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# Introduction

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood, the well-known children's TV series, aired from 1968 until 2001 and touched the lives of many. Through his gentle and encouraging nature, Fred Rogers showed children the power and importance of kindness and compassion for others; he opened his door to all and made everyone feel special, for exactly who they were. Along with positively influencing the development of children all over the world, he left us with an unforgettable message to carry on throughout our lives.

With that kind of encouragement, we were able to manage our fears and feelings, and be willing to try new things even if we might fail.

As a small non-profit organization started in 1971, *Fred Rogers Productions* continues to carry forward the values of Fred Rogers himself, with a focus on innovation. While staying in the forefront of what is new in media to help children explore the world in age-appropriate ways, they continue to celebrate the wonder, challenges, and possibilities of childhood as Mister Rogers always encouraged.

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There is only one person in the whole world like you, and people can like you just because you're you.

**Fred Rogers**

# A Video Archive for the Ages

Today, with a portfolio of seven television series, *Fred Rogers Productions* is home to 1,150 episodes that air in nearly 200 countries. Additionally, they have 4 live stage shows, 10 mobile apps, 60 online games, hundreds of community engagement events all over the United States, a children's museum exhibit, and countless licenses—they even have an amusement park ride. With just over five decades of influential content and three shows currently in production—Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood, Donkey Hodie, and Alma's Way—*Fred Rogers Productions*' extensive archive continues to grow exponentially.

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# Video
# Management
# on the Ground

*Fred Rogers Productions* initially stored and managed their terabytes of video content using an on-premise solution. Employees needed to be onsite to access the system and finding assets was extremely difficult given the lack and inconsistency of metadata. Once assets were found, resizing, reformatting, sharing, and tracking was difficult, if not impossible in many cases. Altogether, the legacy system and processes caused innumerable efficiency, productivity, and security issues that they needed to address now before their archive grew any further.

In addition to the inconsistency of metadata, the lack of robust search capabilities of the legacy system severely limited asset discoverability. While basic searches were possible, the simple functionality and lack of advanced filtering meant that straightforward search terms would generate hundreds of results. As *Fred Rogers Productions'* assets primarily consist of full TV episodes, finding specific clips within episodes would take hours of searching, and caused projects to take considerably longer than ever planned. At the end of the day, their initial solution wasn't optimal for finding, using, or sharing high volumes of video content and, ultimately, didn't perform the way they needed it to.

On top of these challenges, their vendor of the legacy system underwent an acquisition that rendered their platform obsolete and prevented it from being further developed. As a result, user confidence in the solution eroded even further. Chris Arnold, COO at *Fred Rogers Productions*, explains: "It was beyond frustrating because you knew how hard Jack Rowley, our Digital Asset Manager, and our IT team worked to keep the legacy system updated and maintained only to have the system constantly break and people, in the end, not trust it. First and foremost, it was a solution for administrators—not end users.".

As a small nonprofit working with thousands of hours of video footage (not to mention images, documents, and a variety of additional content), it was clear that their current solution was no longer meeting the current needs of their staff – let alone those in the future. *Fred Rogers Productions* needed a system to alleviate these pain points and work with them to improve efficiency company-wide. It was time for a change—and a big one.

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# A Modernized Approach to DAM

*Fred Rogers Productions* approached the search for a new platform as an opportunity to digitally transform and modernize their approach to digital asset management. With a near-60-year history of television production behind them, they needed a way to confidently access and search their vast, multi-terabyte, video library to find specific assets or video clips that best represent *Fred Rogers Productions'* values.

The end goal of the initiative was to enable their team to access the exact assets they need, quickly and securely, at any time of the day and from anywhere in the world. To do this, they realized they would need a solution that is more robust than a standard cloud-based DAM - and one that's video focused, in order to support and enable their entire video content creation and distribution workflow.

With this in mind, *Fred Rogers Productions* had three major priorities:

1. **Enhance their video search experience,** enabling their entire team to be able to access and find specific episodes and exact video clips quickly and easily,

2. **Provide more robust distribution options,** allowing their team to securely share full length, high-definition television episodes, as well as video clips and other assets, in a streamlined and on-brand manner, and

3. **Develop a partnership** with an innovative solution provider that will continually evolve and enable them to grow long-term.

