Du Tuesday campaign wins the first-ever Gold Lion for the UAE at Cannes
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Come and see our solutions at NAB 2014, booth N2513, or visit www.miranda.com/cloud-bpro for more information.
I must confess that although I’m no football fan, I was just as caught up in World Cup fever as everyone else. I think I even went so far as to secretly root for Argentina, although it didn’t particularly break my heart when Germany won.

What fascinated me about the World Cup was not so much the sport itself as the statistics on the number of people watching the matches on TV and online, and the multiple interactions on social media networks that triggered social events around matches and compelled even those less inclined to watch to switch on the TV and see what all the fuss was about. There is no doubt that this year’s event broke all previous television viewing records across the world. Chris O’Hearn, the UAE’s audience measurement guru, elaborates on this in his analysis this month.

This year’s World Cup was also declared the biggest multimedia sporting event in history, with more people watching matches and highlights online than ever before and 672 million tweets on the event.

Of course, all of this has had a huge impact on our industry and created great opportunities for both broadcast manufacturers and solutions providers alike to test new products and services that they have been harping about at the shows.

Sony used this opportunity to drum up support for 4K, while FIFA worked with the Fraunhofer Heinrich Hertz Institute in Berlin to pioneer a 360-degree viewing experience of the World Cup Final with a panoramic, Ultra HD OmniCam. The technology was part of the production of the World Cup, alongside live 4K and 8K productions of some of the matches.

Of course, as with all things today, the Berlin institute has promised that OmniCam video content will soon be available as second screen apps on tablets, smartphones and laptops. This will actually give users the opportunity to navigate through the stadium and serve as their own camera operators.

Wonder what will come next.

Welcome

On this month’s cover...
Manasvi Gosalia of Dejavu on winning the UAE’s first-ever Gold Lion at Cannes.

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Beyond distributing broadcast equipment, First Gulf Company is a major force in the broadcast systems sector in the region with the most significant achievements in HD TV Production and Post-Production facilities and studios. FGC’s capabilities cover the design, implementation, integration and support of the most sophisticated systems. Additionally, FGC provides turnkey solutions in all systems including high-capacity Media Asset Management and Digital Archiving Systems.

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Ahmed Saeed Al Mansouri, CEO of TV and Radio at DMI, has clarified that Dubai One is undergoing a routine review of programmes and media content. Al Mansouri said that there is no administrative decision to discontinue the channel or terminate the services of its employees. He added that the distribution of the programmes included in the channel’s grid is based on studies and market research that will help in the formulation of a clear strategy of the most followed and watched programmes by the audience.

Sarah Jarman, Director of Dubai One channel, said: “As part of the DMI bouquet of channels, Dubai One aims to attract more audiences by offering the latest entertainment programming. The channel will be focusing on more Hollywood and international movies, top dramas and sitcoms as well as exclusive world programmes.”

All of Dubai One’s programmes are under review in order to enhance and develop our new programme grid scheduled for September 14, 2014. No decision has been taken yet regarding the restructuring or cancellation of the existing programmes as any such decision will need approval from DMI’s board of directors.

IBC has revised the dates of its inaugural Middle East event in the UAE in light of the recent announcement confirming the Abu Dhabi Media Summit.

Following on from IBC’s announcement last August to develop a series of global events under the title ‘IBC Content Everywhere’, the MENA dates have now been confirmed for January 20 – 22, 2015.

OSN is the subject of a full takeover bid from an unnamed buyer, its parent company KIPCO has revealed. The deal is expected to be one of the largest acquisitions of a regional business in recent years. OSN was valued at $4.3bn by Arqaam Capital last year.

Alrai TV - Kuwait will replace the monitor stack in its playout room, and two production and news control rooms. The broadcaster will now deploy APANTAC 32 input analogue/SD/HD multiviewers. The new equipment has already been shipped and will reach the facility this month. The installation will begin soon after.

BSA to set up HD studio in Cairo

UAE-based Broadcast Systems Arabia (BSA) has signed a deal to set up a three-camera HD studio in Cairo, Egypt. The name of the production house was not revealed; however, BroadcastPro ME has learnt that BSA will provide a turnkey solution for the production facility. Muhammad Irfan Gondal, CEO, BSA, confirmed that the equipment for the facility has already been purchased.

“We have deployed four of our staff at the facility and we will commence work on the project soon. The installations will be completed this month,” said Gondal.

The equipment includes, among other things, three HXC-100 Sony HD cameras, VCT-U14 tripod attachment for the video camera, the HDVF-C550W Sony electronic viewfinder and the RCP-1500 standard Sony remote control panel.

Broadcast Systems Arabia recently signed an exclusivity agreement with Italian Acoustic Engineering firm Reson8 for the representation, sales and service across the UAE. The agreement will give UAE-based recording studios, practice rooms, broadcasting studios, theatres, concert halls, gyms, restaurants, schools, places of worship and home cinemas access to Reson8’s acoustic treatment and design facilities.

IBC Content Everywhere MENA to be held in January

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IN FIGURES

4.17m

Or 1.4% is the quarter-on-quarter increase in the number of pay-TV subscribers during Q1 of 2014 in EMEA and Asia Pacific regions, while year-on-year they grew 5.2%.

Source: informitv Multiscreen Index

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In Figures

80.7m

Is the number of unique users of ESPN across computers, smartphones and tablets, the largest total for a single month in category history, a year-on-year increase of 56%.

Source: ESPN

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Twofour54 partners with digital platform Lamsa

Twofour54 has partnered with Lamsa, an Arabic edutainment platform for children. Lamsa is a digital platform for delivering educational Arabic content through interactive and entertaining applications on smartphones and tablets. As part of the long-term strategic partnership, Lamsa will relocate all management and content activities from its offices in KSA, Jordan and Lebanon to Abu Dhabi.

Afkar.me shows 200% hike in applications

Afkar.me, a digital incubator and accelerator, has received more than 150 applications for its second round intake in Dubai. Applications were received from 29 countries from as far afield as Brazil, China and Sudan, while Egyptian entrepreneurs submitted the highest number of ideas, followed by the UAE and Bahrain.

Afkar.me, which is presently incubating two e-commerce startups – TheDressRoom.com and TheCurve.me.com – was developed by Intigral to encourage and support the growth of MENA’s digital ecosystem.

Juan Jose de la Torre, VP of Digital at Intigral, said: “MENA’s digital startup sector is in a growth phase. We truly believe that this region has the ability to produce digital products that will not only take off in the region, but gain global recognition.”

Cobham powers Abu Dhabi sailing championship

Cobham has announced the successful deployment of its SOLO 4 wireless transmitter and PRORXB receive system for live television coverage of the Abu Dhabi Yacht Club’s Ghanada Dhow Sailing Championship held last month.

Cobham, in conjunction with Dubai-based technology solution provider Glocom SNG, installed transmitters on two race event chase boats and a helicopter, a receive and transmit ship, plus onshore receive systems at the ADYC headquarters and Nation Towers, the two skyscrapers near the southern tip of Abu Dhabi.

According to Rakesh Mishra, Senior Engineer at Glocom: “Cobham’s transmit and receive systems worked perfectly. Reliable, high-quality video and audio was sent and received from the chase boats and helicopter throughout the race from all the supplied links.”

Eighty of the 60ft dhows, each rigged with two masts and sails that closely resemble the historic dhows used for pearl diving and fishing in days gone by, were involved in this year’s races.

Mobily signs MoU with Almajd TV Network

Mobily has signed a memorandum of understanding related to a strategic partnership with Almajd TV Network with the objective of providing exclusive services to Almajd Network subscribers.

The MoU was signed by Khalid Al Kaf, MD and Chief Executive Engineer of Mobily, and Ahmed bin Abdulaziz Al-Fayez, Almajd TV Network Chief Executive, at Mobily’s headquarters in Riyadh.

Cobham PRORXB at the yacht race.

IN FIGURES

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Tiffen takes great pride in introducing the Steadicam® Shadow V™ camera stabilizing system, a low cost big rig that performs like the Ultra2®. Shadow V is designed to be user-friendly, field-serviceable, tool-free, straightforward, and versatile so the operator can quickly and easily configure the rig to the best advantage for each shot. Change the sled length, balance, inertia, and go to low mode, all without tools, extra parts, or fuss and bother. It is a solid, versatile and fast system.
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Deluxe, a trusted partner to the world’s most successful content creators, owners and distributors, brings its world class expertise to broadcasters. Deluxe LeapCloud™ a revolutionary, IP-based playout solution provides full broadcast-grade capabilities to ensure your channels and services stand out anywhere in the world. Monitor, record and control all of your media assets securely anytime and anywhere. Whether you’re expanding globally or looking to streamline your business, Deluxe LeapCloud™ puts the control back in the hands of broadcasters.

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mark.johnson@bydeluxe.com
bydeluxe.com
Clacket Productions extends filming of The Brothers

Clacket Productions, in partnership with twofour54, has announced the extension of filming of the popular Syrian drama, Al Ikhwa (The Brothers). The next 100 episodes of the series will now be filmed in Abu Dhabi until October.

Filming on the complex family drama commenced in Abu Dhabi in February 2014, and is taking place at prime locations in the UAE capital, such as Al Saadiyat Island luxury villas.

Maryam Al Mheiri, Chief Operating Officer of twofour54, said: “We are delighted that Clacket Productions is continuing its association with Abu Dhabi through their hit series Al Ikhwa. The drama has been hugely popular with audiences across the entire region and not only does it position the Emirate as a leading media hub, it also reflects facets of this cosmopolitan city.”

Eyad Al Najjar, Executive Director of Clacket Productions, said: “Al Ikhwa is a big hit, which is why we have increased the number of episodes in the series and extended its filming in Abu Dhabi.”

Global broadcasters celebrate 'outstanding' World Cup

According to data from PEPPTV — an informal grouping of broadcasters’ trade bodies and sales houses, World Cup 2014 shattered records from kick-off to the end of extra time in the final.

TV broadcasters around the world joined in celebrating an outstanding set of results from the tournament. The group matches had already set new TV records in a number of markets across the world. Sales of television advertising and subscriptions have also benefitted.

