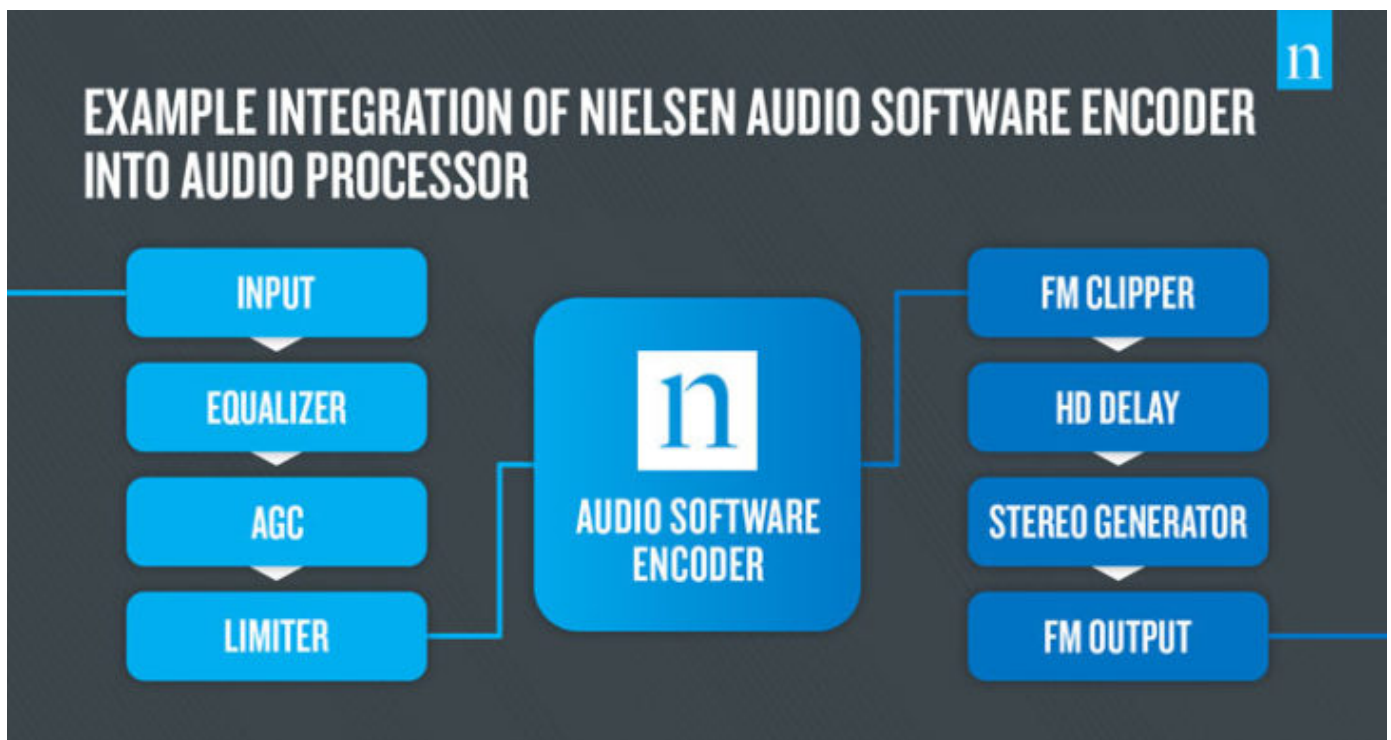# Nielsen PPM Is Ready for the Cloud

By [Nick Mannion](#) •
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Here's what to know about our Nielsen Audio Software Encoder

The author is director of product management, Nielsen Audio.

In today's modern landscape, there is no company or industry that has not considered moving some portion of its operation to the cloud.

The modern vernacular for data operations is cloud-based, and most things now operate from the cloud, including shopping, email, banking and many other conveniences in our modern lives.

The release of the Nielsen Audio Software Encoder will now bring your station's PPM encoding to the cloud.

If you are well-versed with PPM encoding, you are likely familiar with the dedicated rack unit, industrial-grade hardware encoder that is offered today. You probably have a rack full of these in your facility, with each one playing a critical role in ensuring your station's audience is properly counted.

The Nielsen Audio Software Encoder was born out of the simple idea to give you, the radio broadcasters, more options when it comes to your station's PPM encoding and to be ready to meet you in the cloud when your station(s) are ready to make that transition.

Simple idea

The concept behind the Nielsen Audio Software Encoder is simple.

We took the PPM encoding algorithm (Enhanced CBET) out of the hardware that it lives in today and made it available in the form of a software development kit (SDK). This SDK is then made available to industry participants enabling them to integrate PPM encoding into their products.

Once an integration is complete, Nielsen works with the manufacturer of that product to perform a rigorous certification process. This certification process ensures that the PPM encoding generated by the manufacturer's product meets all of Nielsen's encoding quality standards.

Today, the broadcast radio industry primarily utilizes an on-premise broadcast audio chain, and the initial Nielsen Audio Software Encoders have been largely with products created for that world. Additionally, Nielsen has been working with top audio processor manufacturers to integrate the Nielsen Audio Software Encoder into their products.

To date, we have certified integrations across a variety of Orban, Omnia and Wheatstone audio processors, with many more in the pipeline.

Three-phase rollout

In the near term, the Nielsen Audio Software Encoder will enable you to perform your station's PPM encoding in products from leading audio processor manufacturers that you have trusted with your station's sound for decades, while also providing the opportunity to reduce the footprint (rack space) consumed by each of your stations.

As we continue to evolve our industry and station playouts move away from single-purpose dedicated hardware in favor of either channel-in-a-box architectures or straight to cloud based approaches, the Nielsen Audio Software Encoder will be ready to power your station's PPM encoding.

Nielsen will release this capability in three waves: first AM, followed by FM and then streams. Each of these releases will be preceded by successful completion of a field evaluation using certified integrations on that platform.

We released this capability for AM stations at the end of 2020. We anticipate the release for FM to be in mid-2021, with streams to follow in the back half of the year.

As you continue to think about how your station's facility may evolve, I'd urge you to stay connected with your Nielsen client engineer via phone at (866) 767-7212 or email to _encoding@nielsen.com_, or through the Nielsen engineering

portal *https://engineeringportal.nielsen.com*, to ensure that you are up-to-date on the latest Nielsen certified software encoder integrations.

Whether the future of your broadcast playout remains on-premise or moves to the cloud, Nielsen, together with the industry, has innovative PPM encoding solutions that are ready for the next generation of radio broadcast facilities.

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