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## As we explored our options and started talking with MediaValet, we began to realize what fully unlocking and instantly accessing our video assets could mean to departments across our organization.

**Jack Rowley**

Digital Asset Manager,
Fred Rogers Productions

After exploring the various options on the market, they selected MediaValet, a cloud-based digital asset management solution that specializes in managing high-definition video content—at scale—while **augmenting it with advanced artificial intelligence.** Working with the DAM, employees were able to find specific assets quickly, confidently, and securely without having to sift through hours and hours of content. Furthermore, they were able to uncover a variety of additional use cases for their video assets, and ultimately expand their vision for the future of *Fred Rogers Productions.*

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# From Isolated to Engaged: Access for All

While the new solution just went live in February 2022, *Fred Rogers Productions* staff are already discovering episodes and clips that they have never seen before. Today, all episodes, as well as all related images, audio, and documents, are uploaded to their DAM (see Figure 1), where they are accessible at high speeds from anywhere worldwide.

The *Fred Rogers Productions* team currently allows open access to the DAM for all 30 staff members. As the protectors of Fred Rogers' legacy, it is critical for staff to understand the company's history and explore the different brands. Mister Roger's Neighborhood, as well as other shows, are continually used as sources of inspiration for new episodes and initiatives. By taking a more open approach to DAM, as well as making use of an unlimited user subscription model, the organization has been able to maximize access to these critical assets and further drive Fred Roger Productions' message.
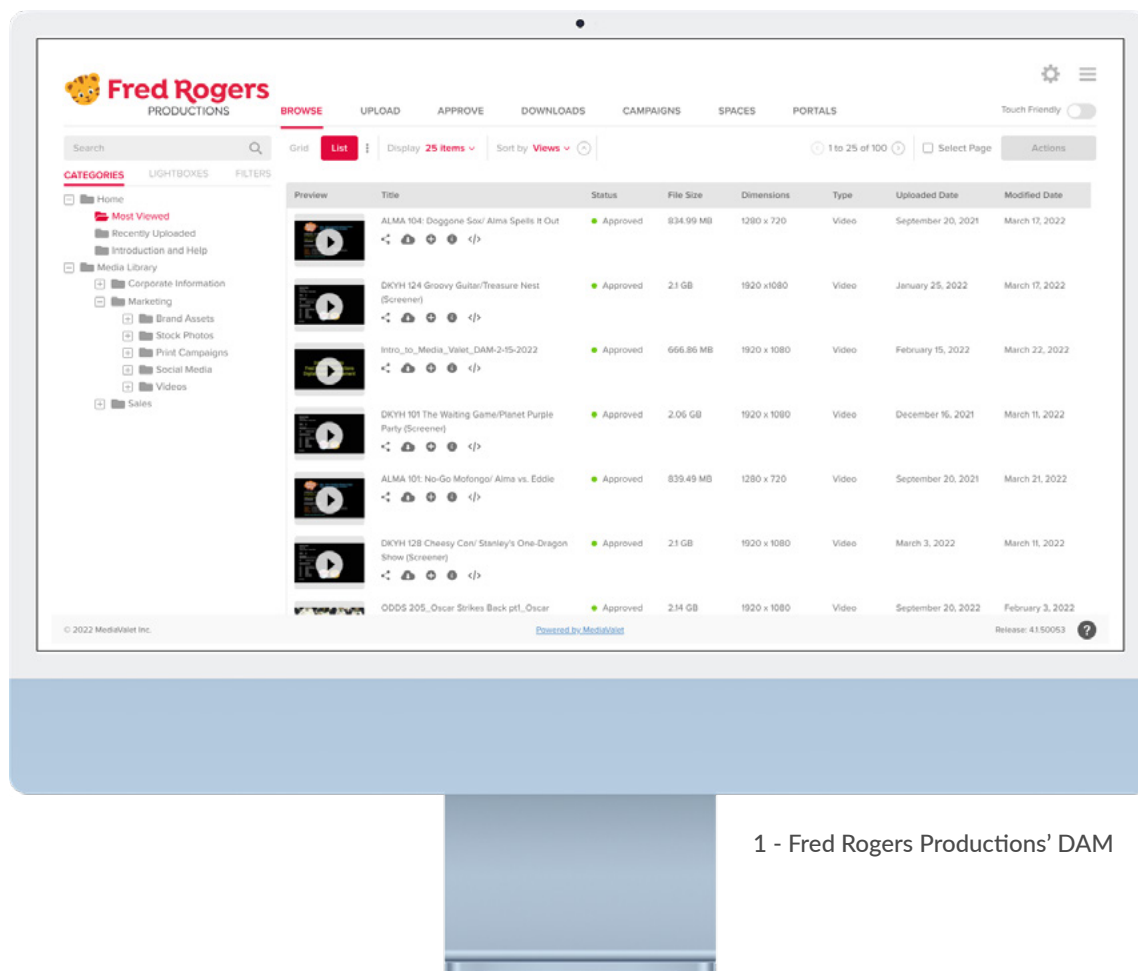