Germany’s semi-final victory over Brazil was watched online by a record 8.4m fans across Europe and the Middle East including 2.35m visitors on mobile platforms operated by broadcasters. And viewer engagement was up, with the same match generating a new record for any sports event of more than 35m tweets.
RIEDEL'S NEXT STEP

More info? IBC Stand 10.A31

RIEDEL.net
Angola’s TV Zimbo migrates to HD with VSN solution

VSN and British systems integrator VSC have executed the migration of Angolan channel TV Zimbo to HD. TV Zimbo is the first private channel in Angola, part of the Medianova Group, that broadcasts nationwide, over terrestrial and cable, via the TV Cabo platform, and internationally via satellite on the DStv and Zap platforms.

VSN’s solution powers the interoperability of VSN modules through the VSNSPIDER framework, enabling communication between different solutions.

The turnkey solution includes the upgrade of MCR baseband equipment to HD. The automation system, VSNMUTCIM PLAY, interfaces the new Miranda Imagestore and PressStation for channel branding together with the new NVISION 9000 router control, facilitating the automation for linear distribution.

The VSNNEWS solution covers the complete newsroom and studio production. This solution includes the VSNWires module allowing for the reception of news wires from the agencies together with the associated video media.

Arab Film and TV awards announces 25 categories

The first edition of the annual Arab Film and TV Awards (AFTVA) has announced 25 awards categories that will honour the very best of Arab film and TV talent from around the world.

The award categories for the best Arab film and television talent are: Best Film, Best Actress in a Leading Role, Best Actor in a Leading Role, Best Director, Best Original Screenplay, Best Cinematography, Best Film Editing, Best Original Music Score, Best Short Film, Best Documentary, Best Leading Actor TV, Best Leading Actress TV, Best TV Drama Series, Best TV Soap and Continuing Drama Series, Best TV Comedy Programme, Best Factual TV Programme, Best Light Entertainment Programme, Best TV Commercial, Lifetime Achievement Award and Rising Star Award. Four awards have been created to honour Best International Film, Best International Actor, Best International Actress and a Western Lifetime Achievement Award.

Aereo asks to be reclassified as cable company

American over-the-top (OTT) provider Aereo has petitioned the US courts to be classified as a cable company. Such a move would ironically take advantage of the view of a majority of the judges, who regarded the OTT service as acting like a cable company, and thus liable to such companies’ terms of operation when it came to copyright. Aereo’s streaming service was declared illegal by the US Supreme Court in June.

Twofour Arabia appoints Yara Awad as GM

Twofour Arabia has appointed Yara Awad as General Manager to oversee Twofour’s UAE-based operations. Based at Twofour Arabia’s offices in Twofour54, Abu Dhabi, Awad will manage a team of producers and production managers, providing digital services and broadcast television to brands, broadcasters and the public sector. Awad will report to Jonney Steven, Twofour’s Head of MENA.

Twofour Arabia is the MENA region subsidiary of the international media group Twofour, with offices in London, Plymouth, Los Angeles and Philadelphia. The entity works with some of the biggest brands and broadcasters in the region on projects that range from full length broadcast series to online digital content.

NEW MD FOR NETIA

Thierry Gandilhon has joined NETIA as its Managing Director. To this new leadership role, Gandilhon brings more than 25 years of technical experience in the field of software development, as well as a strong record of establishing and building successful technology companies.

Twofour Arabia appoints Yara Awad as GM

Yara Awad, GM, Twofour Arabia.

Yara Awad, GM, Twofour Arabia.
ABS and Arabsat sign multi-transponder deal

ABS and Arabsat have signed a strategic commercial agreement for a multi-transponder lifetime Ku-band payload on the new ABS-3A satellite planned for launch in late 2014 or early 2015.

This Ku-band payload deal will provide Arabsat with additional growth opportunities to serve their customers in the MENA region. The ABS-3A satellite will be one of the world’s first all-electric propulsion satellites with nearly 8 kilowatts of EOL payload power and up to a total of 48 C and Ku-band transponders. It will be located at 3° West and will offer expanded capacity connecting the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Khalid Balkheyour, President and CEO of Arabsat said: “Arabsat has a request for proposals for four new satellites at different orbital locations. We continue to see rapid increase in customers’ demand on telecommunication and broadcasting services across the region.”

Blackmagic Design announces new Apple ProRes for cameras

Blackmagic Design has announced the immediate availability of Camera 1.8.2 software which adds three new Apple ProRes file formats for the Blackmagic Cinema Camera, Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Camera and Blackmagic Production Camera 4K.

Customers using Blackmagic Design cameras will be able to get smaller video file sizes allowing for longer recording durations on the same media card.

Yahoo buys video streaming startup RayV

Yahoo has bought video streaming startup RayV. The financial terms of the deal, however, were not disclosed.

Yahoo is focusing on ramping up its offerings for streaming video live or on demand. News of Yahoo’s latest acquisition came on the same day that it unveiled a lineup of free streaming concerts by international music stars such as Usher, Michael Franti and The Dave Matthews Band.

LOUD Technologies partners with NMK for distributorship

Nicolas Kyvernitis Electronics Enterprises (NMK) has been appointed distributor by LOUD Technologies Inc., for Mackie, a well-known name in the field of dedicated pro audio and music.

NMK will take over the product distribution for Mackie, in the Middle East, covering countries that haven’t been directly covered before. The distributor will also provide maintenance and servicing for Mackie’s new and old models.

RTW announces legacy trade-in programme

RTW has announced an extensive trade-in programme for its legacy equipment. Through October 31, 2014, customers can return any number of functioning devices from the RTW Peakmeter, PortaMonitor, DigitalMonitor or SurroundMonitor ranges and purchase the same amount of new devices in any configuration at an extra discount of 10%. For additional details, customers are encouraged to call their dealers or systems vendors. They can also contact RTW directly.

Canon’s Creative Force

Canon Middle East has appointed Creative Force to expand its professional video business in Iraq. Focused on the broadcast and production industry, the collaboration is part of Canon’s strategy of diversification into new business domains such as professional cinematography and pro-video.

In Iraq, the number of radio and TV stations has increased rapidly since 2003. According to a BBC report, up to 97% of homes have a satellite dish and there are more than 30 Iraq-facing satellite networks.

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The Blackmagic Studio Camera features built-in talkback using general aviation headsets, so you get better noise cancelling and comfort at a much lower cost! You also get built-in tally lights that illuminate automatically when your camera is live so your cast and crew can easily see which cameras are on air! Talkback and tally signals are embedded in the return video connection to the camera, so you don’t have to run separate cables!

The active Micro Four Thirds lens mount is compatible with an incredibly wide range of lenses and adapters. You can use your existing photo lenses for smaller setups and fixed camera use, or connect incredible broadcast ENG lenses via a B4 lens adapter. You can even use third party adapters for high end feature film PL mount lenses, so it’s easy to customize your camera to suit any sized production!

Talkback and Tally
The Blackmagic Studio Camera includes the world’s largest viewfinder built in! The massive 10” high resolution screen has a super wide viewing angle and extremely high brightness so you can see your images with amazing detail even in bright daylight! This professional grade viewfinder makes it easy to frame, focus, change iris settings and make subtle adjustments with full confidence even when you’re live on air!

Optical Fiber and 6G-SDI Connections
Connect Blackmagic Studio Camera to your live production switcher with optical fiber cables connected to the built-in fiber port or use regular 6G-SDI BNC video cables! The video connections are bi-directional and carry HD or Ultra HD video with talkback, tally, embedded audio and even camera remote control. With standard, low cost fiber optic cable, you can connect to your cameras over massive distances!

Full Size HD Viewfinder
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The Blackmagic Studio Camera is the world’s most advanced broadcast camera for live, multi camera production! It features an incredibly tough, lightweight machined magnesium design with a massive 10” viewfinder, 4 hour battery, talkback, tally indicators, phantom powered microphone ports and built in optical fiber and SDI connections. That’s a fully self contained, broadcast grade, live camera solution!

The new Blackmagic Studio Camera has optical fiber, talkback, tally and massive 10” viewfinder!

www.blackmagicdesign.com/me
*Excludes duties, shipping and sales tax.
New news channel Alarab to launch with Viz Mosart

Alarab, an independent 24-hour news channel to be launched this year, is being built around two Viz Mosart studio automation systems from Vizrt. Alarab, which will broadcast from Bahrain, is entering a fiercely competitive news market in the Middle East. This is Vizrt’s first major sale of Viz Mosart licences since the newscast automation solutions specialist became part of the Vizrt group.

The deal, for two Viz Mosart newsroom automation licences, will cover the channel’s two studios in Manama, the Bahraini capital. The larger studio will be for a 24-hour rolling news live broadcast, and the Viz Mosart studio automation will control equipment from Snell, Sony, Calrec, Avid and Vizrt graphics, among others. The Viz Mosart system will also integrate closely with Avid iNews and with the LSB Virtual Studio Management (VSM) switching and management system.

The second studio will be used to produce news features and packages to insert into the rolling news output, where Viz Mosart will interface with the Avid Airspeed 5000 editing environment and Vizrt graphics.

The Alarab installation will be the first Viz Mosart installation which interfaces directly with Avid Interplay. The Viz Mosart ActiveX functionality in Viz Mosart allows it to appear as a web client to Avid Interplay.

Alarab also purchased a full compliment of Vizrt broadcast graphics and media asset management (MAM) tools.

UAE TRA publishes Twitter code of conduct

The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has launched a white paper regarding Twitter usage which comes as part of ‘The UAE Social Media White Papers’ collection. The series of awareness documents is designed specifically to highlight the terms and conditions of the most popular social networks in use in the UAE. The latest release focuses on Twitter, which has around 360,000 users in the UAE who share around 2.5m tweets per day.

OSN introduces responsive website

OSN has revamped its web site (osn.com) to provide visitors seamless access across multiple devices.

Featuring a new ‘responsive design’ that automatically optimises the website for any device, from smartphones to tablets, visitors can now surf, share and purchase an OSN subscription on-the-go anytime, anywhere at their convenience. OSN’s revamped website also boasts an enriched content offering, allowing visitors the ability to share pages via social media and personalise their experience.

