Capturing Cirque du Soleil's stellar performance in Saudi Arabia for a live TV audience with MBC and Seven Production
ALPIN®
NATURAL MINERAL WATER
Presents
The Open Road
Powered by TOSHIBA
Storage Solutions

2 WOMEN, 2 BIKES, 3 COUNTRIES.
The Middle East's first Fox Original Production is here. Follow Chantal and Pamela as they chase experiences on their bikes, riding on the open roads of the UAE, Jordan and Lebanon.

SERIES PREMIERE ON ALL FOX CHANNELS AND FOX+
OCTOBER 13 – 8PM UAE

Watch all 6 episodes at one go on FOX+ the streaming video-on-demand service available on eLife TV and IAS Media TV.

For advertising queries, contact FOX on +971 55 992 8206 or IAS Media on +971 52 358 5824.
The winds of change are becoming stronger in broadcast. If we only felt a gust or two in previous years, it has gathered strength, building towards a gale, with IP, open architecture, cloud, more mature collaboration and SMPTE 2022/2110 becoming the standard at IBC this year.

For the first time, e-sports featured on more than one stand, offering a glimpse into a world not unlike the one we’re familiar with. With very different content and a more demanding viewer, it seemed to hint at the direction we need to take.

VR and cognitive services didn’t seem quite as prominent. VR continues to be a great technology trying to find its niche as the quality and use cases catch up. There were the familiar faces and products of rebranded and consolidated manufacturers, but perhaps this year, more than any other, there was a feeling that a step change in the industry is just around the corner. And that feeling was most evident in Hall 14.

For those of us who frequented Hall 14 in previous years and couldn’t quite put our finger on what exactly its core theme was, this year offered some clarity. This hall had everything we needed to broadcast OTT from the cloud and develop one’s own solutions.

Of course, Google had a stand right at the entrance of Hall 14 and Facebook was tucked deeper inside. As the players in the OTT and the social media ecosystem become a part of mainstream entertainment, it may not do to ignore Hall 14 anymore.

With Amazon, Google, Facebook, Microsoft and even, Netflix making prominent appearances at IBC2018, one wonders if the incumbent vendors and broadcasters feel overshadowed by these household names and internet giants?

These were the questions I came back with from IBC, and some of these may be tackled at the ASBU BroadcastPro Summit and Awards that we host annually in November. In the meantime, for those of you who have innovated in MENA TV, radio, film, OTT and all things entertainment, please participate in the awards nominations at broadcastpromeawards.com.
HABTOOR GRAND HOTEL / DUBAI / UAE

1 day / 1 evening / 4 panels
23 speakers / 19 awards
1 gala awards dinner
13 November 2018

Sponsorship
Raz Islam
+971 50 451 8213
raz.islam@cpitrademedia.com

Nominations
Vijaya Cherian
+971 55 105 3787
vijaya.cherian@cpitrademedia.com

Information
Sheena Sapsford
+971 4 375 5498
sheena.sapsford@cpitrademedia.com
Annual Event

The BroadcastPro ME Summit & Awards is our annual flagship event to promote and celebrate excellence in the broadcast and satellite industry across the MENA region. The event features extensive networking opportunities, seminars and awards presentations by key industry and government leaders.

The Summit

The summit creates an engaging platform for MENA TV, film and radio professionals to discuss and debate the most pressing topics and trends in the market.

The Awards

The gala dinner and awards ceremony brings together the industry to celebrate excellence in the MENA broadcast and satellite industry.

Event Sponsors

GOLD SPONSOR

Social Media Partner

Knowledge Partner

Silver Sponsors

Endorsed By

Organised By
Welcome to Broadcast 3.0

RETHINK MULTIVIEWERS
V_matrix vm_dmv64-4
Infinitely Expandable 4K/HDR IP Multiviewer

RETHINK CONVERSION
V_matrix vm_udx
4K IP Up/Down/Cross Conversion

RETHINK AUDIO
A_UHD Core
Ultra-high Density IP DSP Engine

RETHINK CONTRIBUTION
A_line & V_line
WAN-capable IP Audio and Video I/O

RETHINK MONITORING
SMART
System Monitoring and Realtime Telemetry

www.lawo.com
Inside this issue

07 NEWS
Encompass reaches out to Oman with Babcock acquisition, Bloomberg Asharq launched, Twitter’s #FrontRow goes live, Arabsat’s HTS initiatives, MBC Studios established

16 SPECTACULAR CIRQUE
MBC and Seven Production collaborate to bring Cirque du Soleil to TV audiences

24 CANON AT 60
Canon experts explain the many ways to tell a story in 4K and HDR

28 EXTENDING TV AUDIENCES
Dubai’s Qanawat helps MENA broadcasters build online audiences

32 DOCUMENTING INDIA
Dubai-based documentary maker Reshel Shah Kapoor on filming deified children

38 MEDIA ARCHIVE & AI
Jon Morgan of Object Matrix looks at AI’s vast potential

40 IBC2018: A REVIEW
An event overview by our editorial team

42 WINDOW-SHOPPING AT IBC
DoP Paul Mongey picks his favourites

46 WHAT’S CHANGING AT IBC
Dominic Baillie on why Hall 14 was exciting at RAI this year

48 IBC PRODUCT LAUNCHES
Innovations from Blackmagic Design, Lawo, Nagra and more

56 STOPPING PIRACY
Neil Sharpe of Friend MTS outlines solutions
Whatever your ambition just add NewTek

The world of professional multi-camera video moves fast. That’s why we build every NewTek system with the future firmly in mind. So our solutions are software upgradable to make the most of your investment. You can mix legacy SDI with cutting-edge IP. And, every NewTek solution gives you more than you expect for less than you think. Simply, with NewTek, you can go as far and as fast as you want.

What’s your ambition? Realize it at NewTek.com/tomorrow

Learn more about NewTek solutions by visiting the MediaCast Seminar on Wednesday, 14th November at The Westin Dubai Mina Seyahi Beach Resort.
Encompass extends into Oman with the acquisition of Babcock’s media services

Encompass Digital Media has signed a definitive agreement to acquire Babcock International Group’s (Babcock’s) Media Services business. This deal expands Encompass’ scale in EMEA and extends the company’s combined channel playout, transmission and digital products portfolio while adding international radio distribution to its suite of services. Encompass has existing facilities in the UK, the US, Singapore, Argentina, Latvia and India. This acquisition will grow its operations in the UK and Singapore, and add operations in Oman and Ascension Island.

Elaborating on the agreement, Chris Walters, Encompass CEO, said: “Acquiring Babcock’s Media Services business increases our presence in the EMEA region, expands our video services offering, specifically in the live streaming sports arena, and bolsters our collective relationships with some of the most important media companies and public service broadcasters around the world.”

Nick Thompson, MD of Babcock’s Media Services business, lauded the acquisition, saying that it will cement Encompass’ global reputation as the provider of choice. The release stated that the acquisition of Babcock’s Media Services business represents a continued push to offer end-to-end, reliable and scalable services to media companies.

Saudi Research and Marketing Group and Bloomberg tie to launch news service

Saudi Research and Marketing Group (SRMG), a major regional publishing group, and Bloomberg have launched Bloomberg Asharq, a new multi-platform Arabic-language business and financial news service. This includes a 24/7 television and radio network and dedicated digital platform.

The news service and its new logo was officially launched by Peter Grauer, Chairman of Bloomberg LP, and Dr. Ghassan Alshibli, Chairman of SRMG last month. Last year, the two companies had signed a long-term agreement to launch Bloomberg Al Arabiya.

Operating out of Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), Bloomberg Asharq will have a major presence in Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, and Cairo with studios in each city.

Bloomberg Asharq platforms will provide Arabic-speaking audiences with news and analysis on the companies, markets, economies, and developments shaping the Middle East.

“This is an exciting new development as we move forward in our partnership with SRMG, as this multi-platform agreement is the most ambitious of its kind,” said Justin B. Smith, CEO of Bloomberg Media Group.

Heading the technology operations is Omran Abdallah, who has previously held senior tech positions at Al Arab News, twofour54 and MBC.

Ooyala recently opened an office in Dubai under parent company Telstra. Scott Bunce heads sales and is based in Dubai.

Asim Saeed (l) has joined Ikegami as Business Development Manager for Africa and Pakistan. Seen here with Abdul Ghan, GM (r) of Ikegami Middle East.
MBC Studios launches as part of five-year growth plan

MBC Group has launched MBC Studios, a subsidiary, set to build on the expertise of the group’s production assets, which include O3 Productions (MENA), AlSadaf (KSA) and O3 Medya (Turkey). The launch is part of the group’s five-year growth plan, a vision spearheaded by MBC Group Chairman, Waleed Al-Ibrahim, to provide content tailored to Saudi, Middle Eastern and global audiences.

Leading this new subsidiary is Peter Smith, who joined as Managing Director of MBC Studios, last month. His previous roles include President of International Home Entertainment at Universal Pictures International, President of NBC Universal International and CEO Scripted Business of Cineflix Productions Worldwide.