1 - Fred Rogers Productions' DAM

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In addition to use cases in production and learning, in just a few months, *Fred Rogers Productions* has been able to identify additional use cases for nearly all their departments. For example:

- **Marketing**: to share campaign assets with public television stations around the country,
- **Licensing**: to showcase assets and style guides for products related to each series,
- **Legal**: to determine parameters for video clips requested by external parties, and
- **C-suite**: to identify parallels drawn between various episodes.

With over five decades of video footage, and three shows currently in production (Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood, Donkey Hodie, and Alma's Way), *Fred Rogers Productions'* asset library continues to grow every single day. Jack Rowley shares, "Every single facet of our business takes inspiration from our work from the past. To be able to give our staff access to the entire *Fred Rogers Productions'* history, while still having effective control over what gets added and distributed in an effective way is an absolute blessing."

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# Video Discoverability with Artificial Intelligence

For *Fred Rogers Productions*, the discoverability of their video content was equally as important as its accessibility. With choosing to make the move to the cloud came a feature that was critical to their success: **Audio/Video Intelligence (AVI).**

Powered by Microsoft's significant investment into advanced artificial intelligence and machine learning, MediaValet's AVI capabilities are available directly within the DAM. As an immediate solution for video discoverability, AVI significantly reduces the time required for *Fred Rogers Productions* staff to find video content both in terms of individual episodes, as well as exact moments within an episode when a specific word, phrase, or person appears. Specific AVI features include time-stamped auto-tagging, voice transcribing and closed captioning (in over 100 languages), along with object character and facial recognition.

## Auto-tagging

Audio/Video Intelligence instantly identifies people, as well as common objects, places, actions, key themes and more in any video. These tags are then associated with specific times, meaning users can instantly pinpoint the moments within the video where specific things appear or specific phrases are said. This is invaluable for multiple teams at *Fred Rogers Productions*, helping to speed up discovery, boost creative workflow and increase the ROI of each episode.

"The production team came to me looking for video content featuring the trolley in Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. Specifically, the trolley with another character in the show." shared Jack Rowley. "Using our DAM, I was able to quickly search "trolley" plus that character and find all the moments across our entire library of 1,150 episodes where they're both present."

Auto-tagging has also saved Jack time as the DAM administrator and allowed *Fred Rogers Productions* to get their DAM up-and-running considerably faster. As a strong baseline of common terms are automatically added on upload, Jack and his team could instead focus their time on providing keywords that are unique to the company and its various shows.

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## Voice Transcribing

*Fred Rogers Productions* also takes advantage of AVI to create a timeline of every word spoken throughout each episode, including – of course – the many songs present, such as the infamous "Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood". Searchable transcripts provide solutions for a vast number of *Fred Rogers Productions'* challenges, including:

- Locating episodes that include specific words, phrases, and songs,
- Narrowing in on a specific moment within an episode, and
- Improving accessibility with on-screen subtitles that are automatically translated into over 100 languages.
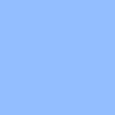


2 - Audio/Video Intelligence on a
Fred Rogers Productions video

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These capabilities have been invaluable for *Fred Rogers Productions*—especially their social media team, who regularly create new clips to use on their various social media platforms. Before implementing Audio/Video Intelligence, searching for clips to use would be a manual and laborious process. With AVI now in place, the social media team can find clips they're looking for in seconds by searching for specific words or phrases (see Figure 2).