EBU invests in Snell Alchemist

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) has made a further investment in Snell Alchemist Ph.C-HD standards conversion systems to enable SD and HD TV coverage of global sports and entertainment events.

The EUROVISION network, operated by the EBU, integrated Snell products to deliver premium television coverage from the FIFA World Cup venues to leading broadcasters across the world.

IN FIGURES

10m

The number of tweets generated by Arabs every day. There are 258m daily views of Youtube videos, and 90m of them come from KSA. 63% of KSA population uses smartphones.

Source: Social4ce

My-HD now offers four Turner channels

My-HD has signed a new partnership with Turner Broadcasting to offer four channels to its programming suite. The new channels are CNN International HD, HLN (Headline News), Cartoon Network Arabic +2 and Turner Classic Movies (TCM). This is the first time that CNNi HD in DTH technology (direct to home) and HLN are available in the region.
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Aflamnah turns two

Aflamnah, the UAE’s first crowdfunding initiative, turned two last month. It was first announced at the Cannes Film Festival 2012 and launched on July 1 of that year. The platform has crowdfunded 70 projects since its launch, out of which 60 have been films.

According to Vida Rizq, Principal Founder, Aflamnah, the initiative has taken on a momentum of its own and attracted global interest.

“Our traffic comes from all over the world. So we have a good reach but our focus is to educate the market here and while we have traffic from all over the region, we really want to bring crowdfunding into the mainstream in the Arab world,” she says.

The journey according to Rizq has been very encouraging; she says that each project that Aflamnah has supported has been special. While films remain the main focus of the initiative, close to 10% of the projects crowdfunded by Aflamnah have been other things, such as a community theatre, a mobile art bus, a website, illustrated novels and a photography exhibition curated by MEFCC.

“We did our first live crowdfunding event with We Can Be Heroes during Comic Con this year and that was a huge success,” comments Rizq.

A World Not Ours, Saken and Slow Death are some of the latest projects that Aflamnah has funded.

“We had three Oscar nominations this year, which is testimony to the awesome talent we have. In fact, one of our crowdfunding projects was raising money to qualify for the Oscars 2015. So we think, increasingly, we will see films from the region making an impact on the international stage,” she comments.

Aflamnah is rewards-based but there are also donation-based and investment platforms coming up as well. The platform also plans to launch other hybrid formats.

Aflamnah now offers several other services including translation and script consulting. It recently launched a service to help people make their pitch for video and movie trailers.

“We have two distinct audiences – those who have ideas and those who are interested in supporting them – so we talk to everyone. We do like to find great ideas,” she says.

Social media has been instrumental in the growth of this initiative, agrees Rizq.

“We enjoy having our projects introduce the concept and Aflamnah to their networks and this way we spread the word to a much broader and much more diverse group of people. We have had grandmothers and teenagers take part and we love that. It’s something everybody can participate in! And what we love most is that it creates conversations. “People talk about what they do and if they support a project, they tend to tell their friends because, after all, crowdfunding is regarded to be ‘cool’.

“We also take part in events such as MEFCC or DIFF and we do crowdfunding workshops across the region. Most recently, we did one in Cairo and we are planning our next one already,” she adds.

People love human stories. And they love to be part of a success story. Social documentaries have been particularly popular for crowdfunding because they also lend themselves to reaching out to groups, associations and individuals who show an interest and a concern for a certain topic.

What about sustaining such an initiative over a longer period of time? How viable are such platforms, one would ask.

“The secret to success in crowdfunding terms is really about knowing your audience and connecting with them. We say it’s all about emotion not promotion and that the 3 C’s of crowdfunding are connect, captivate and convert.

“So any story has the power to do that but you need to target the right people and with the right social media strategy – nothing is impossible! But nothing in life is easy and we really encourage people to plan their campaigns properly,” concludes Rizq.
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For the first time in decades the World Cup coincided with Ramadan, so there was much speculation as to what the impact might be. Would it be a month of two halves? Here’s what emerged.

Yes, we all know that the ruthless and efficient Germans swept all before them, even showing the Brazilians a thing or two along the way. But who was lifting the silverware and who was sick as a parrot when it came to television and audiences?

Look away now if you don’t want to see the results, but in the end, I think it was the equivalent of grinding out a goalless draw. People watched, but not in huge numbers and it is difficult to see, with any sense of certainty, that Ramadan had much impact on viewing.

Group stages
As with the tournament itself, we have to start with the group stages, and this is probably where there is a clear effect of bringing in extra viewing. The group stages saw games at 8pm, 11pm and 2am most nights – football heaven for fans, and they seem to have risen to the challenge.

Although the 8pm timeslot stayed much the same in terms of total numbers watching TV, the 11pm and 2am slots had clear increases of more than 7% and 13%, respectively. There must have been a lot of sleepy faces in the office each morning. The figures

WHO WON THE WORLD CUP?

For the first time in decades the World Cup coincided with Ramadan, so there was much speculation as to what the impact might be. Would it be a month of two halves? Here’s what emerged.
shown are for households, so you need to multiply by about four to get a figure for individuals.

But that was largely in June. What would happen when we got to the serious stage, the quarter- and semi-finals? These critical matches took place during Ramadan. Would there be a predicted knockout or a shocking upset?

In the early stages, with multiple channels and audio, it was technically difficult to reliably pinpoint which viewing was World Cup’s and which was not, although we still have to give the caveat that these figures relate only to the main Arabic channels.

This is perhaps where the surprises start to come in. Only beIN Sports can tell us exactly how many subscribed, but the range of the UAE households watching most of the later-stage matches seemed to move between the 40,000 to 60,000 range, so we’re looking at around 200,000 people.

It’s clear many people went to out-of-home venues like cafés and bars to enjoy the communal atmosphere, but unfortunately, a home-based metre system can’t capture that viewing.

We can’t be sure, but this may explain the decrease in viewing for the final game, with many people choosing to watch that match elsewhere, even when they could have watched at home.

To watch the World Cup at home you had to, first of all, be a pay-TV subscriber, which rules out a very large part of the population, and then you had to be prepared to pay an additional USD 120, which cuts down the potential audience much further – not everyone is THAT interested in football or prepared to stay up all night to watch it.

We get a slightly different picture when we look at the minute-by-minute viewing with the final match appearing to be an exception to the rule, perhaps because of those other factors like out-of-home viewing.

Although the final had the lowest average over the whole game, it did bring in the highest peak in close to 80,000 homes.

In fact, it had two peaks, one as the second half was getting underway and the other as the match went into extra time, and clearly interest built in expectation of a result or penalties.

In the other three games, the viewing was reasonably consistent, apart from a big drop at half-time in the third-place playoff. This suggests that the final match was under a different influence, but to be honest, I’m not sure if I have a clear explanation for the difference – sometimes research is like that and leads you to expect the unexpected.

Was this the Twitter Final?

I saw many interesting animations and much PR about the amount of tweeting generated by football. One could be forgiven for thinking it was all about social media.

At the risk of appearing boring and conventional, I often try to remind audiences at conferences and panel discussions that we shouldn’t get too carried away by social media. Let’s not lose sight of the fact that those millions of people tweeting during the World Cup are tweeting about something they are watching on television. The figure for tweets during the final was around 35m worldwide.

Twitter doesn’t say how many people tweeted, just how many tweets there were, so in research terms it is not unduplicated reach. For all we know, it could be 7m people sending five tweets each. But even if it was individuals, compare that to the worldwide TV audience, expected to be 1bn (in 2010 the final audience was 909m).

There were 41m television viewers in Germany alone, with another 12m out of home. And that isn’t just taking 10 seconds to send a one-word tweet, that’s watching nearly two hours of football.

Global live sporting events are the last thing that will ever disappear from TV, and in that competition, television is Germany to social media’s Liechtenstein.

Christopher O’Hearn is GM of Emirates Media Measurement Company, which has rolled out ‘tview’, the UAE’s television ratings and audience measurement system and the first in the Middle East.
It was a moment of glory for the UAE ad film industry when a homegrown ad campaign won a Gold Lion at Cannes. It was the first time ever that a UAE commercial had struck gold at Cannes in the film category.

The win came as a long overdue breakthrough for the region. The Middle East had previously won on international platforms for print and outdoor campaigns, but the region had never won in the film category. This year was a glorious year with multiple wins for the region, with Ogilvy winning Titanium for integrated advertising while Impact BBDO won Gold for radio.

du Tuesday’s Gold film wins were for Too Complicated and Too Depressing spots. These two films were a part of a series of four short films created by Leo Burnett, produced by Dejavu and directed by Ali Ali and Maged Nassar to promote du’s ‘Cinema Tuesdays’. The films were nominated in the category – Television & Cinema. Titled Too Complicated, Too Boring, Too Scary and Too Depressing, each of the four films belongs to a different film genre and evokes different human emotions.

“After winning three MENA Crystals, 23 trophies at Lynx, including the best production house and the Lynx Palm Award, we were quite confident that we had created something special and had a strong case at an international platform such as Cannes,” says Manasvi Gosalia, Executive Producer at Dubai-based production house Dejavu.

“It feels special to be in the spotlight and get noticed, not only on a global platform but also to be recognised locally. Nine out of 6,000 entries won a gold Lion at Cannes and we were one of them,” he adds.

It was a special campaign that culminated in the most special way, according to Gosalia.

The campaign
Du’s ‘Cinema Tuesdays’ offer two cinema tickets for the price of one and encourage cinema-goers not to see films alone.

According to Gosalia, Leo Burnett’s objective was clear – create an insightful clutter-breaking campaign that makes waves globally and locally.

Dejavu was chosen to execute the project after a three way bid. The agency wrote the initial idea and was clear from the start that it wanted to work with well-known Egyptian director Ali Ali.

“We believed that Ali Ali was the right director to take this idea forward. He has a very interesting body of work and
is one of the top directors in the region," says Gosalia.

It took about six months to get the project off the ground, from paper to film.