MBC Group CEO, Sam Barnett commented: “Content is the fuel that drives the success of both MBC television and Shahid.net, our VOD platform. Building on the group’s successes in drama, we are now expanding our ambition and widening our horizons yet further. I am delighted to welcome Peter Smith to MBC Group.”

More information about specific projects undertaken by MBC Studios will be released in the coming months.

The Group also marked Saudi Arabia’s 88th National Day with a live broadcast of Cirque du Soleil last month. Read our exclusive cover story on the biggest Cirque du Soleil production created for a customised event.

iflix inks MOU with KSA’s GCAM

Saudi Arabia’s General Authority for Audiovisual Media (GCAM) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SVOD platform iflix MENA, to bolster Saudi media production. The MoU aims to support Saudi nationals by sourcing local talent and developing, promoting and distributing their work through the iflix entertainment service.

Discovery produces new documentary on Dubai wildlife

Wild Dubai, a new documentary from Discovery Channel produced by UK-based Plimsoll Productions, premieres in the Middle East exclusively on OSN this month. The documentary reveals a range of animal species unique to this part of the world.

Amanda Turnbull, VP and GM of Discovery MEA, said: “This documentary will reveal a side to Dubai never seen before and reinforce Discovery’s ongoing commitment to raise awareness about the ways in which we can protect and care for our wildlife and ecosystems.”

AdColony launches interactive video ads in ME

Mobile advertising platform AdColony has partnered with Unilever to run interactive mobile video campaigns for the first time in the Middle East, with Aurora HD Video. For the first time in digital advertising, the company claims, Aurora gives brands the chance to measure the attention of users. The company showed that 50% of all people that saw an ad engaged with it. The campaigns allowed consumers to interact with video in a variety of ways, ranging from dragging a slide or tapping a character, to wiping away dust to better reveal the video.

We spotted the MediaKind team - Georges Dabaghi (l), Head of Sales, MEA and Luke Williams (r) – at IBC. Their new business cards seem to suggest they have opened a new office in Dubai Media City.
**ARN transforms workflow with IDS**

Arabian Radio Network has deployed IPE’s Intelligent Display System (IDS) at its Dubai facility.

ARN, which runs nine FM stations, previously had its operations spread across multiple sites. The network recently consolidated its operations at a single, flagship location, which has gone live with IDS at the core of multiple workflows within the facility.

ARN’s GM, Mahmoud Rasheed, said: “Flexibility is one of the key things we look for in a product. We are always looking ahead to future developments and don’t limit our requirements to functionality only or tie to a single manufacturer or system for decades.”

Executive Director of Broadcast and Technology, Essa Darwish, added: “IDS seamlessly brings together multiple workflows and products, and greatly simplifies complex broadcast operations.”

Reuben Such, Head of Sales and Support at IDS commented that the IDS system “simplifies the complicated, enabling any user to easily navigate through operational menus”.

“We are happy to closely integrate with any vendor and work with them to tailor IDS to their precise requirements.”

IDS is a scalable, network-based display and control system designed specifically for all broadcast applications. It is a modular display and control system that can be tailored to fit any installation.

---

**Facebook rolls out Watch**

Facebook announced the international rollout of its content streaming service, Facebook Watch, last month. The service was launched in the US a year ago. Watch offers publishers and content creators the opportunity to make money from their videos while also being able to analyse the popularity of the content.

Facebook Watch offers the latest videos spanning entertainment, sports and news as part of a personalised feed. Over time, new video experiences will be part of the Watch feed, such as Watch Parties, premieres and videos focused on audience participation – such as the new trivia game show, Confetti. Facebook is expected to spend between $1bn and $2bn on content deals for Facebook Watch over the next year.

---

**Dubai to host Chinese Film Week in October**

Hala China, a JV initiative by Meraas and Dubai Holding, has announced that Dubai’s first Chinese Film Week will be launched on 1 October, with a programme that includes the screening of some of China’s most popular blockbusters.

Chinese Film Week will take place during the Chinese National Day holiday. Supported by the Consulate-General of the People’s Republic of China in Dubai and the China Film Administration, the film screenings will take place at Roxy Cinemas at City Walk, The Beach and Boxpark.

---

**Inaugural MENA Cinema Forum in Dubai to host 450 delegates**

The first-ever MENA Cinema Forum will be held at the Grand Hyatt hotel in Dubai. The two-day inaugural event is slated to host around 45 speakers, 450 delegates and 60 sponsors from 30 counties. It will discuss cinema-related issues including the transition through digital disruption and the economic impact of the growing cinema industry, as well as the effects of the Saudi cinema market across the region.

Commenting on the industry, Leila Masinaei, Managing Director of GM Events, organiser of the MENA Cinema Forum, said: “The Saudi government anticipates 300 cinemas will open by 2030, contributing $24bn to the economy, creating 30,000 jobs.”

The MENA Cinema Forum will feature some of the biggest names in the global film industry, and will also screen exclusive premieres for VIPs and delegates, the release stated.
Former DIFF MD and Freej creator to offer consultancy for content makers

Shivani Pandya Malhotra, former MD of the Dubai International Film Festival (DIFF), which folded last year, and Mohammed Saeed Harib, Chairman of Lammtara Art Productions, best known for animated TV series Freej, have partnered to launch NearEast Entertainment.

Based in Dubai, the new enterprise, which targets the TV, music, film, arts and live events sectors, claims to combine strategic consulting services, global experience and local insight to deliver cultural initiatives and events from ideation to execution, and provide strategic consulting services in the media and entertainment industry.

NearEast Entertainment will support Arab cinema and will strive to help filmmakers from the region secure financing, build all-important connections with film professionals from across the industry and assist with publicity to ensure films from the Arab world are seen by global audiences and further drive cinematic growth in the region.

The group aims to bring a diverse range of international films to the region. Support will be extended to studios with their MENA theatrical release through publicity support, regional insight and reaching new audiences in the Arab world.

They are joined by former associates and media specialists Jane Williams, Mahsa Motamedi, Zeina Sfeir, Ben Amy and Antoine Khalife, who together bring more than 20 years of local, regional and international experience.

Nigerian network deploys V-Nova solution

Pipul TV, a Nigerian education and entertainment television and media communications network, has selected video compression solutions provider V-Nova’s Perseus Plus to support the launch of its entertainment service. V-Nova’s next-generation compression technology deployment is slated to help Pipul TV deliver full HD content to all devices across Nigeria, regardless of bandwidth.

By deploying Perseus Plus, Pipul TV is able to deliver full HD video entertainment at 1Mbps and 720p video at 300kbps. Leveraging the reach of mobile networks, the service aims to provide the best consumer experience at a fraction of the bandwidth required with other solutions, resulting in reduced buffering and overall improved quality of experience for consumers. The ability to deliver video at lower bitrates also enables services to reliably reach more viewers, even on the slowest or most congested network connections, increasing their addressable market substantially, the release stated.

The Pipul TV OTT service will carry more than 200 local and international live channels and a catalogue of VOD content, and is projected to reach two million subscribers within three years.

$150,000 on offer for Arab films at Egypt’s El Gouna Film Festival

The second El Gouna Film Festival (GFF) was held from September 20 to 28 in El Gouna, a resort on the Red Sea riviera in Egypt. An international jury of film experts chose the winners from 12 projects in development and six films in post-production, with prize money in excess of $150,000.

Films were selected based on their content, artistic vision and overall financial feasibility. The projects represent six Arab countries: Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq and Sudan.
Cablevision, a pay-TV provider in Lebanon, has announced the imminent launch of a new IP-based entertainment service in major cities across the country.

Cablevision will bundle its IP-to-home content delivery service with a broadband offering – reportedly delivering more than 150 entertainment, news, sports and film channels alongside on-demand and OTT content. The service launch is planned in and around the capital Beirut before a new tier of cities is targeted for further expansion, the release stated.

Commenting on the launch, Bassam Jaber, Chairman and General Manager at Cablevision, said: “The choice of a proven ecosystem helped us reduce the number of integrations and equipment, and therefore simplifies future business operations. We see IP-based delivery as the way forward for future content delivery and believe we have in place the right ecosystem with Meatel, Alpha Networks, Amino, Broadpeak and Viaccess to drive our future strategy.”

The IPTV platform was executed by Beirut-based systems integrator Meatel and enabled by tucanoRED service delivery platform from Alpha Networks, a pay-TV technology company. Solutions also included Amino’s Ari6 hybrid HEVC client device, Broadpeak’s nanoCDN for multicast ABR streaming and Viaccess’ Connected Sentinel security suite, along with the Viaccess multi-platform secured media player for content delivery to multiscreen devices.

Commenting on the solutions, Samer Elia, Head of Entertainment, Multimedia and Communications Business Unit at Meatel, said: “We’re delighted to enable our customer, Cablevision, to cost-effectively deliver a high-quality VoD and live services over IP to its subscribers.”

Pascal Birot, SVP Business Development at Alpha Networks, added: “Our modular back-end provides a faster time-to-market for delivering new services so that Cablevision maintains its competitive edge.”