These transcription capabilities eliminated an entire workflow for the *Fred Rogers Productions* team, in which they would need to upload and relate transcripts to be manually synced with each episode. This process was incredibly arduous, including a special syncing formula that typically resulted in subtitles that were delayed by up to 5 seconds.

"Artificial intelligence is a great safety net because sometimes you don't know what's going to be important in the future," shared Chris Arnold. "We're just at the beginning of exploring the power of AVI. The great thing about having partners like MediaValet and Microsoft is that it's only going to get better, and you don't have to do anything. You just get the fruits of the labor of the improvements they make to the platform and AI engine over time."

# Other Applications of Advanced Intelligence (AI)

Audio/Video Intelligence is just one application of AI that *Fred Rogers Productions* is taking advantage of. The organization also leans into image intelligence to enable additional use cases, including:

## Identifying cast lists using text recognition

Optical character recognition (OCR) (i.e., text recognition), turns all recognizable text, including handwriting, in PDFs, graphics, and images into searchable metadata. Using these capabilities, *Fred Rogers Productions* can seamlessly manage and quickly locate their various cast lists—which lists all actors who took part in any of the 1,150 episodes across their seven series. Staff use this data to search for specific actor names or episode numbers to be used to pay residuals. This functionality was available immediately after upload and is invaluable in enabling them to pay actors in a more cost-effective and time-efficient manner.

## Monetizing historic imagery with object recognition

With thousands of episodes and hundreds of thousands of images from Mister Rogers' Neighborhood, finding the right imagery and assets for new products could take hours using their legacy solution. Today, using object, facial and optical character recognition, combined with embedded metadata and subjective keywords manually added by the *Fred Rogers Productions* team, the organization has dramatically reduced the effort and time required to identify historic Fred Rogers imagery for use with new products.

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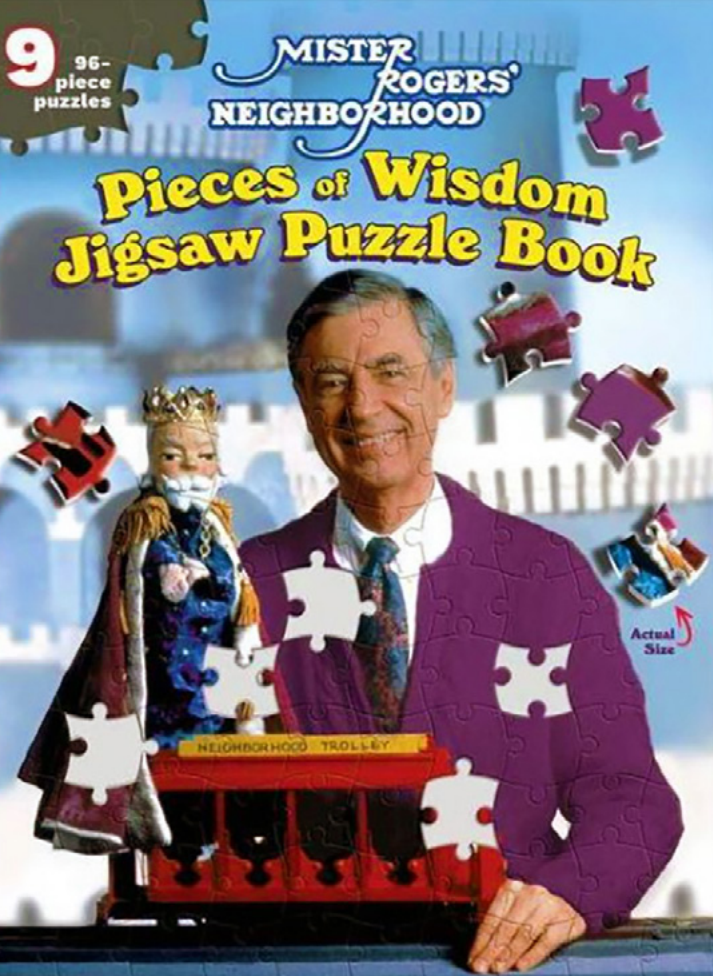
3 - Mister Rogers' Neighborhood puzzle book

**Jack Rowley explains a recent experience:**

"Our licensing team came to me about a month ago and said they would really like a fresh image of Mister Rogers wearing a purple sweater. That might sound very easy to find, but there are 900 episodes of Mister Rogers Neighborhood and close to 4,000 images of Mister Rogers. On top of that, each of those images has specific rights, in which we can use to license certain products.