“Few days before the production, the director suggested an

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Manasvi Gosalia, Executive Producer, Dejavu

interesting way of doing the production; Leo Burnett liked it, worked with us to develop the idea as a team and sold it to Du. Our client Ahmed Zeki of Du was brave in letting us shoot both sets of ideas – the initial approved one and the new suggestion," says Gosalia.

To achieve the agency's requirement of creating a clutter-breaker, four different moods were created in the films. The films had to have an element of surprise.

“The film, for a change, didn't require us to localise it. We didn't have to show any cultural references. That meant we could do what we wanted creatively,” comments Gosalia.

The shoot took place over the Christmas holidays in Lebanon.

“We decided to shoot in Lebanon for several reasons. Firstly, we required those locations. We wanted snow and forests as the backdrop. Plus, they do have a good talent pool there. All in all, with the environment we wanted to shoot in, the availability of talent and considering its cost effectiveness, it made sense to shoot in Lebanon,” explains Gosalia.

The films have a totally different look and feel. For one, they do not have the colour and fast cuts that are typical of most commercials.

Leo Burnett was very clear in what they wanted and how they wanted this project to unfold.

The look was captured during the shoot on camera, so the art director had a key role here. The films were shot using ARRI Alexa, which came in handy in creating the look that the director wanted. The DoP and the director worked out the exact colour tones, based on which the wardrobe was planned and the
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mood was created. Too Depressing, for instance, has an Eastern European milieu and is clearly inspired by films from that region. Too Scary was shot in a forest to create the look and feel of a typical Hollywood horror flick.

Too Complicated was a difficult concept to present. It’s set in a room with three people speaking different languages at the same time, while Too Boring has two people sitting in a car doing nothing. The audience is initially intrigued by the film, and after 45 seconds comes the tag line that says it’s too boring – or too complicated, or too scary, or too depressing – to watch a film alone. A different one for each genre.

“There was not much required in terms of visual effects, it was more about realising the director’s vision. Everything was shot on real locations. The same viewer at the end of each film reacts differently to each of the four genres shown,” comments Gosalia.

After filming in Lebanon the films were graded in Beirut and edited in Cairo. “We used Dejavu Lebanon for production and post production support. The films were edited on FCP and graded on Resolve. Yet in the end result the style of editing and grading is very different to that used more commonly. It is not saturated and colourful. Everything in terms of look, feel and the music score has the makings of a feature film,” he adds.

However, Gosalia points out that the tools didn’t make these films but the concept did.

Shooting over the holidays was a challenge. It was not easy to get everyone together to pull the shoot through.

“As they say, the road to gold is never golden. Our experience on the shoot was everything but dull. While we were hard pressed for time, there were sprinklings of adventure too,” points out Gosalia.
Join the community
The producer recalls: “There was also a bomb blast on the first day of our shoot. We had just picked up our art director and were barely 500m away from location. “There was a major storm and torrential rain on the day of the shoot and we almost missed the production, but the rain happened to be a blessing in disguise because it gave us the foggy look that we were looking for. We were lucky that the rain stopped just before the shoot began.

“These were long shooting days, where we’d start at 6am and end at 2am. One of the main reasons for shooting in Lebanon was the snow. The day we wanted to shoot we had no snow, so we got snow tankers to create artificial snow.

“But these are challenges that one takes in one’s stride. In hindsight I feel every bit of it was worthwhile,” comments Gosalia.

Getting the right team to execute it was critical. Everyone had to be on the same page, so choosing the right people was important. The commercials ran for the first time in cinemas in January 2014.

“We decided to enter the campaign for nominations at Cannes Lions because of the success we had with it at Lynx. It was a big collective effort. We pitched in together and won together.

“Two days before the awards the Cannes Lions jury shared the shortlist with us. It was surreal. We were competing against countries that have a huge appetite for such ads and they invest millions. They take risks and have no creative restrictions. We work within a culturally sensitive region, and so to compete against such established entities and still win is a huge win for the region as a whole.

“Television is difficult to win because the works that come out of the US and Europe are mostly big-budget, one to two million dollar projects. To work with a quarter of that budget and still win a gold is hugely inspirational, not just for our company but also for the entire region,” concludes Gosalia.

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Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC) and Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) chose WASP3D’s real-time on-air graphics solutions to broadcast FIFA World Cup 2014. The project began in early June, a week before the World Cup, and the solution was handed over to the end user just in time when the matches began.

WASP3D had one week to design both the solutions. Commenting on the project, Deependra Rathi, Vice President – EMEA, WASP3D says: “For these two projects, in particular, we had to adhere to a very stringent timeline as the projects had to be up and running for the World Cup broadcast. Not only was the solution deployed on time, but we also managed to train the staff on-site to use the software. The live broadcast went smoothly thereafter, with added elements, thereby enriching the viewing experience for millions of viewers across the two African nations.”

WASP3D sent a different team to each site to deploy the solutions and train the staff. The network requirements were communicated to the end user in advance, to ensure the groundwork was in place when the teams arrived. The projects were undertaken simultaneously at the two sites, Nairobi in Kenya and Kampala in Uganda, at the broadcasters’ respective headquarters, because of the time constraint.

The broadcasters presented a storyboard to WASP3D and stipulated their requirements, which included simplifying the graphics creation and the presentation process. They needed a comprehensive graphics package with interactive 3D graphics that could be displayed on a touchscreen and controlled by the anchor/presenter.

WASPi Mimosa was recommended, as it matched most of the requirements of the end user. WASPi Mimosa, an interactive touch-based solution, was deployed in both the facilities. Although the basic software was the same, the design aesthetics were different in each case. WASPi Mimosa is an anchor-driven solution to present graphics and videos interactively. It is workflow-based and functions as a standalone system.

The solution allows the user to present the content (zoom,
pan, stretch, spin) on a touchscreen. For creating interactive content, designers created various objects and animations inside the scene and marked them as ‘Interactive Enabled’ to allow object-related operations to be performed from the WASPi Mimosa application. The designers also included various activities, such as animation plays or pauses when a specific gesture is performed on a specified object.

“We tailor-made the packages specifically for FIFA World Cup 2014 live broadcast, to give the broadcasters more than just data graphics. The solutions also offered expert analysis and an engaging content presentation. Both the channels wanted the graphics to gel with their existing look and feel. We provided different in-field player strategy analysis and customised data entry applications for each of the two clients,” explains Rathi.

A project manager was assigned to each site to handle the entire project from creation and delivery to broadcast. Each location had a graphics resource and an IT resource for two weeks to train and handhold the project.

The solution
A team comprising senior product designers and technical heads designed the workflow for the two broadcasters. The workflow involved a simplified solution that is easy to operate, according to Rathi: “Our system is a standalone system which integrates well with other NLE (non-linear editing) and newsroom automation systems.”

Using WASPi Mimosa, a presenter can guide viewers through the match with pre-game statistics and line-ups, in-game analysis and post-game discussions.

WASP3D’s interactive solution included 3D models of the stadiums in Brazil that hosted the World Cup. The 3D graphics templates were created in Drone Designer.
by the design team at WASP3D. The solution also offered live automated data feeds or manual data to be easily integrated using the Comb Builder application.

The solution automates the entire process of integration of data with the graphics template. The real-time data comes from multiple sources including the web, manual data entry, RSS feeds and so on; the solution has to ensure that nothing is lost.

The data is immediately picked up by the WASP server. The software then analyses the data, carries out calculations as required by the graphics templates and converts data into 3D graphics. The graphics are then updated automatically to be sent on-air as and when the anchor requires them. Everything in the workflow, right from data analysis to the creation of 3D graphics, is delivered in real time.

“**It was a very prestigious yet challenging project for us.** For one, we had a limited window to execute it. Secondly, the end user was not familiar with the solutions and training them took a lot of time and effort”

Deependra Rathi, VP – EMEA, WASP3D

“This was critical to the success of the solution because we were dealing with live feeds here and the broadcast took place in real time as well,” comments Rathi. The designers developed a customised data entry application (DEA) in which the user enters the data before the programme goes on air. The data entry in application is then reflected in the touch application (WASP Mimosa in this case).

“The workflow was very simple. All one needed to do was to enter data in the DEA and then this data was ready to go on air. Our DEA has a built-in library of country flags, teams, players and their jersey numbers. This application additionally feeds data into the master database, which keeps all this information intact,” says Rathi.

Uganda and Kenya Broadcasting Corporation used WASP3D solution for showing broadcasting info graphics for pre- and post-match analysis. The pre-match analysis included team statistics, team goals, team standing, team fouls,

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team ties, goalie record, player goals, player statistics, offsides, team formation, field strategy, scenario building, team line-ups, weather updates and jersey colour.

During the match, the broadcast included real-time text commentary, real-time statistics including starting line-ups, clock timer, formations, substitutions, goals, shots, penalty shoot-outs, yellow cards, red cards, fouls committed, crosses, passes, offsides, corners, half-time scores, team score and so on.

The post match analysis featured wins and losses, team scores, half-time scores, half-time shots, goal analysis, match analysis, match summary, fouls, goals scored, goals saved and player goals, among other things.

The main challenge, according to Rathi, was training and also the inclusion of a number of on-site last-minute changes.

“It was a very prestigious yet challenging project for us. For one, we had a limited window to execute it. Secondly, the end user was not familiar with the solutions and training them took a lot of time and effort. With our team’s support and the end user’s desire to make it work, we achieved the perfect result.

“We are increasing our footprint in the Africa. We are already working with five customers in Kenya and one in Uganda. Africa is an upcoming territory because the continent has a mandate for digitisation, which gives a lot of scope for us to operate in the market,” he adds.

KBC was also provided with a complete real-time graphics package for news, business, weather and sports. A turnkey hardware and software package was delivered to the broadcaster with 40-day on-site support and training for its staff, including reporters, engineers and producers.

“We tailor-made the packages specifically for FIFA World Cup 2014 live broadcast, to give the broadcasters more than just data graphics. The solution also offered expert analysis and an engaging content presentation”

Deependra Rathi, VP, EMEA, WASP3D

WASP3D’s customised FIFA World Cup solution

- Access Drone Designer module
- Basic graphics templates as per guidelines
- Integration with live and historic data
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- Custom application development
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The continued proliferation of mobile enabled devices has amplified the social chatter around TV programmes. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter have become influential in media consumption as audiences turn to their second screen, with more than half of the Millenials owning tablets and using their device in conjunction with the TV, according to research from NPD Group.