Bart Vanderostyne, VP Sales at Amino, stated: “We are very pleased to partner with Meatel on this new IPTV deployment – one of the new ‘greenfield’ opportunities in the region.”

Barco appoints new VP of MENA operations

Barco has appointed Ramzi Itani as VP of MEA operations. With experience spanning more than 25 years, Ramzi will be responsible for developing Barco’s enterprise, entertainment and healthcare client bases.

GatesAir appoints new EMEA MD

GatesAir has appointed Andy McClelland MD, EMEA. Based in the UK, McClelland will lead a team of sales and technical specialists across EMEA and India, and report directly to Rich Redmond, President and MD, GatesAir International.

IndiaCast, the distribution company for TV18 and Viacom18, has launched a family quiz show Brain Wagon in the Middle East. Conceptualised and produced by The Magic Box FZ LLE, the show premiered last month on Colors TV ME. The show has been designed to engage the entire family both for participation and viewership, the release stated.

Commenting on the new programme, Sachin Gokhale, Business Head – Middle East & Africa and Head of Corporate Strategy for International Business at IndiaCast, said: “Over the past few years, we have seen our local content initiatives resonating well and proving to be extremely popular with our audiences in the Middle East. Given the universal nature of the contest, the fun and informal setting and the presence of a much-loved celebrity host like Cyrus Sahukar, we are sure this show will be much enjoyed by the entire base of our South Asian family audiences.”

This first-of-a-kind format on a South Asian TV channel will have families as participants battling it out in a series of challenging mind games.

Business Operations and Corporate Strategy for International Business at IndiaCast, said: “We are very pleased to partner with Meatel on this new IPTV deployment – one of the new ‘greenfield’ opportunities in the region.”
Arabsat and Newtec sign multi-million-dollar deal to enable MENA HTS services

Arabsat and Newtec signed a multi-million-dollar agreement at IBC2018 to enable the launch of new HTS services in the Middle East and Africa, including enterprise broadband services, IP trunking, VNO services and mobile backhaul for 3G and 4G services.

Under the partnership, Arabsat will deploy a Newtec Dialog platform with a variety of Newtec’s DVB-S2X wideband modems. The specific modem used for each customer will depend on the market served, with Newtec’s portfolio providing vertical-specific solutions for any satellite application to provide the best connectivity experience, the release stated.

Commenting on the new agreement, Khalid Balkheyour, CEO at Arabsat, said: “Expanding our partnership with Newtec in this way will help us meet rising market demand for high-throughput and high-performance services, pushing the boundaries of what is available today. We chose to partner with Newtec after careful consideration of the market. We are confident that Newtec’s expertise will enlarge our addressable market and maximise the benefits of HTS to gain highest efficiency and throughput. This helps us provide the high-quality, cost-effective services our customers expect.”

Elaborating on the solution, Thomas Van den Driessche, CEO at Newtec, said: “Maximising revenues with the highest profitability and at a minimised risk can be associated with our Newtec Dialog platform, especially being used to enlarge our addressable market and maximise the benefits of HTS networks.”

Once launched, the new services will use Arabsat satellite capacity, with the initial hub expected to be installed in Europe within the next month, enabling key markets in the MEA, followed by coverage of northwest Africa and southern Africa. Full operational capacity is expected to be ready by Q1 2019. The underlying Dialog network will ensure flexible, scalable, cost-effective and efficient operations for Arabsat customers, the release stated.

Talia, Arabsat to offer secure broadcast services

Talia Limited, a communications provider serving the Middle East, Africa, Europe and the Americas, has announced the completion and successful deployment of a new uplink platform to host HD and SD channels through a secure transmission on Arabsat’s Badr-7 satellite at 26°E.

With Arabsat’s satellite technology, Talia offers customers a secure broadcasting service that is reportedly immune to signal jamming and interference at the 26°E hot spot.

Khalid Balkheyour, Arabsat President & CEO, said: “The service offers high monitoring capabilities and quality of service, an excellent solution for Arabsat’s DTH services from Europe.”

Alan Afrasiab, Talia President & CEO, added: “This partnership equips us to provide secure video transmission services to those customers that use our facilities. We are also delighted to continue our long relationship with Arabsat and provide customers with this complex technical solution. Working with Arabsat’s professional team, this new service was achieved quickly and with the minimum of trouble.”
ATEM Camera Control Panel controls up to 4 cameras at once including iris, shutter speed, color, master gain, pedestal, and more!

The ATEM Camera Control Panel is a compact remote camera control unit designed to control up to four different URSA Broadcast, URSA Mini, Blackmagic Studio or Blackmagic Micro Studio cameras. Featuring traditional broadcast style controls and adjustments, now a single operator can monitor and adjust a wide range of technical parameters such as black levels, gain, color balance, shutter speed and more. This means that camera operators are free to focus on creative framing and composition. The ATEM Camera Control Panel has been designed to be portable and simply placed on a desktop, or it can be bolted down for mounting in a slide out rack shelf. The controls are arranged in a familiar and logical layout, making it perfect for both experienced and new operators. Plus, it works with all ATEM switcher models!

ATEM Camera Control Panel  US$3,195*

Compatible with:
- ATEM Television Studio HD  from US$1,065*
- Blackmagic Studio Camera  from US$1,595*
- Blackmagic URSA Broadcast  from US$3,725*

Learn more at www.blackmagicdesign.com/ae

*SRP excludes duties, shipping and sales tax.
Qvest Media partners with Carrosserie Akkermans to build OB vans in MENA

Systems architect and ICT integrator Qvest Media and Carrosserie Akkermans, a bodywork construction specialist for media vehicles, have entered into an exclusive MENA partnership to create production and broadcast vehicles. The companies will focus on increased technical and structural standardisation and a modular vehicle concept. Technologically, a full IP-capable design of the vehicles will play a central role in order to be able to increasingly relocate production tasks to stationary production and broadcasting centres via remote connection.

Networking with cloud services and resources will also simplify field production and relieve the local OB teams.

In the past, Qvest Media and Carrosserie Akkermans have jointly developed media vehicles for applications such as television, events, sports broadcasts and live reports. Building on this shared experience, cooperation will be extended to the MENA region.

Commenting on the partnership, Ahmad Al Kayal, Sales Manager at Qvest Media in Dubai, said: “Akkermans’ know-how in the construction of high-quality and sophisticated bodywork solutions helps us to implement our media technology concepts and workflow designs in the best possible way, and to arrange customer-focused and cost-optimised turnkey solutions.”

Peter Nöthen, CEO of Qvest Media Group, told BroadcastPro at IBC that this partnership has already led to “three OB projects in the MENA region together”, though he declined to comment further.

Arjan Akkermans, CEO of Carrosserie Akkermans, added: “We are pleased to further expand our partnership with Qvest Media.”

The latest joint project between the two companies is the construction of two 4K/UHD production vehicles for the international news agency Ruptly.

Networking with cloud services and resources will also simplify field production and relieve the local OB teams.

In the past, Qvest Media and Carrosserie Akkermans have jointly developed media vehicles for applications such as television, events, sports broadcasts and live reports. Building on this shared experience, cooperation will be extended to the MENA region.

Commenting on the partnership, Ahmad Al Kayal, Sales Manager at Qvest Media in Dubai, said: “Akkermans’ know-how in the construction of high-quality and sophisticated bodywork solutions helps us to implement our media technology concepts and workflow designs in the best possible way, and to arrange customer-focused and cost-optimised turnkey solutions.”

Peter Nöthen, CEO of Qvest Media Group, told BroadcastPro at IBC that this partnership has already led to “three OB projects in the MENA region together”, though he declined to comment further.

Arjan Akkermans, CEO of Carrosserie Akkermans, added: “We are pleased to further expand our partnership with Qvest Media.”

The latest joint project between the two companies is the construction of two 4K/UHD production vehicles for the international news agency Ruptly.

Networking with cloud services and resources will also simplify field production and relieve the local OB teams.

In the past, Qvest Media and Carrosserie Akkermans have jointly developed media vehicles for applications such as television, events, sports broadcasts and live reports. Building on this shared experience, cooperation will be extended to the MENA region.

Commenting on the partnership, Ahmad Al Kayal, Sales Manager at Qvest Media in Dubai, said: “Akkermans’ know-how in the construction of high-quality and sophisticated bodywork solutions helps us to implement our media technology concepts and workflow designs in the best possible way, and to arrange customer-focused and cost-optimised turnkey solutions.”

Peter Nöthen, CEO of Qvest Media Group, told BroadcastPro at IBC that this partnership has already led to “three OB projects in the MENA region together”, though he declined to comment further.

Arjan Akkermans, CEO of Carrosserie Akkermans, added: “We are pleased to further expand our partnership with Qvest Media.”

The latest joint project between the two companies is the construction of two 4K/UHD production vehicles for the international news agency Ruptly.

Networking with cloud services and resources will also simplify field production and relieve the local OB teams.