Before implementing MediaValet, this would have been an incredibly inefficient, lengthy, and strenuous task to undertake. Now, we were able to execute that request with just the simplest search in the search bar for 'Mister Rogers' and 'purple sweater.' From there, we were able to immediately identify if the image was a licensable asset. As a result, we were able to quickly give it to our vendor for use in a puzzle book (see Figure 3)."

One of the classic challenges faced by organizations, especially those with a heavy emphasis on video content, is how to meaningfully apply metadata to thousands of high-definition media assets at scale. With basic and advanced artificial intelligence (like AVI), hundreds of meaningful searchable metadata points are instantly added to each asset on upload, without *Fred Rogers Productions'* team needing to lift a finger.

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4 - Category showcasing character, Alma
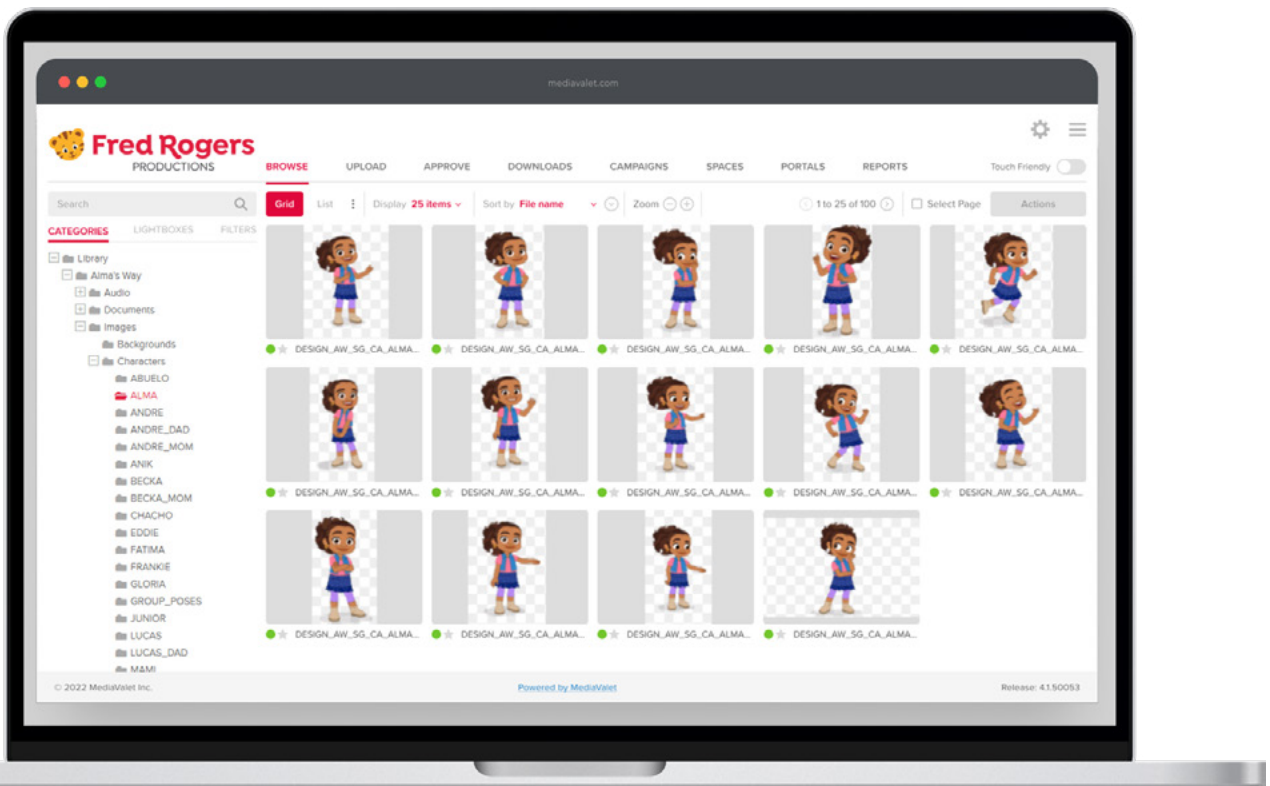
## A collaborative approach to metadata

In addition to AI-generated tags, *Fred Rogers Productions* has a unique approach to adding business and show-specific metadata. Each show has a distinct set of characters, songs and themes that need to be mapped accordingly (see Figure 4). Rather than requiring their Digital Asset Manager, Jack Rowley, to learn the ins and outs of each individual show, they designated representatives from each series to assist with uploading and providing keywords and descriptions. This approach ensures that the DAM provides the best search results possible, right from the start.