This marriage between the second screen and social media enables broadcasters and advertisers to go beyond the traditional living room TV model. Synchronising content airing on TV with an app on a companion screen enables broadcasters to leverage the second screen to complement programming and help reduce churn, as well as hook viewers to the programme as it plays.

Automatic content recognition (ACR), a technology solution enabling broadcasters and advertisers to synchronise content between both screens, allows the mobile device to ‘listen to’ the activity on the TV and become ‘content-aware’. Upon identification, the app can trigger complementary content or ads in real time. Broadcasters can retain their audience’s attention and create new business models leveraging the multiscreen phenomenon. This innovative technology also enables advertisers to create cross-screen campaigns that blend the scale of television with the consumer’s desire to make their entertainment experience more interactive.

The BBC has utilised Civolution’s SyncNow technology for live TV recently in order to power its play-along quiz app for CBBC’s (the BBC’s dedicated children channel) Gory Games, the second screen app developed by SyncScreen for the broadcasting company to complement the third series of Horrible Histories.

France’s ‘My Warner’ second screen app that syncs the app with Warner content, including DVDs, VoDs and TV programming. Examples of broadcasters utilising the second screen to develop new interactive programmes have multiplied since 2013, demonstrating a strong demand and adoption of interactive experiences both live and time-shifted.

Second screen advertising is also seeing rapid growth since the beginning of the year. Recent pilot campaigns in Europe and North America of TV-synchronised content between TV and Facebook or Twitter have proved hugely successful, delivering between 60% and 250% in consumer click-through rates.

Owing to the proliferation of second screen and social media, the traditional living room TV model is changing. What does this phenomenon have in store for the broadcasters? Andy Nobbs comments.
**Social Media Transforming TV in the Middle East**

Facebook and Twitter, although more popular in the Western world, are showing significant reach in the Arab World as well. According to data provided in the 5th annual Arab Social media report, Facebook has registered over 55m users across the Arab region while Twitter reached 3.7m users. Research from IPSOS also shows that users of Facebook in MENA are more active than in any other part of the world with 42m active on mobile devices. The research also found that people in the region upload 1.2 times more photos and message and comment 1.5 times more than the global average.

According to ABI Research, only the Middle East, Africa and Latin America will see a growth in mobile internet service revenue double digit CAGR between 2013 and 2018. Social media in the Middle East & Africa is showing a huge uptake with a 191% growth, according to WeAreSquared, even surpassing the growth in economies such as India and China.

While social media is growing at an incredible rate, e-commerce is also gaining significant traction. For example, The Online Shopping Behaviour 2013 study has found that 5 in every 10 people in the UAE trust the internet for shopping, yet another example of how technologically savvy and digitally aware people in the region are becoming.

The increased affordability of smart devices in these regions has led to data traffic consistently doubling every two years on average, and the market is still catching up. We are already seeing signs of commitment from the broadcasters in the region to deploy second screen services, particularly as the population owning connected devices keeps rising.

This idea that the mobile will become integral to the future of advertising in MENA is corroborated by independent research, demonstrating how pivotal the region will soon become for advertisers looking to increase their revenue through synchronised advertising. A report from PWC found that the combination of social media and cheaper smart devices will act as the catalyst to spending on advertising in the regions tripling in the next five years. Spending on internet advertising in the Arab world is expected to grow from $707m in 2013 to $2.46bn in 2018 and television will be one of the biggest beneficiaries of this higher digital spending. Pan-Arab TV is the biggest media sector in the Arab world and the TV market is due to grow in the region to $6.4bn in 2018 from $3.3bn last year.

Regional second screen initiatives include the recent launch of the first Turkish cross-TV-channel, cross-screen app for mobile devices for “Kara Para Aşk”, one of the country’s most popular TV series. Developed by Tagvance, in partnership with Samsung Electronics Turkey, the app allows viewers to interact with the TV series in real-time as episodes air on TV. By enabling them to engage with the programme through synchronised quizzes, polls and original videos that can be unlocked via the Samsung Galaxy S5, the broadcaster has launched a brand new content strategy, taking product placement a step further.

The ability to synchronise content between the TV and mobile devices means that broadcasters can retain and regain consumers’ interest through exciting experiences. These new TV experiences are rapidly spreading across the globe and opening the door for new cross-platform broadcasting and advertising opportunities utilising social media to enhance the experiences for the end users as well as open up new and improved monetisation opportunities for advertisers.
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Dutch production house Airfilms has a growing repertoire of aerial cinematography projects in the region. In an exclusive chat with Vibhuti Arora, Airfilms talks about its expertise and what it takes to fly drones.

The idea of replacing expensive helicopters with cost-effective unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) – or drones – is catching up with producers, but it is yet to achieve the quality and finesse required in more sophisticated shoots. Experts believe that aerial cinematography using unmanned aerial vehicles is a work in progress and that the production quality is getting better by the day. They also agree that drones hold great promise when it comes to broadcasting live events, making a lot of shooting angles possible that were previously deemed difficult or even impossible to achieve.
UAV production shot to fame in the region with the December 2012 live broadcast of the camel races in Qatar. Airfilms, a Dutch production house, undertook the aerial part of the broadcast for this project. Airfilms had an exclusive contract with Al Rayyan TV to produce aerial footage for the races and the production house has since been producing the event for live television broadcast, every year.

“We have covered several live broadcast events all over the world in different conditions. Be it camel racing at very high temperatures or football matches in the rain, or offshore sailing and triathlons, we have experience in the harshest conditions. Our drones have filmed even with wind speed of up to 70 km/h,” says Bart Hartge, Managing Director, Airfilms Production BV. Hartge and Marvin Dechene, Team Leader Operations, Airfilms, were in the UAE recently to film the soccer matches between Manchester City and Al Ain. Although very different to the camel races, filming soccer from the air was as exciting and challenging for the producers.

The camel races
The production house did not have a handbook to cover the camel races; their method was devised through trial and error before mastering the technique. When they started out, live feeds used to be shaky and the footage was not crisp, but the technology has steadily evolved over the years.

“There was a time when video drones were a nightmare in terms of image stability, safety and performance. In the last three years we have improved tremendously where stability of images is concerned. Even in windy conditions, light live broadcast setups work quite well,” says Hartge.

Filming using drones involves two-man operations – a pilot and a cameraman.

“They need to understand the programme and the needs of the director,” comments Dechene. The drone works on batteries and is controlled remotely from the pick-up truck that follows the camels. It takes off before the race starts. This being a very energy intensive shoot, the batteries need to be replaced every 15 minutes during the shoot.

The camera on the drone gives a bird’s eye view and wide angle view of the distance between the camels. “We have to maintain a distance to have a bird’s eye view of the subjects. We offer a supplementary camera as most of our shoots involve multiple cameras on the field. Technically we can go up to 15km in one stretch; we always keep the line of sight with
“There was a time when video drones were a nightmare in terms of image stability, safety and performance. In the last three years we have improved tremendously where stability of images is concerned.”

Bart Hartge, Managing Director, Airfilms

the drone not further than 1km, but most of the filming is done within a range of 300m,” says Dechene.

The footage is then streamed to the OB van using the Cobham transmitter on the drone and the receiver on the OB van. It is then mixed with the footage received from the main cameras placed on different positions on the tracks.

“We offer a plug and play solution that delivers full HD H264 video signal seamlessly into any broadcast environment with very low latency. The system is easy to integrate and can serve as a single camera standalone system or can be integrated into any existing environment.”

The drones return to their GPS home position if signal interference occurs. The camel races broadcast have had about 30% aerial footage, while the soccer matches have had approximately 8%.

“High temperatures, dusty conditions and high wind speeds pose a major challenge to operating UAVs in the region. “From our past experience of operating in the region we have worked out ways to ensure that our aerial devices deliver optimum quality. High temperatures, along with high humidity and dusty conditions, are potentially damaging to all kinds of electronics, especially if the equipment is used outdoors. The equipment that we use in the Gulf region has to be serviced more often than the kit we deploy in, say, Europe,” explains Dechene.

Adhering to European laws, in terms of organisation, Airfilms Productions is obliged to follow the operation manual approved by EURO USC. The operator(s) need to be certified by EURO USC.

Unlike the camel races, where drones are active at the time of the actual races, in a soccer match the main role of the drone is only before the match, when the players start arriving in the stadium, during rest and for post-match ceremonies. During the match the director can

ARGOSY “IMAGE” EQUIPMENT RACK

Designed specifically for the broadcast industry, the new Argosy IMAGE equipment rack range incorporates a variety of features to help simplify installation and maintenance whilst minimizing roll out costs. These include:

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CABLES CONNECTORS PATCH PANELS MDUs RACK SYSTEMS FIBRE/HYBRID CABLES KVM VIDEO ACCESSORIES

Argosy products are available from stocks at locations in the UK, UAE, India and Malaysia
cut to aerials if time permits, but it’s mainly the ground footage that’s used.

What makes a drone
Hartge points out that all the components in a drone are based on market requirements, as each drone is custom designed according to the job it is meant to do.

“It is a combination of a perfectly functioning platform in all weather conditions (wind, heat, sand) and very skilled operators. Every second of your shot footage need to be stable and usable. The challenges are mostly the weather: salty wind, sand and heat are terrible for the electronic components. You need to evaluate your hardware all the time and a very strict maintenance plan is mandatory.”

The key components of a drone are the flight controller (auto pilot), motor management, motors and three-axis direct drive gimbal. The cameras presently in use include the Panasonic GH4/M Zuiko, remote IRIS, Cobham Solo7 HD Nano Transmitter and the Cobham ProRX receiver decoder, with 8-way diversity.

“We worked and tested with several electronics suppliers to achieve a redundant and safe setup. We started using Cobham components in August 2013,” says Hartge.

