Avail / Interstitial Manager

⊙ **Click here to view the latest AIM webinar from October 2021**

Overview

In early 2017, the PBS 24/7 KIDS channel was made available to stations via satellite for rebroadcast and multiple system operator (MSO) retransmission in their local designated market area (DMA). As part of the rebroadcast, stations can program sponsorship and interstitial content into 65-second breaks at the end of each scheduled program. These **65-second breaks in the linear stream when stations can insert an interstitial are referred to as *avails*** (short for availability). The Avail / Interstitial Manager (AIM) distinguishes station-specific streams instead of user-specific streams, which means all users localized to your station will see interstitial content from your station alone.

The basic workflow for using this tool is pretty straightforward and entails:

- uploading your video file as a pod
- scheduling your pod to appear in the linear stream
- viewing reporting details on your pod elements

The Avail console can be accessed at https://aim.console.pbs.org/

View a PBS webinar about Avail/Interstitial Manager (This link takes you to the PBS Hub website and requires a login. If you need access, submit a support ticket.)

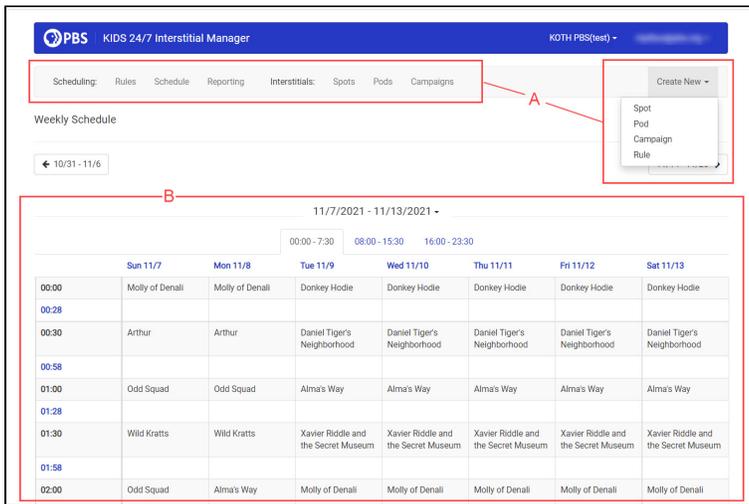Your browser does not support the HTML5 video element

Key features

The primary components that make up the Avail / Interstitial Manager include:

- **Pods** - The 65-second video, and associated metadata, assigned to a time slot.
- **Spots** - Individual video elements that can be of varying lengths and are used to create your 65-second pod.
- **Rules** - The mechanism by which pods are assigned to time slots.
- **Schedule** - The various views showing all pods and campaigns assigned to the time slots. A schedule displays a week's worth of data at a time.

See the Glossary for more terms

Navigation

- All functionality in the AIM console can be accessed from the **top navigation menu** and in the **Create dropdown menu** in the upper right corner of the page (A).
- All scheduling information can be accessed in the **body of the main schedule page** when you first log in to AIM (B).

Getting started

To begin using the AIM console, you need to have access. If you have not been invited to the system, please submit a support ticket to request access to the AIM console. Accessing the console does not mean that your scheduled pods will automatically go live. **Please see the Testing section to learn more**
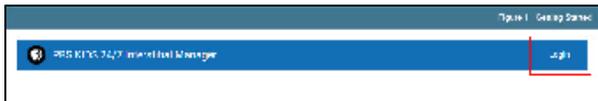
Using the console

> ⚠️ **TESTING**
>
> After gaining access to the console, it's important to familiarize yourself with the console by *testing* scheduling pods to ensure they run well when they go live. To arrange the testing environment, follow the steps below:
>
> - Submit a support ticket requesting a URL for testing purposes.
> - When you're ready for your AIM instance to go live in production, submit another support ticket stating that you are ready for your interstitials to go live. PBS will then update your KIDS 24/7 livestream URL to pull in your localized interstitials.
> - PBS will notify you when everything is complete and when you should start seeing data populate in the report area for your scheduled pods.
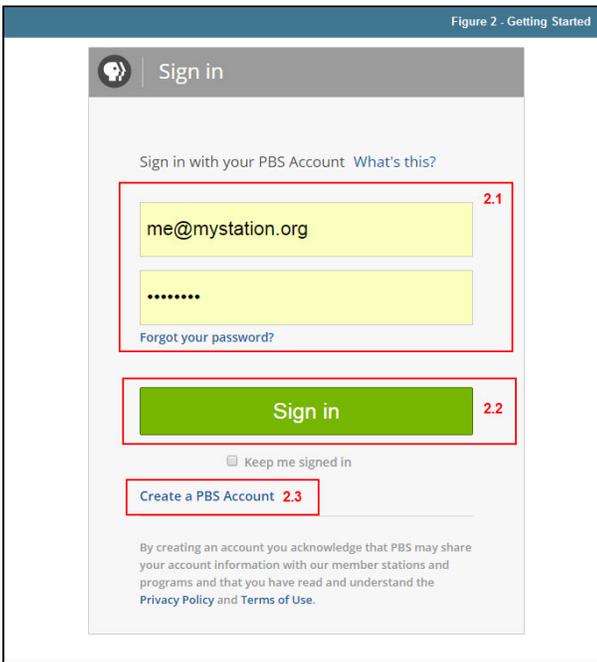
- Once you have access to the console, log in by clicking **Login** in the upper right side of the console (Figure 1).

Figure 1

- Type your **PBS Account username** and **password** in the textboxes provided (Figure 2.1).
- Click **Sign in** (Figure 2.2).
- If you do not have a PBS account, click **Create a PBS Account** and follow the steps to create one (Figure 2.3).
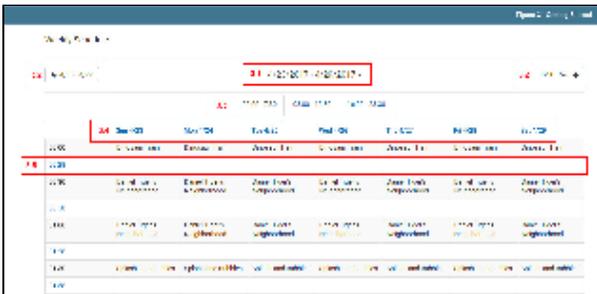
Figure 2

Figure 2 - Getting Started

You are redirected to the schedule view where you can see everything currently scheduled in your live stream. The schedule view is primarily used just for viewing your station's streaming schedule and any pods and campaigns you have scheduled, as well as available timeslots for pods and campaigns.

- The schedule view displays a full week of data with the timespan displayed at the top of the page (Figure 3.1).
- Click the **timeframe** on the left and right side of the page to skip to a previous or future week (Figure 3.2).
- Each 24-hour period of time is split into 8-hour chunks that can be scrolled through by clicking each **tab** (Figure 3.3).
- Click on a **day** (Example: *Sun 4/23*) to see all times for that one day (Figure 3.4).
- Each time slot reserved for an interstitial is highlighted as a blue link and each available time slot displays an empty box (Figure 3.5).

Figure 3

- Begin using AIM by first **creating a pod**.