

## TV Asahi integrates YouTube and Google Maps in a new website to commemorate the March 2011 earthquake

TV Asahi is a leading Japanese broadcaster, producing news, entertainment, and sports content.

### OPPORTUNITY

TV Asahi wanted to create an online homage to the March 11, 2011 Great East Japan earthquake and tsunami so that the disaster would not be forgotten, but also so that future generations might be better prepared for disaster relief. To support this initiative, they saw an opportunity to develop a new content management system (CMS) that could integrate YouTube videos with Google Maps, displaying location-specific archival footage of how different locations were rebuilding after the disaster. They hoped this interactive format would help bring their earthquake project to a broad audience — and that the technology could be used going forward for other, similar projects.

### APPROACH

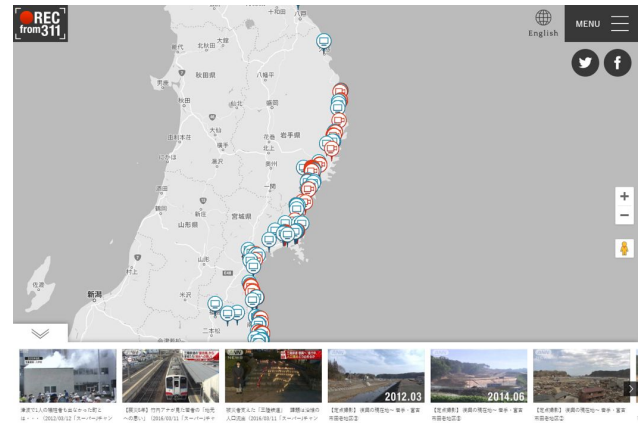
To commemorate the 2011 earthquake, TV Asahi created a website, “[REC From 311](#),” that overlays archival footage of the natural disaster and the recovery aftermath on an interactive map of Japan. Users can navigate to specific locations or time periods on the maps, enabling different views into the rebuilding process. To support this project, they developed a CMS that can take archival videos, connect YouTube to Maps, and display content in an interactive way. They used an existing team within the company, and focused on developing the proprietary software that could scale to other projects.

**Getting the team together:** In order to bring this ambitious project to life, TV Asahi would need to create a bespoke CMS. They brought the web, design, and systems teams together to outline and execute a plan of action.

**Developing the CMS:** The team had very specific tasks they wanted the CMS to achieve — for example, sort clips of reconstruction projects across the country chronologically to show progress, and then link videos to certain locations. They developed a new system for uploading videos, for sorting by location, and then pinning the videos to specific places on Google Maps. They then developed an interface to effectively edit and upload videos into Maps. With the new software, they created the interactive website “REC from 311” where users could navigate to see different locations that the earthquake and tsunami hit, and see how those spots have recovered over time.

**Packaging and presentation:** TV Asahi knew how important presentation was, so they spent significant time and energy dedicated to getting it right. This included aspects like creating an introductory video, testing different soundtrack options, choosing thumbnails, etc. In order to reach a more global audience, they also produced an English language version of “REC from 311.”

**Scaling the software to other projects:** The project was so successful that they quickly scaled the software to other use cases (e.g., other natural disasters, cherry blossom forecasts, and festivals in local areas). They are also developing a whole website about everyday disaster prevention built with their proprietary CMS.



### RESULTS

TV Asahi successfully developed a new CMS that they tested on one project and rolled out to others. In doing so, they significantly grew their audience.

- **Within a single day** (March 11th, 2019), the “REC from 311” page had over 103K views.
- **Over 300K accumulated page views** within eight months of launch.
- **The total number of video views** for “REC from 311” exceeds 3.5M.

### LEARNINGS

**New formats bring new audiences:** While the primary audience for TV Asahi is normally men in their 30s, they found that experimenting with new formats and new ways of presenting content attracted viewers from different demographics.

**There’s opportunity in archive:** Broadcasters often have a wealth of archival footage, so take a page out of TV Asahi’s book and find new ways to repackage existing content from the archives to tell a new story. It’s a cost-effective way of video storytelling and can help increase your audience.

**Linking stories leads to more views:** By linking the YouTube videos to Google Maps, viewers were encouraged to explore the site and watch a lot of different footage. People spent longer on the site, and watched more content than if the videos and stories had not been linked through the map. But you don’t have to use locations as the driving force of your narrative — find a way to create a path through your content that works for you.

“**Breaking news programs are basically broadcast only once, but archived videos can be distributed many times.**”

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