Airfilms has now used Cobham Broadcast’s Nano HD transmitter with drones for a range of high-profile events in the Middle East. The ultra-miniature Nano HD is an HD digital video transmitter designed specifically for point-of-view (POV), body-worn and aerial applications.

Airfilms Production provides the send and receive sites, which are installed and connected to the OB van. The drone’s transmitter sends the data directly to the OB van, where they mix and record the images.

“The equipment that we use in the Gulf region has to be serviced more often than the kit we deploy in, say, Europe”

Marvin Dechene, Team Leader Operations, Airfilms

 electrons, according to Dechene, weight is an important factor in how long a remotely controlled airborne vehicle can stay aloft.

“Cobham’s Nano HD is so light yet powerful and reliable that it has greatly extended our ability to capture aerial footage,” he explains.

Airfilms has used the Nano HDTX transmitter on everything from camel racing to motor and horse racing to provide a comprehensive view of the overall action. With Cobham COFDM and H.264 encoding technology at its core, the transmitter provides video images over the wireless link and supports composite, SDI, HD-SDI and HDMI video input formats.

“We are focusing on worldwide live events because that’s one area where aerial photography can provide very valuable footage. Our objective is to increase the flight time with the camera control unit from the OB van. We are well aware that we need to constantly update and improve our offerings to provide better solutions. Tailor-made solutions for the film and ad industry are also on the cards,” comments Hartge.
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MBC deployed Pixel Factory, a promo solution for its newly launched Bollywood channel. Keith Dallison, Post Production Manager at MBC, sheds light on how the solution has improved workflows.

One of the keys to success for a big broadcaster like MBC is the need to be progressive and seize any opportunity to make an impact on its viewers. When we plan to launch new channels we need to go on air as soon as possible, not prolong the process for months and be beaten to the post by the competition.

And that puts pressure on many areas within the operation.

So when MBC wanted to launch a new channel called MBC Bollywood, we wanted it to be on air as soon as possible. Ideally, a new channel needs to build an audience quickly; then it has to retain those viewers. So the content has to be marketed intensively, and one proven way to do that is through on-air promos and trailers. With good ideas that are well designed and produced, they give the channel a strong sense of identity as well as enticing audiences with the programmes and movies that are coming up.

The problem is that the traditional route to produce all the different day and time versions, once the trailer has been cut, is labour- and hardware-intensive for an editor in a suite.
compiling the mixed audio with the pre-cut visuals and finalising the deliverables with branded graphics. The time required for rendering and delivering the final items to transmission further burns more time from the resources. When it came to MBC Bollywood, our existing resources were already close to capacity and with a challenging budget in hand, an alternative solution had to be found to support the new channel.

With the new channel starting to take shape in September 2013, we took the opportunity to research options at IBC. We spoke to the usual suspects in the post production and on-air graphics arena, and various workflow solutions were starting to match our objectives.

One solution from Pixel Power had a different approach and proposal. It was this difference, plus the added attraction of the minimal effort it would take to integrate it into our operation with the time constraints we faced, that made us look at their solution more closely.

Automation
The product was called Pixel Factory. Essentially, what it does is automate the production process for versioning promos. It is built on their high-quality graphics engines and standard IT servers, so it is easy to implement and meets our technical expectations.

The way it works is that your experienced graphics designers create templates for all the different variations of promos you need. It is a one-off process, and designs can be as elaborate or as simple as required. The final templates are then loaded into Pixel Factory and are ready to be rendered with whatever content you give it.

For the required versions, details are added via MS Excel, and then Pixel Factory creates them automatically. In practice, after creating the promo body, we mix the soundtrack versions, add them, and then the final deliverables are rendered and sent to a pre-selected network folder for QC (quality check) before transmission.

The real advantage is that once the design for the channel branding has been imported into Pixel Factory we know that it will be preserved throughout every promo because that is what we have instructed the system to do. After that, a producer can

“We now have more than six months of practical experience with Pixel Factory, and it has delivered real, quantifiable benefits in terms of taking the pressure off our busy post department”

Keith Dallison, Post Production Manager, MBC
“When it came to MBC Bollywood, our existing resources were already close to capacity and with a challenging budget in hand an alternative solution had to be found to support the new channel”

Keith Dallison, Post Production Manager, MBC

commission a group of promos by filling in an Excel form, which can be done from any work station. This eliminates the need for booking and using post resources, as the creation of deliverables has now become a background task.

Business case
From MBC’s point of view, this automated production solution matched all of our objectives for this project. By deploying Pixel Factory on MBC Bollywood, we have shown considerable savings of time and editing resources, also reducing by half the actual delivery time.

So, after this successful test run and proof of concept our next step was to roll the system out to other channels. The expectation is that we will inevitably see further reductions and savings within our resources, allowing us to streamline our operation more effectively.

Our branding post production department is a very busy area, with eleven online suites and four audio mixing facilities, divided into sub divisions to handle the many differing post tasks and demands, seven days a week. Saving on time and resources means we can now focus more on creativity. So the benefits are seen on many levels.

In the beginning, Pixel Power offered us two options for this system, and we opted to start with a product called Pixel OnDemand. This pay-as-you-go option – paying for each hour of output – appealed to us, as it meant we could very quickly set something up and be in production.

The cooperation and support from the people at Pixel Power was tremendous. From the time when the decision was made, and with the channel launch set for November 2013, we had just a few weeks from placing the order to going on air.

In that time, Pixel Power delivered, installed and commissioned the system, they also provided an artist to train and work with our post and design team to ensure the templates were exact and to the high standards we demand.

Pixel OnDemand is an operational expenditure business model, and with the success of its use in MBC Bollywood, when we started to add extra systems we switched to the capital expenditure model, Pixel Factory.

At MBC we seek solutions that are robust, innovative and come with a strong infrastructure for local support. Additionally, the companies offering these solutions must display an understanding of the high pressure and demands on the leading network broadcaster in the region.

We now have more than six months of practical experience with Pixel Factory, and it has delivered real, quantifiable benefits in terms of taking the pressure off our busy post production department.

The MBC Bollywood launch was hugely successful, and our experience with this technology contributed in no small measure to that success. I have no doubt that MBC will rely ever more on automated promo production for its future expansion of channels and projects.
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World Cup 2014 was the most watched TV event ever. Broadcasters, however, struggled to keep the pirates at bay as more screens resulted in more methods of illegal content consumption.

The 2010 FIFA World Cup was the first major football tournament where online streaming became widespread, with online audiences setting records for major broadcasters at the time, according to FIFA. With this year’s tournament, this growth in streaming has extended beyond the net and onto a wide variety of mobile and home entertainment devices. In the run-up to the start of the 2014 tournament, FIFA predicted that it would be the “most watched TV event ever”, with global viewers expected to exceed the estimated 3.2 billion that watched in 2010. Just after the opening round of group fixtures, new internet video streaming records had been set for Akamai, ESPN and Univision. With such a high viewership and demand for content, major broadcasters across the globe spent months before the tournament ensuring consumers had the best possible access to games and related content – Sky added ITV to its SkyGo multi-screen service, and the BBC produced daily highlight programmes designed to be downloaded onto mobile devices through iPlayer. Sports content consumption is going multi-screen at a rapid pace, and these initiatives are great for driving consumer loyalty. However, despite unprecedented levels of access for the 2014 World Cup (particularly in more developed media markets), the threat of illegal streams and piracy is still a real one.

The piracy problem
The battle against piracy is an ongoing one, and high-profile sports content is no exception. Our anti-piracy coverage for the Germany vs Portugal World Cup match, for example, uncovered 110 streams across the world showing this game – the eight streams that published their viewing figures had a total of 660,000 views. In addition, according to the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), more than

“The battle against piracy is an ongoing one, and high-profile sports content is no exception”

Julia Mooney, Product Strategy Director, Irdeto
18,000 illegal digital broadcasts were identified by FIFA during the 2010 tournament. It’s clear that when it comes to the World Cup, broadcasters and operators must consider the prevalence of live sports piracy and how they can best protect their content.

These numbers speak for themselves – there are some alarming trends in sports piracy that everyone involved should be aware of, and that they should work collaboratively to mitigate the threat of as much as possible. We believe that three of the most critical and important trends to consider are: the rise of TV hub devices as a gateway for piracy; advertising; the new piracy business model; and sports pirate services as a Trojan horse for malware.

The rise of TV hub devices as a gateway for piracy
Despite the clear appetite for World Cup and general sports content to be offered as streaming services across multiple devices, consumers still love to watch sports on the TV – a recent Irdeto survey found that 53% of UK consumers mostly watch sports on TV at home and 54% planned to watch World Cup matches on TV.

With the technological advancement of TV hub devices such as HDMI dongles and OTT streaming set-top boxes (STBs), viewers can just as easily watch pirate sports services on their large-screen TVs as they can on traditional PCs and mobile devices – bringing piracy right into the centre of the home.

Since 2013, Irdeto has monitored the widespread offering and deployment of OTT streaming STBs, which are sold in a perfectly legitimate manner but subsequently allow users to subscribe to illegal streaming services. This infringes the intellectual property rights of a range of content owners and broadcasters.

Advertising: the new piracy business model
At this point, some may be wondering how pirate sites make money by offering premium content for free. The answer is that one of the main sources of sports piracy income has become advertising. When a consumer comes across a linking site (via search engines, social networks, etc.) that directs them to a pirate site from which content is illegally streamed, they usually have to click through a myriad of adverts on linking sites, which generate revenue for pirates who stream the content as well as those that own the linking sites.

Consumers often don’t understand the reality of this process and the impact it has on broadcasters and content owners, making it difficult to stop. One of the main problems here is that linking sites don’t actually host any infringing content, so they are not technically violating copyright laws such as the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. In addition, adverts are served via regular ad-serving networks and sites often carry top brands, which gives them the feel of legitimacy for consumers.

Pirate services and malware
What consumers often don’t realise is that the use of pirate services creates more than just ethical issues. By using pirate sites, consumers are putting themselves at risk of encountering malware that can infect their devices and cause lots of damage – such as stealing their credentials – without ever getting the content they want. Before accessing any site, consumers should always consider whether they know who is actually behind this sports TV service on the internet.

