



"In the age of AI, Cinedapt® will prevail with the originality it empowers to creators"

An interview with MICHAEL KURETH | *WHITEBOARD CHALLENGE* | VMA February 2020



*In the world of filmmaking, advancements in technology continue to shape and redefine the industry. One such innovation that has caught our attention is **Cinedapt®**, a groundbreaking patented adaptive film service created by **Michael Kureth**, an VMA award-winning, technology and entertainment industry professional with a wealth of experience in software engineering, film production, and technical architecture.*

Michael is trying to revolutionize the field by combining artificial intelligence and personalization techniques both to expand the filmmakers talents and to cater the unique preferences of individual viewers.

In this interview, we delve into the potential impact of Cinedapt® on the future of filmmaking and how it could reshape not only the viewer's experience but the entire film industry.

• Hi Michael, congratulations on your wins at the VMAs in January 2020 for "Whiteboard Challenge®" and at the 27th Annual Webby Awards for the script processing software portion of your patent on Cinedapt®. Before we dive into the interview, could you introduce yourself and your extensive career in the film and tech industry?

I am a filmmaker, entrepreneur, and technologist who has been at the forefront of the entertainment and technology industries for over two decades.

In 2007, I created and copyrighted the first streaming service for filmmakers. This was a major breakthrough for the independent film community, and it helped to make independent films more accessible to audiences around the world.

From 2004 to 2014, I produced seven independent feature-length films. These films gave me firsthand experience into film production and distribution.

From 2008 to 2015, I created hundreds of personalized and interactive campaigns for major film studios. These campaigns were designed to engage audiences and promote the films.

In 2017, I was fascinated by how the subconscious mind could create a nightmare more terrifying than a film with a multimillion dollar budget. This led me to invent and patent Cinedapt, a new technology that allows filmmakers to create more immersive films.

• What inspired you to create "Whiteboard Challenge®," and what message do you hope to convey through the show?

Whiteboard Challenge® is based on an interview practice where employers use an employment test which screens out a class of individuals with disabilities (Autism, Anxiety, PTSD, etc.) by using a selection criteria that is not job-related for the position in question and is not consistent with business necessity. This practice is a violation of federal law Title 42, U.S.C., 12112 (b)(6).

The primary intention of the Whiteboard Challenge® series is to advocate for the diversity, equity, and inclusion of software engineers and software engineering related positions within the tech industry as well as to showcase methods to improve the overall interview process to be more inclusive by adhering to federal laws while providing an entertaining and educational platform encouraging others to have interest in joining the field of software engineering and information technology.

There also seems to be a misunderstanding outside of the tech industry why this interview practice is even offensive to people without a hidden disability. A Whiteboard Challenge® interview would be comparable to having a Principal Attorney with more than 20 years experience retake the Bar Exam in front of a mock jury for 8 hours over a 2 day period while having the test administered and graded by a Paralegal.

I own the trademark for Whiteboard Challenge® because I want for people who search on the topic to be educated that the practice itself is a federal violation. The message I hope to convey to people who watch the show is that

there are ways the process can be improved but also to educate on how to protect against discrimination.



• **How does "Whiteboard Challenge®" differ from other tech-related films and shows, and what is the significance of having a cast consisting only of software engineers?**

It would have been incredibly easy in comparison for me to cast and direct actors instead of people who had no experience on camera. However, I wanted to both challenge myself and give authenticity to the show by having the entire cast consist of only software engineers and engineering leaders.

The show differs from other tech-related films and shows by being the only one created by and casted with professionals in the tech industry. This gives the viewers an inside look into the industry with topic discussion as well as solutions to improve the overall process.

I have produced many feature length films and architected hundreds of multi-million dollar projects in tech. For interviews, I was asked to provide an example of myself on camera giving a tech presentation as well as perform in

interview a Whiteboard Challenge on camera and in front of a room of people. Ultimately, Whiteboard Challenge became the single project which I could use to showcase as a proof of concept for Cinedapt, prove I could manage and present on camera, and help encourage a change in the industry.

• What topics and themes are discussed in the pilot episode of "Whiteboard Challenge®," and how do they promote diversity and empathy in the tech industry?

The pilot episode of the show, Diversity and Inclusion, has 36 primary versions with trillions of variants which gives each viewer a personalized experience. This is derived from the diversity aspect of women in tech, people of color in tech, age diversity in tech, and more. The topics of discussion range from ways to improve the overall process to facts surrounding the current interview process being discriminatory.

Through Cinedapt, each of the primary versions of the pilot gives the viewer an empathetic experience by focusing on a specific contestant with targeted messaging towards the viewer. In each version, the viewer is shown how all contestants are equally qualified but through the journey of the interview process can be eliminated due to personal preference outweighing performance.

Similar to how contestants are judged and voted by the audience on "American Idol", "Whiteboard Challenge" reflects the interview process by having the viewer or audience judge the outcome based on personal preference.

The goal of the pilot is to give empathy to the viewer and motivate change in the industry. There are 13 additional episodes scripted with a specific theme focusing on a historic figure in tech with the code challenge, contestants, and topics centered around that core theme and lesson for the viewer.



• **When did you first come up with the idea for Cinedapt® and what motivated you to pursue it?**

I originally conceived Cinedapt from a nightmare and wanted to capture that fear in film. After the emotional pain of my mother's death, I sought to recreate elements of that suffering in film as well. It was by understanding what and how causes fear and terror that I knew I could leverage my experience in technology to evolve film to be less stoic.