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## Video use without constraints

While aggregating and uploading *Fred Rogers Productions'* entire video archive into the cloud was the first step, there was still the question of how staff could effectively download and use the wealth of video assets they would now have access to.

With *Fred Rogers Productions'* legacy DAM solution, users would need to save assets off their server to their local machines, which was slow, tedious, and put a large strain on their internal infrastructure. Using their new DAM, staff can access, reformat, resize, share (assets or links), and embed assets without moving the assets themselves – saving bandwidth and more importantly, time. What's more, the DAM dynamically packages and streams the required formats and resolutions to ensure each end user receives the optimal video experience based on the device they're using and their access to the internet. Users can also manually choose the format and size they want to download or share – further saving time and improving the user experience. For example, *Fred Rogers Productions'* social media team can choose to download a broadcast-quality video as an mp4 in 1080p in order to clip portions of it for use on social channels.

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## Driving collaboration with new distribution capabilities

Equally as important to *Fred Rogers Productions* is the ability to enable other teams to securely and effectively access and distribute videos and other content to external parties; all within an on-brand experience.

The need to continually upload assets over and over to share them is lengthy, tiresome, and downright frustrating – especially when working with high definition (1080, 4K and 8K) video. Today, *Fred Rogers Productions* can provide a seamless experience for its staff, as well as partners, stakeholders, and sponsors.

Leaning into Branded Portals, *Fred Rogers Productions* can build on-brand, curated microsites that address the needs of multiple teams, use cases, and campaigns (see Figure 5). More critically, they can build these collaboratively, where multiple staff members can work on a single campaign, adding content simultaneously or together.
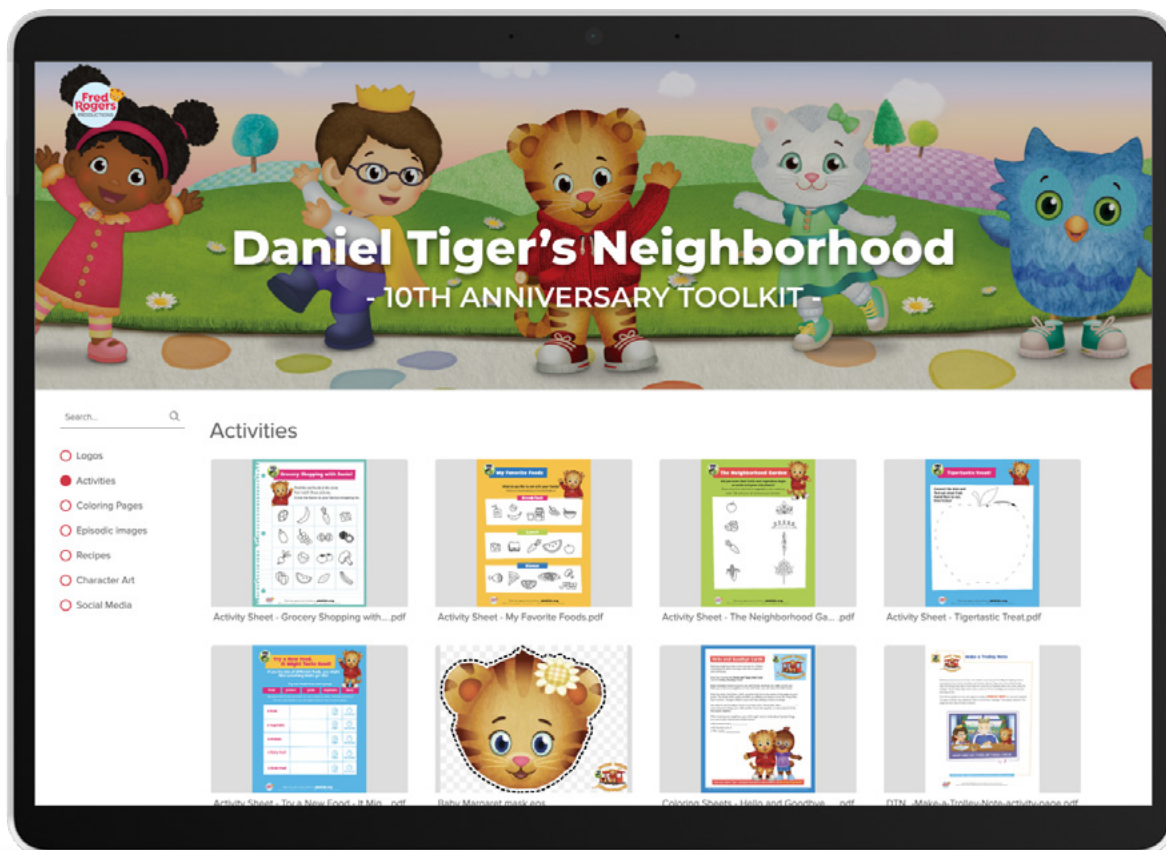