Protecting sports content
In the face of all these threats, a holistic approach is required, including identification of the scale of the problem, effective technologies to identify and track piracy, and education backed by legislation and enforcement. With major sporting events like the World Cup an increasingly attractive target for pirates, content owners, broadcasters and operators must make sure they are proactively taking the necessary steps to protect their live sports content.
My task which I am trying to achieve is to make you hear, to make you feel, it is above all, to make you see
Joseph Conrad

Winner of ASBU BroadcastPro ME “Innovative Project Award” 2013
WHAT'S NEW AT IBC2014

IBC2014 takes place at RAI Amsterdam from September 11 to 16. While the conferences will run from September 11 to 15, the exhibition takes place from September 12 to 16. We bring you a product preview.

Each September IBC brings the world’s electronic media and entertainment industry together in Amsterdam to challenge, direct and set the industry’s agenda. Staged by the industry for the industry, it spotlights and drives future trends, technologies, innovations and business models, delivering a dynamic, comprehensive event that is stimulating and relevant to the changes and challenges faced by its attendees.

More than 52,000 attendees from more than 170 countries come to IBC to experience all aspects of the creation, management and delivery of all electronic media and entertainment content in this rapidly changing multi-platform and multi-screen world. From the inspiration of the world-leading forum of the IBC Conference to the excitement of free-to-attend feature events and the experience of meeting more than 1,500 key international suppliers that fill the 14-hall exhibition, IBC provides an unrivalled environment for attendees to connect across countries, technologies and industry sectors.

This year, the IBC conference will feature a keynote address by Professor Brian Cox OBE, the world-renowned physicist and multiple award-winning broadcaster. He will speak on “Television’s Expanding Universe” on Sunday, September 14.

Quantum will unveil StorNext Connect – a new way to monitor and manage StorNext deployments. StorNext Connect simplifies the process of configuring systems and eases ongoing system management and health monitoring.

Through StorNext Connect, customers can install StorNext software, upgrade StorNext clients and servers, restart clients, check status on automated tasks and troubleshoot performance issues through real-time graphs. Quantum will also highlight StorNext cloud solutions enable wide-scale collaboration on content stored in the cloud, without disrupting users’ existing and familiar workflows.

Also on display will be StorNext Pro solutions: StorNext Pro 4K, StorNext Pro Production and StorNext Pro Studio.

Stand 7.B26

Movie from Video Clarity

Visitors to Video Clarity’s booth at IBC2014 will experience MOVIE (Motion-based Video Integrity Evaluation), a new perceptual test method for the ClearView line of video quality analysers. MOVIE is used for measuring video quality, a full-reference test delivering results that are closer than ever to human perceptions of video quality.

Broadcast operators and manufacturers of consumer electronics and broadcast transmission equipment use ClearView analysers to ensure the best viewing experience, operate more efficiently, meet SLAs and stay in compliance. ClearView uses several proven test methods to arrive at a measurement of subjective quality that very closely approximates what the average person would see and hear when watching a video.

Stand 2.C57
Specific to the requirements in TV studios, the new Genlock-compatible display, with an image frequency of 60 Hz, can be adjusted to conventional studio frequencies. Due to the high brightness level of 500 cd/m² and 100% NTSC, the display also offers best image characteristics for digital signage applications in bright ambient light conditions.

Additionally, the display through an optional touch system on an infrared basis.

EBS introduces PAWA
TV data service provider EBS will launch its new PAWA software at this year’s IBC. PAWA provides a multi-platform, multi-territory, scalable software solution that enables EPG data to be aggregated, restructured and delivered to any platform.

In the traditional linear world when channels and platforms need to aggregate and supply data for the EPG, there is a ‘create-once-distribute-many-times’ approach.

The 24/7 accessibility of VoD/download-to-own (DTO) content means that the traditional schedule information is no longer tied to the programme’s date and time of viewing. PAWA accommodates the full range of distribution requirements needed by today’s broadcast professionals.

PAWA can import listings from a variety of formats, storing them centrally in preparation for distribution. Editors can then add any additional data required for translations, as well as extra metadata (such as images or cast), before the listings are sent to the broadcaster or content owner for multiple distribution.

PAWA can be bought as a managed service.

Stand 14.C01

LiveU showcases uplinking solutions
LiveU will present its complete range of bonded 3G/4G uplink solutions used at all major news and sports events worldwide, such as the FIFA World Cup in Brazil, the Indian elections and the Sochi Winter Olympics.

On display will be LiveU’s Professional-Grade LU500, weighing only 1 kg (2.2 lbs) and available in backpack and camera-mount configurations. This is based on LiveU’s fourth-generation patented bonding algorithms and powered by LiveU’s new multi-processor video encoding engine.

LiveU DataBridge, a mobile hotspot that offers resilient mobile broadband connectivity for any device in any location by bonding together multiple cellular and other data connections, will also be shown at IBC2014.

LiveU will also demo LiveU Central, its browser-based management system for easy control and geo-tracking of all LiveU systems, feeds and apps from anywhere. It enables a live preview of all incoming feeds that can be dragged and dropped to server.

Stand 3.B62

Viz Mosart creates new symphony
Highlighted during the show will be Viz Artist, the real-time 3D modelling and animation tool with Maxon Cinema4D and Adobe After Effects CC integration; Viz One, a file-based video workflow with Viz Pilot timeline editor workflow; and the new Viz Mosart, for a complete newscast automation solution.

Also on display, among other solutions, will be the Viz Social TV solution with maps and interactive touchscreen capabilities; Viz Libero, a 3D virtual sports enhancements solution with Viz Arena image-based tracking for displaying live player-attached graphics in real time; and Viz Pilot, a template-driven graphics and video management tool with multi-channel playout.

Stand 7.A10

Eyevis in TV studios
Specific to the requirements in TV studios, the new Genlock-compatible display, with an image frequency of 60 Hz, can be adjusted to conventional studio frequencies. Due to the high brightness level of 500 cd/m² and 100% NTSC, the display also offers best image characteristics for digital signage applications in bright ambient light conditions.

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Ross Video brings the openTruck to IBC
This IBC, Ross is celebrating its 40th anniversary, sporting a new look with a modernised corporate logo and an updated tagline: “Production Technology Experts”.

A mobile production vehicle built to the openTruck specifications will be highlighted at the Ross stand at IBC. openTruck brings a standardised way to design a new generation of cost-effective remote-production vehicles to deliver video and audio content from sports and other live events.

Also on display will be the newly-introduced Acuity and the updated Carbonite, among other products. Introduced at NAB 2014 and now released and shipping, the Acuity production switcher is the latest large production switcher platform.

DAC expands storage
Disk Archive Corporation (DAC) will unveil the new EX-60 storage expansion for the ALTO archive and content library at IBC 2014.

The EX-60 meets the growing demand for larger capacity and more densely packed media storage. ALTO is a cold storage solution that can accommodate up to 300 TB of storage in each 4RU module, with an exceptionally low power dissipation of around 1 watt per Terabyte.

DAC will demonstrate a new storage concept at the show, overturning the traditional economic barriers that have made the cloud unaffordable as a storage platform for long form broadcast content in native resolution.

Combining the strengths of a high-yield on-premise appliance backed by an infrequently accessed cloud storage layer, the system offers a multi-petabyte class solution with ultra-low TCO for broadcasters and media companies who need secure and affordable storage for DPP/AS11 tapeless operations.

Venera’s Pulsar brings advanced QC
Making its debut at the IBC2014 exhibition, Venera’s new Pulsar PPU (pay-per-use) solution will provide capabilities to users wishing to implement quality QC immediately without making an up-front capital investment.

Boasting the flexibility of a cloud solution and the security of a dedicated on-site system, Pulsar PPU makes the advanced QC functions of Pulsar automated file-based QC solution available to facilities as they are needed. Because Pulsar PPU is a software solution that operates within the user’s facility, there’s no need to install additional network infrastructure to take advantage of it. Media companies of all sizes can leverage Pulsar PPU to perform integrated QC across content types and stages in the workflow.

RTW measures loudness
RTW will bring its latest crop of loudness metering solutions to IBC 2014. Launched earlier this year, RTW’s Masterclass Plugins Loudness Tools software and TM3-Primus will be on display for IBC attendees for the first time.

In addition, executives will be on hand to discuss the company’s new software and its smart and premium product categories, as well as additional solutions that RTW is planning to reveal during the show. RTW’s Masterclass plugins Loudness Tools is a standard-format plug-in for Windows and Mac OS platforms. The first item in this new product line, Loudness Tools, was designed to serve the needs of users in the DAW sector.

Meanwhile, the TM3-Primus, the latest entry to its smart product category, is a compact, fully-loaded specialised metre at an entry-level price point, suited for individuals working in smaller production environments such as OB vans.
Camera robot for high-speed motions

Camerobot Systems GmbH presents a new camera robot designed for high-speed film sequences. In TV commercials, action films and sports broadcasts, slow motion and time-lapse shots are increasingly being used to show details that are simply too fast for the human eye to follow in conventional viewing.

The new high-speed Camerobot allows for ultra-fast, high-precision camera movements that were not previously possible with older technology. Used in combination with the lightweight yet stable camera mount, Camerobot delivers vibration-free images and quality sequences. It can be controlled via a joystick or simply left to run in automatic mode.

Broadpeak supports multiscreen

Broadpeak will demonstrate how its CDN and streaming server equipment can be used by content providers and operators to support new business models in today’s challenging multiscreen environment.

Broadpeak will showcase a range of solutions that can be deployed in the network, in the home or on the go.

A key demonstration in the network area of Broadpeak’s booth will be the company’s CDN in a box solution, which simplifies the deployment of video streaming services by providing operators with comprehensive multiscreen technologies to support the delivery of live and VOD content to any screen in any format, including HEVC 4K.

SGL showcases integration with Sony and EVS

SGL’s FlashNet content management solution is designed to integrate seamlessly with NRCS, MAM or automation control systems to provide significant improvements to workflow efficiency without intruding on the user’s familiar desktop.