In the past, Qvest Media and Carrosserie Akkermans have jointly developed media vehicles for applications such as television, events, sports broadcasts and live reports. Building on this shared experience, cooperation will be extended to the MENA region.

Commenting on the partnership, Ahmad Al Kayal, Sales Manager at Qvest Media in Dubai, said: “Akkermans’ know-how in the construction of high-quality and sophisticated bodywork solutions helps us to implement our media technology concepts and workflow designs in the best possible way, and to arrange customer-focused and cost-optimised turnkey solutions.”

Peter Nöthen, CEO of Qvest Media Group, told BroadcastPro at IBC that this partnership has already led to “three OB projects in the MENA region together”, though he declined to comment further.

Arjan Akkermans, CEO of Carrosserie Akkermans, added: “We are pleased to further expand our partnership with Qvest Media.”

The latest joint project between the two companies is the construction of two 4K/UHD production vehicles for the international news agency Ruptly.

Networking with cloud services and resources will also simplify field production and relieve the local OB teams.

In the past, Qvest Media and Carrosserie Akkermans have jointly developed media vehicles for applications such as television, events, sports broadcasts and live reports. Building on this shared experience, cooperation will be extended to the MENA region.

Commenting on the partnership, Ahmad Al Kayal, Sales Manager at Qvest Media in Dubai, said: “Akkermans’ know-how in the construction of high-quality and sophisticated bodywork solutions helps us to implement our media technology concepts and workflow designs in the best possible way, and to arrange customer-focused and cost-optimised turnkey solutions.”

Peter Nöthen, CEO of Qvest Media Group, told BroadcastPro at IBC that this partnership has already led to “three OB projects in the MENA region together”, though he declined to comment further.

Arjan Akkermans, CEO of Carrosserie Akkermans, added: “We are pleased to further expand our partnership with Qvest Media.”

The latest joint project between the two companies is the construction of two 4K/UHD production vehicles for the international news agency Ruptly.
Dubai’s first arthouse cinema opens in Alserkal Avenue with daily screenings

Dubai’s first arthouse cinema, Cinema Akil, opened last month on Alserkal Avenue with a screening of two regional premieres: Palme d’Or nominee Yomeddine, directed by Abu Bakr Shawky, and critically acclaimed documentary McQueen, about the life and career of fashion designer Alexander McQueen, directed by Ian Bonhôte and Peter Ettedgui.

The erstwhile pop-up cinema platform established in 2014 has moved into a permanent home at Warehouse 68 on Alserkal Avenue. Cinema Akil has two daily screenings, one at 7pm and one at 9.30pm.

Speaking to BroadcastPro ME, Butheina Kazim, Co-founder and Managing Director of Cinema Akil, said: “Over three years, we have had more than 190 screenings at Alserkal Avenue, apart from other venues in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Having tested the concept of arthouse cinema and seeing the consistent interest in our screenings, we decided to turn a warehouse into a single-screen cinema with 125 chairs and screen films every single night.”

Cinema solutions provider and systems integrator CineTech supplied and installed the cinema equipment. Outlining the solutions provided, Peter Khamas, Managing Director of CineTech DMCC, said: “We deployed Barco Projection, QSC 7.1 surround audio and a Harkness screen at Cinema Akil.”

Once the civil contractor had completed the required works, CineTech took five days to deliver, test and commission for the single screen. Khamas said: “The client requested us to provide the latest technology and to meet current world cinema standards. The main challenge was the acoustics of the location, considering it was a warehouse, but we are happy with the final audio quality. We believe this project will play a vital role in the region’s cinema industry. We have been working with Butheina since the start and we share the same passion for cinema.”

Underscoring the commitment to quality, Butheina, an Emirati and self-confessed film lover, said: “CineTech is a leading technology provider. They have previously worked with VOX and Reel cinemas, among other brands. We did not want to compromise on quality and this was where most of our money, acquired through painstaking fundraising projects, was spent.”

Throwing light on the process of sourcing films, she said: “Dubai-based distributor and content aggregator Front Row Filmed Entertainment is a key partner. They are not just the biggest art-house cinema distributor in the region, but they also work with a lot of regional titles.”

Apart from ticket sales, Kazim said Cinema Akil is open to corporate sponsorships and events towards offsetting the cost of screening films.

Describing Cinema Akil as a “365-day film festival”, she believes the permanent home at Alserkal will be a proof-of-concept for the single-screen arthouse sector in the region. Stressing that Cinema Akil will complement and not compete with multiplexes, she said: “Multiplexes are an important part of the ecosystem. We believe an independent cinema platform such as Cinema Akil is there to enable little-known films to get wider releases. We want to work hand-in-hand with multiplexes and be that first entry for independent cinema.”

Significantly, Cinema Akil will be a platform for regional filmmakers to find audiences as well as hone their skills through workshops, stressed Kazim. Having started her career with the Arab Media Group in 2008 to set up a channel for arthouse cinema similar to the TV network Arte France, she said Cinema Akil will be open to collaborate with broadcasters on free-to-air and pay-TV as well as VOD platforms.

The eclectic fare on offer following the opening day included the 1969 film The Color of Pomegranates, directed by Sergei Parajanov; Matteo Garrone’s Dogman and Philippe Van Leeuw’s war drama In Syria, among others.

On the kind of films that would make the cut, Kazim said: “There are different ways to connect to films. A film should essentially be a consciousness-raising experience from the artistic, narration or technical points of view.”

Cinema Akil is open daily from 4pm. Butheina Kazim, Co-founder and Managing Director of Cinema Akil.
With an estimated audience of 200 million viewers watching the Saudi National Day celebrations on TV, the event became a global showcase, the biggest yet in MENA. The team at Seven Production was tasked with the coverage of this momentous occasion and the production of the first ever live broadcast of the spectacular Cirque du Soleil on MBC1.

September 23, 2018 saw Saudi Arabia erupt into a hive of activity as people took to the streets to celebrate the country’s 88th National Day. Celebrated singers Dalia Mubarak and Shamma Hamdan regaled audiences at City Walk, an open-air lifestyle destination by Meraas in the Kingdom, with their respective popular hits Qalbat Al Tawela and Mojaba, among others.

The General Authority for Entertainment marked the occasion in Riyadh by presenting Cirque du Soleil, in one of the Canadian entertainment company’s largest shows to date, and its first in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The event, attended by 27,000 guests, was organised by MBC Group and broadcast live on MBC1, a global first for Cirque du Soleil.

More than 120 cameras and 10 OB trucks were deployed across different parts of the Kingdom to capture and broadcast the National Day action live – a challenge met successfully by Seven Production, a broadcast services provider and production house based in Dubai with large operational facilities in both Saudi Arabia and Lebanon.

For Saudi Arabia, 2018 marks a watershed moment with several decrees being passed in the last few months to shed its ultra conservative image and open its doors to entertainment and international investment. In a landmark announcement, Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, declared that the Kingdom will spend $64bn over the next ten years to develop its entertainment sector, as part of the country’s Vision 2030. In related efforts, Saudi Arabia also lifted a 35-year-old ban on cinemas, leading to a raft of international and local partnerships and investments to develop its cinema and media infrastructure.

The country announced that it will host a whopping 5,000 live shows, concerts and
“Our biggest challenge was to be able to capture the action in ways that will make TV viewers feel as if they were experiencing it live in the venue”

Pierre Tabet, Managing Director, Seven Production
festivals across its 56 cities this year to mark the onset of this era of greater cultural and social openness. In parallel, KSA has also witnessed another historic moment with women now being permitted to drive and assume high-profile positions in the corporate sector. With so many milestones and opportunities auguring positive change in the country, Saudi Arabia is poised for a cultural renaissance that was reflected in its National Day celebrations last month.

Cirque du Soleil’s debut in the Kingdom broke the record for the largest number of people attending in a single circus performance. Taking place at the King Fahd International Stadium on a tailor-made 100m x 40m theatre designed and constructed especially for the occasion, the audience witnessed a blend of the latest technological innovations in stagecraft, large-scale video projections, special effects and fireworks with Cirque du Soleil’s signature style acrobatics.

Intertwining storytelling with acrobatics, the Canadian company presented a visual masterpiece that included aerial silk, suspended pole, rotating ladder, German wheel, fire manipulation and Trampowall performances, as well as unicycle tricks, contemporary and hip-hop dance, electric motorcycle stunts and even a free-flying hoverboard illusion.

The show revolves around a tribe of nomads gathered on the desert dunes in search of an oasis, when a raging sandstorm sweeps across their encampment. The desert dwellers are whisked off to a surreal world and the wheels of the future begin to revolve. The encampment turns into a magical oasis where waterfalls flow upwards, and when the great falcon spreads its wings,

“We expanded our services within Saudi Arabia in line with the Crown Prince’s vision, and to be part of this history in the making”

Hadi Ghanem, owner, Seven Production

More than 10km of fibre cable was laid out at the stadium and everything had to be properly covered for safety. Work on the set-up began as early as September 10.