5 – Branded Portal for Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood 10th Anniversary Toolkit

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Sharing content using Branded Portals ensures that all content continually and automatically updates as new versions of assets are added to the DAM or as asset rights expire. Unique to MediaValet is the ability to automatically sync a DAM category to a Branded Portal, meaning that every time a new asset is added to a specific category within their library, it will be instantly added to correct section in a specific Branded Portal without requiring someone to manually update it. This feature saves the *Fred Rogers Productions* team a significant amount of time – especially as new episodes and characters are added to specific shows.

In addition to building out Branded Portals for various campaigns and initiatives, *Fred Rogers Productions* has built unique portals that contain curated assets from each of their shows. While these can be used by anyone, they're especially critical to the licensing team when they're on the road. While the licensing team is strong in explaining the value of each show, being able to highlight each show's key brand elements, including characters' looks and behaviors, various episode clips and style guides, enables them to tell a better story and show what Fred Rogers Productions is all about.

Chris Arnold explains further:

"Let's say we have our licensing agent going to a toy fair and they're speaking with someone about Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood. So, you can talk about it or even share a still image, but with MediaValet, our licensing agent can pull everything up on their iPad and immediately have access to a continually updated gallery of curated, high-definition episodes and clips and can show imagery of the various puppets in different poses. It really makes an impact, helping those individuals that are responsible for connecting our products with our audience."

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# Success Built on Partnership

From the get-go, *Fred Rogers Productions* understood that undertaking the digital transformation of their media workflow and extensive video library would be no easy feat. It would require patience, organization, planning and, above all, an approach engrained in partnership, innovation, and technology to ensure the success of their journey.

"It's difficult to migrate assets from one system to another. Naturally, there will be problems," explained Chris Arnold. "You need a vendor that is not just able to - but is willing - to help. The migration to our new DAM exceeded every expectation. We had reasonably expected to do a ton of extra work on the side; hire and retain a consultant or take up all our tech team's bandwidth for a whole summer. But we didn't need to do that because we had a strong partner in MediaValet. Since completing the migration, we've had a similar experience analyzing and improving our media workflows."

By taking an implementation approach that's rooted in technological advancement, automation and partnership, *Fred Rogers Productions* has solidified their DAM initiative for years to come.

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# About MediaValet

MediaValet is a leader in cloud-based digital asset management that helps marketing, communication, video production and creative teams easily manage, collaborate on and distribute their digital assets and content, improving productivity and increasing the  ROI on their marketing investments. With unlimited users, support and training, teams worldwide can access the content they need, whenever and wherever they need it.

### Clean and Easy-to-Use

From administrators to basic users, MediaValet is easy to use and understand.

### Unlimited Users and Training

MediaValet offers unlimited users and training included in your subscription fee.

### Easy to Integrate

Use our intuitive out-of-the-box integrations or build your own with our open API.

### Partner, Not Platform

We believe in building long-term relationships with our customers and going the extra mile.

### Speed and Scalability

MediaValet is hyper-scalable and built to optimize speed and performance.

### Commitment to Security

MediaValet is SOC 2 certified, as well as compliant with most industry requirements.

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