With the increasing move to archiving as a central element of the media and data workflow, SGL will showcase integration with the Media Backbone to help increase productivity, raise creativity and drive down cost.

Tedial’s media exchange platform

Tedial has taken a whole new approach to helping the diverse players in global media work together.

Employing Tedial’s new media exchange platform, content producers, broadcasters, pay-TV operators, service providers and telcos can work collaboratively on media securely and efficiently. Whether it’s upstream during news, sports and co-production or downstream during multi-platform packaging and distribution, Tedial has directly integrated media exchange into its core media workflows. The thousands of multi-format content exchanges now required by media companies can be managed and monitored centrally by Tedial.

Building on its integration with Apple, Avid and Quantel, Tedial now adds enhanced support for Adobe Premiere Pro CC.

Tedial has directly integrated media exchange into its core media workflows. The thousands of multi-format content exchanges now required by media companies can be managed and monitored centrally by Tedial.

With the increasing move to archiving as a central element of the media and data workflow, SGL will showcase integration with Sony Media Backbone, EVS fast turnaround sports production and possible disaster recovery options.

The adoption by broadcasters and post producers of Media Backbone from Sony is in response to the desire to make an existing workflow run faster by including an archive as a key element of the process. SGL will showcase integration with the Media Backbone to help increase productivity, raise creativity and drive down cost.
We invite you to join us for a free round of Golf. Meet TV, film and radio professionals directly and network in a relaxed, fun-filled environment.

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Rascular at the Helm

Helm now supports Miranda (Grass Valley) Densite modular products, giving fast access to card functions at the touch of a button. Alongside numerous back-end upgrades, Helm can also control Black Magic videohubs, Grass Valley native protocol routers and Sierra Video’s Aspen router range. The latest version of RouteMaster, Rascular’s established and flexible PC-based router control system, will also be on show. It now includes support for hardware control panels from Blackmagic, Nevion and Sierra.

Stand 8.B38a

Forscene enhances user interface intelligence

Forbidden Technologies will bring new Forscene developments to IBC2014. These have been inspired by feedback from users. The company will showcase the new Forscene user interface look and feel.

Also on display will be high-res codec that enables dynamic display of high- or low-res proxy, iOS and Android Forscene apps, new publishing framework and new documentation for supported camera and ingest formats, among other things.

IBC TV, the official broadcaster for IBC2014, will once again use Forscene to provide its self-service syndication workflow.

A Forscene server based in the RAI conference centre will compress and upload material shot by the IBC TV teams during the exhibition. Participating broadcasters and IBC exhibitors will be able to access library content provided under editorial control, including rushes and daily programme footage.

Stand 8.B38e

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**PRO 50**

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AAdynTech brings the Punch

The Punch and Jab series of AAdynTech LED lighting fixtures provide flicker-free, single-source lighting, eliminating multiple shadows. These don’t heat up excessively and are cool to the touch with low amp draw, resulting in a saving of up to 90% in energy costs.

AAdynTech’s Space Light is a high output fixture with multi-channel operation. Its applications go beyond traditional Space Light. It can be used as a skypan or an audience blinder; or for chase and effect lighting. All of AAdynTech’s products are designed, developed, engineered and assembled in the United States by a collaborative engineering team from Sturdy Corp. and CREE.

www.aadyntech.com

dB Broadcast upgrades Cardinal

dB Broadcast has launched an upgraded version of its intelligent mains distribution unit. The latest Cardinal iMDU is now capable of handling inrush currents that rise to 200A at switch-on and 60A per individually switched output. Both the dual input and single input versions of the Cardinal iMDU now benefit from this improved design.

Modern high-efficiency switch mode PSUs can exhibit very high inrush currents even though their steady state load may be just a few amps. dB Broadcast recognises that equipment manufacturers are increasingly making use of switch mode power supplies and that customers need inrush current protection in their equipment rack mains distribution design.

In addition to the new inrush current capabilities, the Cardinal iMDU provides intelligence for mains distribution with features such as an intuitive web-based user interface to remotely configure and control outputs; SNMP traps; and email messaging that can send alerts when faults occur.

www.dbbroadcast.co.uk

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Sennheiser brings WSM 4.1

Sennheiser has announced the availability of Wireless Systems Manager (WSM) 4.1, a professional software solution for remotely monitoring and controlling wireless systems.

Available as a free download for Mac and Windows systems, WSM is a tool for audio engineers at TV studios and live events, as well as musical productions, and aids the effortless set-up and coordination of frequencies for wireless microphones and personal monitors.

The rise in the popularity and frequency of live music event and festivals in the Middle East means audio engineers must now manage complex and rapid set-ups. Version 4.1 of Sennheiser’s WSM boasts a brilliant function that protects any selected frequency settings before the software calculates a new plan, thus helping accommodate the last-minute changes that are often faced in such scenarios.

Spectrum is another challenge faced in the region. Wireless Systems Manager 4.1 includes some new extras that help overcome these challenges.

Albis Technologies simplifies migration

Albis Technologies has announced the availability of its ACCEED 2104, an eight port Gigabit Fibre Ethernet Demarcation Device (EDD), designed to support Gigabit Carrier Ethernet services and comprehensive service-level agreement (SLA) enforcement for a variety of applications, including high-speed business access, network demarcation for wholesale solutions, utility solutions and mobile backhaul.

Featuring extensive traffic management and supervision capabilities, Metro Ethernet Forum (MEF) CE 2.0 compliance and integrated E1 CES inter-working functionality with dedicated clock and synchronisation abilities, the ACCEED 2104 simplifies the migration to full Carrier Ethernet services, while increasing operational efficiency and cost savings for service providers and operators. The ACCEED 2104 features full Gigabit line rate performance.

Libec introduces ALLEX

Libec has announced its new integrated tripod system, ALLEX, which allows users to use pan, tilt and slide camera movements.

The ALLEX system includes three components ALLEX H, a 75mm dual head; ALLEX T, a 75mm bowl diameter lightweight [2.5kg/5.5lb] tripod; and ALLEX S, a 30” slider.

ALLEX H has a dual head design that could be mounted on a 75mm bowl and any flat head equipment including tripods, sliders, skater dollies, and so on. ALLEX T, has the highest rigidity in Libec’s lineup of compact tripods. It is very light at the same time.

ALLEX S, with a platform which has 8 high performance ball-bearings, is perfect for smooth and precise camera shots. By the integration of all three components, the ALLEX system makes dynamic camera moves possible at an affordable price.

DK-Technologies improves audio

DK-Technologies has upped the functionality of its audio, loudness and logging meter by adding Loudness Automation, a software update that is free of charge to existing and future DK T7 users.

This latest upgrade is based on SMPTE timecode and allows the DK T7 to instantly recalculate the Integrated Loudness value up to four hours back in time. For audio engineers, this exceptionally useful time saving function is a major improvement as it means they no longer have to re-run programme material to hit their Loudness target value.

DK-Technologies has also added USB mouse operation to the multi-touchscreen DK T7, allowing for fast and easy on screen access or operation using the HDMI external monitor output.

A number of other improvements have also been incorporated, including the headphone volume control and more screen setup functions.

The DK T7 allows end-users to adapt to virtually any format including 3G SDI I/O.
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Our digital lives are undoubtedly becoming more complex. We’re spending more time on connected devices – with 74% of mobile users in the UAE not leaving home without their devices, according to the 2013 Google My Planet report. And we’re consuming content in diverse ways, using multiple devices to complement and enhance our viewing experiences.

In this video landscape, sharing relevant content with viewers at the right time and in the right place is more important than ever – something that’s prompting media organisations to look long and hard at how they can improve and simplify user experiences. It’s for these reasons that the next video evolution will undoubtedly be the onset of personal television – the concept of ‘Me TV’ experiences that deliver individual programming, optimised for each viewer by screen, timing and geography.

Underpinning the ability to deliver this personalised, smart content-decisioning is the enabling architecture of ‘Me TV’ data.

Viewers are interested in getting the high-quality content they crave, based on their individual tastes and regardless of source or delivery. As such, the advancement of truly ‘leanback’ experiences will mean programming treats all video content consumption as live (to the viewer), regardless of whether it’s pre-recorded or live content. We’ll see a more agnostic approach to content source, as traditional boundaries between the likes of a live show and an advertisement are removed.

Integral to making such personalised programming possible will be the ability to mine value from the complex datasets that the cloud can unlock – data that vastly extends beyond that offered by electronic programme guides (EPG) and basic content scheduling. Media organisations will need to use a Big Data approach in their operations – just as the TV measurement industry is beginning to. Nielsen, for example, is moving towards tapping big data to measure how people view TV on mobile apps and other digital formats.

We can expect media organisations and publishers to increasingly drive personal programming by using baseline information about a user’s viewing context, from location to device, screen size and form factor. What’s more – if granted permission by a user – they have the means to enhance this experience further by aggregating user preferences based on analysis of shared information.

As consumers continue to demand greater choice and freedom in their viewing, there’s no doubt that personalised experiences will define tomorrow’s TV experiences. But the notion of creating a unique channel for each viewer runs counter to the traditional make-up of the entertainment world. While the technical parts of the ‘Me TV’ puzzle are, for the most part, already in place for publishers, the model of personalised, leanback programming raises a direct challenge for publishers to reject, refresh or entirely revise their existing content and monetisation strategies – no minor feat. Success will depend on the effective measurement of video consumption to gauge content engagement, popularity and relevance.

Enhanced viewer data not only enables more relevant, targeted advertising, it also presents an opportunity for publishers to interact more meaningfully with users. If a publisher can detect a user has switched from PC to mobile viewing, for example, it then has the ability to offer the user programming that’s adjusted for mobile consumption – programming that’s shorter in duration, for example, or optimised for 3G or LTE connections.

Middle East media organisations must realise that personal TV presents a unique opportunity for them to maximise their core strengths while enriching user engagement and gratifying the individual needs of the viewer. 

Sue Thexton is Senior Vice President of Sales, EMEA at Brightcove.

“As consumers continue to demand greater choice and freedom in their viewing, there’s no doubt that personalised experiences will define tomorrow’s TV experiences”
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