With operations in Saudi Arabia for the last two years, the company had most of the equipment here for the occasion, says Hadi Ghanem of Seven Production.
**A new sun rises over the horizon.**

The visual theme of the King Fahd International Stadium’s exterior was reminiscent of Bedouin tents. This design was explored on stage as well, thus creating a ‘theatre within a theatre’ experience. The four elements came into play, with the tent structures and four mashrabiya-inspired lanterns immersing the audience in a surreal realm where tradition inspires the future.

The set design was accentuated by bold architectural lighting that carved out dynamic visuals with graphic angular lines and geometric patterns. Drawing inspiration from the visual culture of Saudi Arabia and harnessing the power of video mapping, large-scale projections whisked the audience away to a surreal world brimming with historical and geographical references, as seen through the prism of Cirque du Soleil.

The event was watched by more than 200 million viewers worldwide, turning the Saudi National Day celebrations into a global event.

Abdulrahman bin Nasser Al Khalifa, General Manager of Communications and official spokesperson of the General Entertainment Authority, commented in a release that the event provided “the Saudi audience with an enthralling international entertainment experience, mixed with locally-relevant content”.

“This is part of the Authority’s efforts to attract and welcome the largest and most innovative entertainment and leisure companies to the Kingdom and facilitate business for them. These efforts are in addition to supporting a growing local sector, creating healthy competition between national companies to enrich the local entertainment scene,” he added.

The National Day celebrations last month required Seven to bring together all of its crew and equipment from both Dubai and Saudi to pull off a project of this scale. With a land mass of 2.14 million sq km, Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Middle East with a population of 33 million, of which two-thirds are Saudi nationals. With all the changes this year, the National Day celebrations promised to be bigger, better and radically different from anything witnessed in the last four decades.

“The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia declared that his vision for 2030 for Saudi Arabia is that it becomes the heart of the Arab world, an investment powerhouse and a hub connecting three continents,” Hadi Ghanem, owner of Seven Production, tells *BroadcastPro ME*.

“We expanded our services within Saudi Arabia in line with the Crown Prince’s vision, and to be part of this history in the making. We opened three offices in the Kingdom across Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam, as well as studios and warehouses to store specialist equipment. We even have two outside broadcast (OB) units wired with 12 and 18 cameras respectively, and both are based in Saudi Arabia the whole year round to cover productions.”

Managing Director Pierre Tabet, responsible for overseeing this project from start to finish says,
“This was, by far, one of the biggest events in the MENA region in terms of scale and magnitude.”

Seven has built a reputation over the last couple of years for covering National Day events live in the GCC. But this journey required all of the resources and skill the team could muster.

“Seven Production was the host broadcaster of the Saudi National Day celebrations last year, due to the level of skill and resources required to produce and broadcast an event of this scale. This year, we were again called to cover the celebrations, which were a combination of many different events taking place across 10 major locations within KSA. Alongside this was the first Cirque du Soleil in the Kingdom. As host broadcaster, we were tasked with filming and broadcasting all these events live on air.”

With the volume and scale of equipment and crew required to cover National Day celebrations, Seven was chosen because of its experience covering similar large-scale events in other parts of the region.

Covering Cirque required a lot more planning as it was being hosted at the King Fahd football stadium, explains Tabet. More than 10km of fibre cable was laid out at the stadium and everything had to be properly covered for safety. Work on the set-up began as early as September 10.

Cirque du Soleil alone required one OB unit linked to a combination of 28 specialist ENG cameras. While Cirque and the VIPs attending the event were covered in 4K with special zoom lenses, the rest of the event was primarily covered in HD.

“It took one month to plan the logistics layout with MBC and Cirque du Soleil. We started cabling the venue on September 10. We had to secure all the cables to ensure that they were all covered and did not inconvenience people. Following that, we fixed all the cameras and did a full technical rehearsal for two days,” explains Tabet.

“We had 28 cameras installed around the venue to capture the show. The Cirque team came to the venue five days before the event, so we had five full days of rehearsal with them before the actual day to ensure that everything ran seamlessly. We had a combination of technical crew from Seven with an international creative crew from Cirque. We worked closely with their director and MBC’s director to ensure we were able to keep everybody’s requirements in mind. As we have had operations in Saudi Arabia for the last two years, we had most of the equipment here for this occasion.”

With security high, remote cameras were deployed in all VIP areas as a standard requirement, he adds.

“We had eight brand-new Panasonic 4K camera systems deployed in the VIP rooms to ensure that we can capture the footage without inconveniencing the VIPs. This is what we do for all National Day celebrations.”

In addition, Seven ensured that each of the ten locations hosting the celebrations was covered with 12 to 14 cameras.

“We had an OB truck stationed at each location, so essentially we used 10 trucks for this shoot.

“The client had their own criteria and specifications to which we needed to adhere. Everything from the type of equipment and the lenses that are being used to the manpower on-site had to be taken into account.”

Pierre Tabet, Managing Director, Seven Production
AVAILABILITY LATE 2018
2/3" 4K ULTRA HDTV ZOOM LENS
UA46x9.5

AVAILABILITY LATE 2018
2/3" 4K ULTRA HDTV ZOOM LENS
UA46x13.5

FUJINON 4K Lens Lineup

UA14x4.5  UA18x5.5  UA24x7.8  UA27x6.5  UA107x8.4

UA13x4.5  UA22x8  UA80x9 1.2x EXT

For more information, please contact:
FUJIFILM Middle East FZE
Downtown Jebel Ali, Dubai, UAE
Email: tv_emea@fujifilm.com
Web: www.fujifilm.eu/fujinon
Besides this, we had ENG cameras to take interviews and make reports. We used a combination of HD and 4K formats for this event, due to different protocol requirements and special filming angles. We also used technocranes and the Furio S2, which we now use extensively for work across the GCC,” explains Tabet.

“The client had their own criteria and specifications to which we needed to adhere. Everything from the type of equipment and the lenses that are being used to the manpower on-site had to be taken into account. We had planned for everything, including hidden cameras and wireless systems, along with the latest in HD and remote cameras in 4K.”

One key-piece of equipment that came in handy was the Ross Furio S2, says Tabet. This lift features a linear rail design for greater linearity, repeatability and reliability. The two-stage S2 lift provides 50cm of extension range, on a par with the original Furio legacy lift. Compatible with both the VR100 and VR600 heads, it can be paired with either the SE dolly or the BlackBird base to provide a much more affordable alternative for installations where the extra height or range of the SE lift is not required. This supports virtual tracking and is therefore ideal for virtual sets or augmented reality. It supports the fast and responsive FXhead and is controlled by the remote panbar or joystick control systems.

Tabet also lauds the company’s new investment – the Canon DIGISUPER 95 (X196x8.6B), a super-telephoto lens that provides a range of imaging possibilities that he says conventional field lenses cannot match. The X196x combines the widest focal length (8.6mm) of any field lens in the industry with a 95x zoom range that’s longer at the tele end. Through this extensive framing latitude, every dramatic on-site sensation can be captured covering the National Day was the logistics, says Tabet.

“The country is huge and the locations are so far away from each other that it was a logistical challenge. But having done it last year, we knew exactly what the challenges were so we planned way ahead of time to rule out any issues. Of course, every event has its own pace, and each year the concept and the content tend to change and we face new challenges. But technically, we were prepared for everything and it went smoothly,” explains Tabet, adding that Saudi Arabia is a challenge for everyone because nothing of this scale has been undertaken before in the country.

With 25 people stationed at its Saudi office and more than 100 staff in Dubai, Tabet says Seven had enough technical and creative teams to address a project of this scale.

“We did hire additional freelance creative and camera people from Saudi Arabia, but we tend to have all our technical crew internally. This is crucial,” he explains.

The second big challenge was that Cirque du Soleil had never been filmed at an outdoor venue before, or broadcast live on air.

“It is known to be an event that must be watched live, to really have the ‘wow’ experience. Our biggest challenge was to be able to capture the action in ways that will make TV viewers feel as if they were experiencing it live in the venue. This was a huge challenge, but again we pulled it off.”

The project head is proud that Seven has consistently invested in new equipment.

“The constant investment in the latest technology and equipment, such as our 4K system, is something that always enables us to remain ahead of everyone else. With operations in Saudi, UAE and Lebanon, we have been able to remain at the centre of the industry action.”

---

“IT TOOK ONE MONTH TO PLAN THE LOGISTICS LAYOUT WITH MBC AND CIRQUE DU SOLEIL. WE HAD 28 CAMERAS INSTALLED AROUND THE VENUE TO CAPTURE THE SHOW”

Pierre Tabet, Managing Director, Seven Production

---
AJA expands its openGear line with five new openGear cards, including DashBoard software support for configuration and control.

Designed for use in openGear 2RU frames including AJA’s OG-3 2RU frame, AJA’s new openGear cards combine the reliability and functionality of AJA Mini-Converters with the high-density openGear architecture. New DashBoard Software support provides convenient and industry-standard configuration, monitoring and control options over a PC or local network.

**5 New openGear Cards**

AJA expands its openGear lineup with five new cards for audio, video scaling and HDMI conversion.