At the horror conventions I attended, filmmakers would commonly claim that everything has been done before and there were no original concepts or scenes that could scare people. Audiences have become emotionally numb with an insatiable desire to overcome that tolerance. The creation of Cinedapt was a result of the monotony in films where an audience leaves the theatre unimpressed or unaffected by the movie.

The ultimate goal of Cinedapt is to motivate the viewer to action and impact the viewer with an emotion.

• **Congratulations on your recent Webby Award for Cinedapt®! Can you tell us more about this technology and how it can benefit the film industry in the age of artificial intelligence?**

The original concept for Cinedapt was with the story, "Exolatri," which was provided as an example for the Webby Awards. For the 2023 Webby Awards, I was honored for Cinedapt's Screenplay Processing Software. This is part of the core technology and artificial intelligence patented and copyrighted in both processing a Cinedaptive screenplay and the creation of a Cinedaptive film.

There is a scene in "Exolatri" where the viewer hears the voice of a deceased loved one denigrate the viewer of the film by speaking directly to him or her. This is an example of Generative AI in film generating vocals with the intent to entice fear. There is also a scene in the film that synchronizes a heartbeat and scare sequence to the viewer's resting and elevated heart rates. Also, the main storyline incorporates the viewer's closest loved one as the common name for hundreds of women missing throughout the world.

In the example of using the technology to encourage a positive change with "Whiteboard Challenge," "Exolatri" is an example of the technology being used to evoke fear and terror. In the age of artificial intelligence, Cinedapt will prevail with its patent and the originality it empowers to creators.



• **How can filmmakers and producers benefit from using Cinedapt® to create their films in terms of originality of content and return on investment?**

Cinedapt's primary users will be professional writers, producers, and directors in the film industry. I created and hold a copyright from 2007 for the first streaming service. Cinedapt is not competing in that oversaturated market, so the end consumer of the product will be unaware of Cinedapt directly. The viewer of the Cinedaptive film will engage via a licensing model with existing streaming services.

To summarize, Cinedapt is a reinvention of the film industry's production and distribution process. The current minimum viable product (MVP) and business model for Cinedapt touches all areas of production beginning with a new screenplay format. The entire filmmaking process now begins with a Cinedaptive screenplay as a guideline throughout the film's production and distribution pipeline.

Once the Cinedaptive screenplay is written, filmmakers can export an Edit Decision List (EDL) template from the screenplay for common editing programs such as Apple Final Cut Pro and Adobe Premiere Pro. The filming shot lists, scheduling, budgeting, and other documents are prepared for the pre-production and principal photography phases of film production.

An advantage filmmakers now have with test screenings of a Cinedaptive film is evaluating how well a particular scene or content does for a certain demographic prior to the theatrical release. For example, a different Digital Cinema Package (DCP) can be provided to each theater based on the location. Once released, the viewers will be able to enjoy a more immersive and personalized experience. Analytics from viewers is then taken into consideration when revising future versions of the film.

- **How does Cinedapt® change the way films are delivered and perceived by viewers, and how can this technology enter viewers' homes?**

A proof of concept for Cinedapt was exemplified with the theatrical premiere, screenings, and Cinedaptive release of "Whiteboard Challenge."

Prior to the theatrical premiere of "Whiteboard Challenge," the audience could vote for their favorite contestant. The theatrical screenings at the TCL Chinese Theatre and the Burbank International Film Festival each had different versions tailored to the audience attending. For the early beta to showcase how content can be personalized for each viewer, SXSW shortlisted "Whiteboard Challenge." A Cinedaptive version of the show will be available to the public later this year.

A very simple example of this could be for a scene in a film involving two mothers kissing. In this example, the filmmakers could perform test screenings then release different theatrical versions of the film based on location and demographics. The Cinedaptive version of this film could then be tailored to specific viewers for the best experience.



- **Can you explain how Cinedapt® works in terms of anti-piracy measures?**

Cinedapt's patented technology provides federal law enforcement a service to identify and prosecute criminals who pirate films in a comparable way to how DNA is used in forensics as evidence in solving crime. Each film created by Cinedapt® includes an indestructible tracking code embedded in the film.

This patented process is different from other services in that other anti-piracy companies and methods have been successfully bypassed. Cinedapt is also a verified vendor with the United States Federal Government.

Additionally, with a Cinedaptive film, why would someone want to pirate or steal another person's wedding video? At the very core of Cinedapt is the solution to film piracy.

As a promotion of this service, audiences can visit PiracyPlus.com to find out where any film can be watched and if it is protected with Cinedapt.

• **For those interested in learning more about Cinedapt®, where can they follow you and your work?**

<https://cinedapt.com> | <https://mkureth.com>

• **Thank you for sharing your insights with us. Is there anyone you would like to give a shoutout or dedicate these last words to?**

I would like to dedicate the last words to the reader of this interview. I welcome feedback and collaboration from others and look forward to hearing from professionals in the industry. Please reach out if you would like to learn more or have any questions.



EXOLATRY - Teaser - <https://vimeo.com/369737988>

CINEDAPT® - Promo - <https://vimeo.com/289606965>

WHITEBOARD CHALLENGE® - Sizzle Reel - <https://vimeo.com/415775714>