CLAIMS

1. A method for distributing video content across a network, the method comprising:

Providing video data to a primary data source;
Associating control data with the video data;
Broadcasting the video data with associated control data from the primary data source to one or more user devices across the network;
Providing a media player on the respective user devices which is operable in response to reading the control data to create auxiliary data locally on the respective user devices while the media player is playing the video data;
Creating the auxiliary data locally on the respective user devices while the media player is playing the video data locally on the respective user devices, wherein the created auxiliary data is overlaid on top of the video data;
Wherein the control data defines one or more elements of the auxiliary data to be created by the media player including the elements of the auxiliary data which are to be retrieved from the primary data source and one or more secondary data sources.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the control data comprises metadata.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the control data comprises a data interchange format/or data storage format.

4. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the control data contains instructions defining the elements of the auxiliary data, the elements of the auxiliary data comprising one or more of:
a layout of the auxiliary data relative to the video data;
one or more types of auxiliary data to be provided relative to the video data;
at least a first location from which the auxiliary data is to be retrieved from the primary data source and/or secondary data sources;
a time at which the auxiliary data is to be provided relative to the video data; and/or
an action to be performed to the auxiliary data when the video playback is ended.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the action to be performed to the auxiliary data when the video playback is ended comprises ceasing the creation of the auxiliary data locally on the media player.

6. The method of claim 4, wherein the control data further defines a second location from which the auxiliary data is to be retrieved from the primary data source and/or secondary data sources if the auxiliary data is not available at said first location.

7. The method of claim 4, wherein the one or more types of auxiliary data are provided at different times during playback of the video data.

8. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the one or more types of auxiliary data comprise one or more of:

customisable text overlays;

graphics;

sounds;

secondary video data;

special effects; and/or

live feeds or displays of information.

9. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the auxiliary data comprises user specific data, wherein the user specific data comprises data regarding a user of the user device.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the user specific data comprises one or more of: user location; user age; user gender; user interests or hobbies; user language; user search history; user web history and/or any other suitable user specific information.

11. The method of claim 9 or 10, wherein the user specific data is stored upon one or more of the secondary data sources and/or primary data source and/or user device and/or media player.

12. The method of any of claims 9 to 11, wherein the secondary data sources from which the media player is configured to retrieve the one or more elements of the auxiliary data to be created by the media player is determined based on one or more elements of the user specific data.

13. The method of any preceding claim, wherein prior to creating the auxiliary data locally on the respective user devices while the media player is playing the video data locally on the respective user devices, the method further comprises: authenticating the media player with the secondary data sources to allow for the media player to retrieve the auxiliary data from the secondary data sources.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein authenticating the media player with the secondary data sources comprises requesting the user to provide their consent for the media player to retrieve one or more elements of the auxiliary data from one or more of the secondary data sources.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein authenticating the media player with the secondary data sources comprises verifying that the user has previously provided their consent for the media player to retrieve one or more elements of the auxiliary data from one or more of the secondary data sources.

16. The method of claim 14 or 15, wherein the control data contains instruction defining what action is to be performed if the user’s consent is not obtained or verified.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the control data indicates that the video playback on the user device is not to occur on the media player or that pre-defined auxiliary data is to be created during playback of the video on the media player.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the type of pre-defined auxiliary data to be created is defined in the control data.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein the pre-defined auxiliary data is retrieved from the primary data source.

20. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the primary data source and/or secondary data sources comprise a cloud and/or local server architecture and/or an API service and/or any data storage format file and/or JSON file and/or a computing device and/or any data storage format or other suitable data source.

21. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the media player is configured to create and synchronise the auxiliary data in real time with the video data whilst the video data is played on the user device.

22. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the user devices comprise a smartphone, tablet, laptop or any other suitable computing device

23. A system for distributing video content across a network, the system comprising:

A primary data source;

One or more user devices;

One or more secondary data sources;

Wherein the primary data source is configured to associate control data to video data provided to the primary data source;

Wherein the primary data source is configured to broadcast the video data and associated control data for receipt by the one or more user devices;

Wherein the user devices contain a media player provided thereon which is configured to create auxiliary data locally upon the respective user device in response to reading the control data when the video is played on the user device, wherein the created auxiliary data is overlaid on top of the video data; and

Wherein the control data defines one or more elements of the auxiliary data created by the media player locally on the user devices including elements of the auxiliary data which are to be retrieved from the primary data source and the one or more secondary data sources.