- OG-3-AMA: 3G-SDI to Analog Audio Embedder/Disembedder
- OG-UDC: 3G-SDI Up, Down, Cross-Converter
- OG-4K2HD: 4K/UltraHD to HD Down-Converter
- OG-Hi5-4K-Plus: 4K/UltraHD SDI to HDMI 2.0 Converter
- OG-HA5-4K: 4K/UltraHD HDMI to SDI Converter

**DashBoard**

DashBoard software is the industry standard for openGear configuration and control.

Simply install your new AJA openGear cards in any openGear frame, including the OG-3-FR from AJA, and enjoy the speed and efficiency of setting configuration options for your project’s needs.

New AJA openGear cards with DashBoard software support allow remote configuration and control on macOS®, Windows® or Linux®.

**openGear Compatible Rackframes**

openGear is an open-architecture, modular frame system designed by Ross Video and supported by a diverse range of terminal equipment manufacturers, including AJA Video Systems.

The AJA OG-3-FR is a 2RU high openGear frame which is compatible with any openGear card. The frame has a 20-slot capacity with excellent cooling capabilities for high-density applications and compatibility with advanced openGear connectivity options for supported cards.

Find out more at |www.aja.com|
From innovations around 4K, UHD and HDR to a Netflix partnership alliance, Canon experts at IBC2018 take us through storytelling initiatives suited for filmmakers, big or small.

“The story this year has been all around 4K, ultra-high definition (UHD) and high dynamic range (HDR), and how Canon as the only manufacturer of the golden triangle of lens technology, CMOS sensors and DIGIC processors, are committed to the future of filmmaking,” explains Stephen Hart Dyke, Professional Imaging/B2B Product Marketing Manager for the Imaging Technologies & Communications Group at Canon Europe Ltd.

The world of storytelling and filming has never been brimming with as much opportunity as in this age, with new technologies and platforms opening doors for anyone with a tale to tell. IBC2018 served as the ideal platform for a raft of new launches designed to take storytelling to the next level. Joining that journey with a number of landmark launches at IBC was Canon, which also celebrated 60 years of developing some of the finest glass for filming this year.
“With both the image capture and the output as well with onset/grading monitors, Canon supports the whole process of filmmaking. Everything across our new range has been optimised for 4K, UHD and HDR. From cameras through to broadcast lenses to the world’s longest broadcast zoom lenses, we have created options for everyone. Our new zoom lenses are enormous and ideal for golf or cricket or any sport that requires you to close in on a shot. Canon is bringing new possibilities and new codecs to the customer, with new features in the camera and the greatest possible zoom you can get today.”

Perhaps Canon’s biggest win at IBC this year was Netflix’s timely announcement of the Netflix partnership alliance, which certifies products from certain manufacturers as especially suited for 4K production and delivery. In the words of Chris Fetner, Netflix Director of Post-Partnerships and Integrations, certified vendors are “committed to better interoperability and faster innovation cycles”. Canon has been identified as one of those vendors.

“Essentially, they are trying to simplify workflows,” explains Hart Dyke. “Netflix has pre-approved cameras, which they have tested and know are suitable for 4K production and their workflow. They have started with cameras but intend to vet products for the rest of the spectrum including post-production.

“4K has gained traction because of Netflix, and we have been working with them for years to support this format. We have four cameras that are part of the Netflix Partnership Alliance – the Cinema EOS C700 FF (full-frame) camera that we launched recently, as well as the C700, the C500 and the C300 Mark II. These are the cameras from the Canon stable that Netflix has recommended to those who have been commissioned to shoot for the streaming service. In addition, our lenses offer full 4K support.

“4K has gained traction because of Netflix, and we have been working with them for years to support this format.”

Stephen Hart Dyke, Professional Imaging/B2B Product Marketing Manager, Canon Europe Ltd
Group for Canon Europe, giving an idea of the scale and breadth of its popularity. “We celebrated the sale of 130 million lenses until last year with the EF mount. That gives you an idea of how well established that mount was and the scale at which it has been adopted worldwide.”

He explains that replacing such a popular mount was indeed a challenge, but necessary to keep up with the requirements of new technologies.

Hart Dyke seconds that.

“There are many elements that make this camera unique. For instance, we have added extra pins, which in combination with the new CMOS sensor and processor, allows for several world firsts, such as the world’s first fastest autofocus at 0.05 seconds. Those kind of forward steps in terms of technology through time are allowing end users to capture and innovate continuously.”

He adds that the camera has the ability to focus down to -6EV.

“Imagine a dark room with a lamp in the corner where you can still focus on a person’s face. The human eye may lose the colour in that room, but through the cameras and the new sensor, you can actually capture that. That is a step forward in new boundaries and another feather in our cap.”

Canon has also looked carefully at lens optics for this camera.

“The EOS R brings subtle but important differences. For instance, to protect the CMOS sensor where there is no longer a mirror in front of it, we have a little shutter that comes down and de-focuses the sensor to protect it. There are 12 pins in the RF mount, allowing for faster communication between lens and camera, but also readying the camera for new lenses which might require more power for zoom control, for instance, in the future,” Hart Dyke says, adding that the EOS R is unique because the lens and the camera have been designed together to “give the absolute best in the whole system”.

Atkinson points out that the XF705 is also an important launch at IBC, because it replaces a monumental product like the XF305.

“The XF305 has been around for a few years, and it has been such a trusted old workhorse that it was difficult to try and justify replacing it. But with changes in codec, changes in demand for footage that comes in and more people wanting 4K, it was important to launch a product that addressed those requirements.”

He says the big challenge with 4K in the past has always been the size of the files.

“In the cinema EOS range, like the C200, capturing footage in Cinema RAW Light consumes 1Gbps. What...
we needed were files that had the same quality with much lower bitrate, and that’s what the XF705 does. It uses a new H.265/HEVC codec with approximately double the compression of H.264, with an MXF wrapper to make Canon’s own variation XF-HEVC, which means we can record 4K UHD video up to 50fps and record in 10-bit 4:2:2 onto an SD card at 160Mbps. That’s a huge improvement.”

Atkinson adds that Canon has gone one step further to shoot footage in both HDR and SDR simultaneously. “For the first time in Canon’s pro camcorders, we can record HDR in both flavours – PQ (Perceptual Quantisation) and HLG (Hybrid Log Gamma) – like the Cinema EOS higher-end cameras. If you want to record it in HDR, the camera allows you to just record and output it. That’s the first clever part.

“The second clever part is that they may want an SDR version as well. Till now, you had to do one workflow for HDR and then one separately for SDR. However, with XF705, you can record the HDR onto an SD card and simultaneously SDR onto an external recorder. The challenge there is that you would have to expose differently for HDR and SDR workflows, but with this camera, you can set the gain independently on each recording. This works for those who want to take the easier route. For others who want to do it manually and tweak it in post-production, they have that option as well.

“To help with that, Canon has incorporated several connections at the back of the camera, including 12G-SDI, which means only one cable to take the 4K out. Movie recording can be done at UHD or full HD using XF-HEVC 4:2:2 10-bit up to 50P/i, or full HD using XF-AVC. It allows for IP streaming via Ethernet or Wi-Fi. “This is being positioned exactly where the XF 305 is being used now, which is content news gathering, documentary, small lightweight market, where you can get the memory cards just about anywhere and add relatively low-cost bits and pieces to it. This is why I say this is a worthy successor to the XF305.”

Atkinson also lauds the C700 FF camera, which was announced earlier this year and is now shipping. “With its full frame sensor, this opens up a new style of filmmaking possibilities.”

Although Canon has focused on 4K delivery, it is already working towards having an 8K presence at the Rugby World Cup in 2019, which will be transmitted to specific venues. Perhaps the greatest takeaway from the Canon booth at IBC was the fact that it appeals to a whole range of creative people in every genre. “It’s because all the major Hollywood films have been using a range of our camera systems – everything from DSLRs for documentaries to high-end cameras for feature films. Luckily, we have a product that fits every category, supports all filmmakers and every budget you can imagine,” concludes Atkinson.
With programmatic TV as represented by VOD and YouTube poised to account for a third of global TV ad revenue by 2021, TV broadcasters in the region are taking digital seriously. Digital platform specialists at Dubai-based Qanawat explain the opportunities and hurdles in the MENA region.
**Maa Hessa Qalam** is a popular drama series that played on Dubai TV three months ago during Ramadan. The compelling story of a woman suffering from Alzheimer’s now features on YouTube, and has garnered millions of online viewers since then.

The analytics team at Dubai-based digital platform specialist Qanawat will tell you that the popular drama series is drawing in audiences that do not watch linear TV – much like everywhere else in the world, where digital platforms are seen as complementing traditional broadcasters.

“TV broadcasters are now approaching us saying they will produce content only for YouTube … we had never heard this before,” reveals Ahmed Nureni, Director, Business Development at Qanawat. Established in 2001, the company offers mobile VAS-managed service to more than 45 mobile operators in 22 countries in the MENA region.

In the music industry, Qanawat is readily recognised as the company that represents more than 25,000 tracks produced by 700 artists across MENA. Since 2013, it has seen a small but significant increase in the number of TV channels as clients.

“The channels have seen their YouTube subscriber numbers increase. They probably started with 10,000 subscribers or less, and even the smaller ones have more than 100,000 subscribers. We have TV broadcasters now wanting to devise clear annual digital strategies to grow their current subscribers to reach hundreds of thousands,” reveals Onur Alp Aydin, Business Development Manager for Online Video and Digital Platforms at Qanawat.

BroadcastPro ME met with the Qanawat team at their boutique office in Dubai Media City, which houses around 55 employees. The company also has offices in Riyadh, Cairo, Casablanca and Algeria.

The growing TV clientele happened organically, Aydin reveals, mirroring the early days when music went digital. With Prince Alwaleed bin Talal’s Kingdom Holding investing in French music streaming service Deezer earlier this year, and music streaming initiatives from Apple, Anghami, Spotify, Huawei Music and Samsung Cue, there has never been a better time to hold the digital rights to the works of so many music artists in the region, says Nureni.

“Today, you do not need to explain to a music artist about intellectual property rights, digital rights and so on. Most of them know about protecting their music and the value of monetising music on digital platforms.”

Well-known Arabic singers such as Hussein Al Jassmi, Saad Lamjared, Rashed Al Majed, Balgees are featuring new releases on their official YouTube channels as priority over other platforms and TV channels. 22-year-old Emirati singer Mohammad Al Shehhi is a poster-boy for the potential of the digital landscape. Nureni says: “He had one hit song when our music content team approached him. We set up a digital platform for him and manage it as well, and today, after just one-and-a-half years, he has more than 35 songs and 1.2 million subscribers. Viewership of some of his songs goes up to 70 million.”

Research by PWC predicts that programmatic TV, as represented by VOD and YouTube, will represent approximately a third of global TV ad revenue by 2021. With Facebook now launching Watch, there are more platforms for broadcasters to extend the reach of their audiences. The situation appears to be a win-win in a region not especially noted for audience measurement.

With TV content available on digital platforms, advertisers will be able to optimise TV advertising based
on detailed, immediate feedback generated by online platforms.

Conversations with TV channels began around five years ago, as more of them started making tentative forays into the digital arena, Nureni recalls. “Most channels would say they had a presence on digital platforms such as YouTube, but there was no strategy around that initiative.”

The hesitant start by TV broadcasters the world over can be explained as a failure to fully grasp the power of the snackable content that can be shared, or to fully understand the seemingly anarchic nature of digital platforms. The potency of online platforms in extending audiences, however, was immediately evident.

Since he started his US show in 2014, English comedian James Corden, for instance, has racked up billions of YouTube video views and gained 16 million subscribers to the show’s channel. His Carpool Karaoke with Paul McCartney has clocked up 32 million views since it came out two months ago.

Elaborating on Qanawat’s managed services for TV broadcasters, Aydin says: “We help in copyright protection on digital platforms. We have a dedicated team that monitors content across platforms for any IP violations. Another key objective is audience development. We help increase discoverability of content, which is critical. TV broadcasters are understanding now that these are virgin audiences for them. By sharing exciting snippets of their videos and making them reachable, you keep the buzz high. There is a curiosity created, and eventually the younger audiences catch up with the programmes on TV that in any case their family or parents are already watching. After a while we post entire episodes online.”

With TV clients experiencing exponential audience growth online, they are now approaching the Qanawat team four to five months prior to the all-important month of Ramadan.

Nureni explains: “We work closely with them as Ramadan approaches; sometimes a year in advance. We dig deep into the data to present who is watching the content, what parts they are not watching anymore and so on. 60%, for instance, of the yearly viewership is during the month of Ramadan for all broadcasters. We offer our analyses of previous years, indicating drop-in views, people skipping certain parts and so on. From gender to audience retention, we evaluate the data and present our findings.”

Currently, Qanawat manages the YouTube platform for more than 40 broadcasters in the MENA region. While the Qanawat team, like the rest of the industry, bemoans the lax enforcement of anti-piracy laws, the company has been a torch-bearer in ensuring singers and content producers are paid for their content in the region. And now, as broadcasters come alive to the viral possibilities of digital platforms, plans and people are transforming in Qanawat. Blockchain is one of the new projects.

Nureni outlines the changes: “We are currently working on a blockchain project to track copyright violations of artists on various platforms. We have four developers in-house, and it should be done by Q1 or Q2 of 2019. The other major project is developing our own interface. Content producers will not have to approach us in person. They can upload their content through our interface, complete with online signatures to ensure the contract is legal. We could have done this five or six years ago, but only now have digital signatures been legalised, and that too only in the UAE. It is still not legal in most other countries in the MENA and that is slowing us down.”

“TV broadcasters are now approaching us saying they will produce content only for YouTube … we had never heard this before”

Ahmed Nureni, Director, Business Development, Qanawat
While technology is streamlining a complicated process of engagement with content producers living across MENA, there is also “the dedicated account manager in case the content creator wants to release his work at 3am in the morning”, explains Aydin. And apart from the personal touch for promising content providers, the composition of the staff at Qanawat has undergone a transformation in line with the demands of the changing digital landscape.

Nureni says: “As per the dynamics of the market, our team structure has changed. We require our staff to be YouTube-certified, DITEX (Digital Industry Tools Experts)-certified and up-to-date with a fast-changing digital landscape, to present our clients with strategies that will resonate with the audience.”

For the artist and content producer, Nureni’s team has one compelling proposition: “Build your card.”

Nureni explains: “Our marketing team is working with several sponsors and brands through agencies or directly. For the content producer, his or her followers on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube become the ‘passport’ to effective monetisation. Our team helps them build that passport.”

The conversations around digital platforms have become less difficult with linear broadcasters, admits Nureni. However, the issue of digital rights still needs to be underlined. “We remind our broadcast clients that they need to buy both television and digital rights for the content before it can be aired on digital platforms. For the time being, with most of them, we are concentrating on the content they produce in-house.”

Nureni also believes the advertisement-driven online digital platform model is not sustainable in the long run and does little to curb the toxic notion among online audiences that premium content is free.

“It is not free,” Nureni stresses. “Advertisers pay for the content. We need to change the model from freemium to premium. Advertising budgets that vary year to year will tend to rule in a freemium context, and that kills the intrinsic value of the content. For instance, with Apple Music you have to subscribe from day one even if you are offered a three-month free subscription. Local platforms should follow the same model.”

Both Nureni and Onur acknowledge that the content business is poised to take off in the region, as sampling on YouTube and other digital platforms is leading to extended audiences for television content, with revenue shared between the digital platform and the broadcaster.

Nureni admits to being extremely selective about taking a TV broadcaster on board – it all depends on whether the Qanawat team can deliver the agreed KPIs. The digital path, however, is inevitable for all broadcasters, regardless of size. He concludes: “If you want to talk to young people, digital should be part of your ecosystem. This is my message to TV broadcasters.”

- Supriya Srinivas

“TV broadcasters are understanding now that these are virgin audiences for them. By sharing exciting snippets of their videos and making them reachable, you keep the buzz high”

Onur Alp Aydin, Business Development Manager, Qanawat

Apart from monitoring content for copyright protection on digital platforms, the Qanawat team helps in content discoverability which is critical, says Onur Alp Aydin of Qanawat.
Reshel Shah Kapoor’s feature-length documentary on deifying children takes the Dubai-based filmmaker to the hinterlands of northern India. Beyond the sheer grit it takes to film such an unusual subject, Shah’s decisions since tracing the boys online offer instructive insights into the process of documentary filmmaking.

In a crowded marketplace, 17-year-old Arshad mocks his friend Jaspal and says: “You tried to get that girl, but when she saw you, she ran away.” The audience at the private screening of Reshel Shah Kapoor’s third documentary film God Children, at OSN’s Asli studio, laughs at the teenage boys ribbing each other. The conversation could have taken place in Dubai, New York or, as in this case, the rural hinterlands of northern India.

In a particularly telling scene, the same Arshad, who cannot walk, sits in his dark room and refuses to say anything about his estranged father. “I don’t want to speak anymore,” he says and turns his face away, his expressive eyes filling with tears. You squirm uncomfortably as the camera lingers on his distraught face.

In the space of 72 minutes, the filmmaker takes the international audience through a roller coaster of emotion. Protagonists Arshad and Pranshu are born with birth defects and deified as Hindu deities. Their world is familiar, almost clichéd, yet incredibly strange at the same time. With a straightforward storytelling technique, Reshel lets you enter their precarious worlds, mired in superstition, handicap and grinding poverty. She lets you fall in love with the boys, lets you feel anger with a society that enables exploitation, and leaves you with a pang for what could have been.

The documentary is set for release later this year, and Reshel believes the audience needs to be more than just the film festival circuit. She is targeting digital platforms so it can reach a wider audience.

“We had a promo video after the trailer in April 2018 that got 2.8 million views. The conversations it started were incredible, with people from different backgrounds weighing in. While film festivals are a great platform, this movie needs to be watched by everyone,” she asserts.

We speak to Reshel and her DoP Arith Sudhakaran just as she is putting together her marketing strategy for the film. She recalls the gruelling 40-day shoot in the slums of Mumbai, for her first feature-length documentary on the city’s transgender people. She had promised herself an easier movie the next time around. “Maybe filming flowers or something,” she had joked then.

Travelling to villages in northern India at the height of winter is a far cry from easy. Especially when she had just the names and a couple of grainy YouTube videos to go by. No addresses.

Armed with this paltry knowledge, her Mumbai-based Associate Producer Mohammed Hamati found the boys in three weeks and set the ball rolling in July 2017. What followed was a first meeting, a trailer and an extensive process of pitching for finances.

Shah recalls: “We filmed the trailer in four days on our first visit. The editing was done in a week and sound design and music in 48 hours. With this trailer and a 28-page treatment, I approached potential financiers.”

Support came from Dubai-based businessman Kish Pagarani. Equipment was offered by Sony Middle East.

Reshel admits that the finances made all the difference.
“Our promo video got 2.8 million views ... While film festivals are a great platform, this movie needs to be watched by everyone”
Reshel Shah Kapoor, Director and Producer

Despite intense preparation and multiple visits, there were surprises, as every documentary filmmaker must expect.

The question Reshel Shah Kapoor was seeking an answer to was - are these children happy being deified? (Pranshu in pic).

The critical interviews were conducted on the last day of the two shooting segments allowing for trust to build further with the protagonists (Arshad in pic).
“I had an executive producer who provided the funds, and it was not a small amount. It allowed us to make a good film. While every person on the crew is understandably passionate about filmmaking, all of them got remunerated for their efforts.”

The finances allowed her to invest in superior lapel mics. Poor audio can play a role in hampering documentaries from getting good distributors. On her decision to buy two DPA mics, she says, “No one should come back and say the audio wasn’t right. The mics were so good that it picked up audio from people not wearing the lapel mics as well. With five channels of sound, we had our bases covered. I also had Dubai-based music composer Reiner Earlings, who did both the music composition and the sound mixing and mastering in post, helping me streamline the production process.”

Having worked on production sets since her school days in the UK, Reshel, who is now a full-time senior lecturer on documentary filmmaking at Dubai’s SAE, ensured an efficient 17-day shoot and an editing process that spanned an incredible 23 days.

One of the big secrets to the workflow efficiency was having a full-fledged production team on board. “I had a production team of four people,” she reveals. “I had a location manager-cum-production manager. I had an associate producer, a director’s assistant and a producer’s assistant. This made a big difference. They combined to be the ‘producer’ on set, and I was pure director. We were in sync and completely prepped before the first day of the shoot.”

The extensive prepping was critical. When the crew landed in Delhi and drove the 40km to Arshad’s house, the 17-year-old teenager and his grandparents met Reshel and her team like old friends.

Creating a bond with the families was intrinsic to the process of filming, DoP Arith Sudhakaran explains. “We had gone on a recce a few months prior to filming. The idea was to see the location and meet the people, especially the protagonists. It is important to establish a relationship with the subjects, so they open up to you. Holding a camera in people’s faces can be intimidating.”

In the film, 12-year-old Pranshu speaks of his life being regarded as Ganesh, the Hindu deity of education and all things auspicious. Arshad is visibly agitated when he is informed that he needs to bless someone as Hanuman, the monkey-deity in the Hindu pantheon. The connection Reshel’s team created with the two families cannot be overstated, especially when the big question that made her venture into this project was: Are these children happy being deified?

The all-important interview was left for last.

Shah explains: “I wanted to really observe the boys for the first few days. Arshad was giving more and more of himself – telling us more stories – so by the last day we had created enough trust with him to ask him about his father, and while he is still not comfortable talking about his father, he was okay with us being with him in that small room as he struggled with the question.”

Despite the preparation and multiple visits, there were surprises, as every documentary filmmaker must expect. Arshad’s cynical, grown-up attitude was a surprising turnaround for the team, who had encountered a much more childish boy on their first two meetings. The far bigger surprise was Pranshu’s mother, whose views on her son being deified, were both startling and totally unexpected.

When it came to the audience, Shah chose animation to explain the religion and its mythology: “Since I did not want to get into issues of copyright, I had the animation created by artists Kristy Ligones and Pauleen Vecino. I needed an international audience to know what Hanuman and Ganesh looked like and that there were other deities, and why devotees prayed to them.”

On decisions around the size of the crew, the gear and the almost 9-to-5 nature of the shoot, Sudhakaran explains: “For any documentary, it is crucial to have a skeletal crew. Also, we can’t have too much gear. You don’t want to spend three hours setting up”
On choosing a relatively small camera, Sudhakaran says: “We had support from Sony. I insisted that the camera had to be small. We were shooting in villages and it had to be less intimidating. Also, large cameras can create a mistaken belief that we have a lot of money. We chose to use the Sony A7s2 because it has great features. You can shoot in really dark corners. It is incredibly versatile and lightweight. We had one tripod and two monopods and one gimbal, and the camera works with all of these accessories.”

For the deceptively simple shot of Arshad and Jaspal walking into the crowded market, Sudhakaran chose long lenses. “It was an elaborate set-up. We were using long lenses for close-up shots. It’s tricky holding focus using long lenses. The effect is incredible though, as it isolates the subject from the crowd.”

With six days for each boy, a couple of days for B-roll and interviews and a couple of days off, the 17-day shoot was intense but built around extensive research and a clear understanding of what was needed for the story.

The editing was another breathtakingly efficient process that lasted 23 days. Shah elaborates: “We had 13 hours of interviews. Our last interview with Arshad is possibly 13 minutes long on screen. It was, however, a four-hour-long interview in raw footage. We had a Hindi translator insert all the subtitles before any of us saw the footage. Four of us, including myself, the editor, the assistant editor and my production assistant, then watched all the footage and made notes. We picked what we wanted and created the story on slips of paper, based on the issues we wanted covered around every person. Everything was colour coordinated, so for instance the green slips related to B-roll for the grandfather. This process took a week or so. Working with Robbie Perena, my editor, I then followed through on our initial selection, moving scenes around and timing the sequences as we went along.”

The 23-day, 9am-6pm editing schedule with weekends off, including “one day at the cinema”, was critical because every member of the crew also had a day job to get back to.

Reflecting on the relatively smooth process of production, Shah says: “As a director, my main job was with the people on camera. My camera and sound departments, along with my producers, needed to know as much about the vision for the film as I
did. This is my third film with Arith and we were in perfect sync.”

More than one crew member, including music composer Reiner Erlings (see box), speaks of Reshel’s collaborative approach to filmmaking. The film teacher in Reshel would possibly discuss elements of cinema verité, expository and observational documentary filmmaking – her film has elements of all these approaches, along with a zeal to highlight social injustices.

This zeal has underlined all of Reshel’s filmmaking. A recent short film was about the UAE’s ‘undertaker’, Ashraf Thamarassery, who helps repatriate bodies of poor immigrants to their home countries. In Black Sheep, you see a group of Mumbai’s transgender women relate to the audience as the women they want to be.

There is an ease to Reshel’s storytelling, and only a conversation with her reveals the many decisions that go into lighting or shooting every scene.

In the final moments of the film, Arshad breaks into a haunting song and the camera pans to the grandmother, sitting and listening in the setting sun.

“It was a moment of movie magic that just happened,” recalls Reshel. This is the grandmother regretting the choices she made for Arshad, and you wonder if Pranshu’s mother will have similar regrets in ten years’ time.

Arshad’s song fades as the credits roll, and the room erupts in applause. The images of the two extraordinary and wonderfully articulate boys will linger. You will also marvel at a difficult story told well.

At the time of going to press, Reshel Shah Kapoor informed us that the documentary has been picked up by London-based distribution company, Journeyman Pictures. - Supriya Srinivas

### Sound and music
Reiner Erlings, the Dubai-based music composer and sound mixer for the film, speaks about the process.

**On composing the music:**
“I was lucky enough to be involved with this project right from the very beginning, when it was still in the development phase. Reshel’s brief was to create a score that supports the narrative and ties the two distinct storylines together. I started by composing the main theme music, as well as a theme for each of the two main characters, Arshad and Pranshu. As the edit developed and I saw more of the footage, I was able to delve a little deeper and compose sub-themes for some of the main supporting characters, such as Arshad’s grandparents and Pranshu’s father.

“By the time the edit was locked, most of the main musical ideas were already approved and I was then able to finalise the score and also record the live instrumentation. I worked with an amazing cellist and bansuri flute player for this score, whom I feel added a tremendous amount of human emotion and authenticity to the music.”

**On the equipment and software used:**
“Hardware-wise, I have a simple set-up at my studio, with a UA apollo converter, Neve 500 series pre-amps and Genelec monitoring system (8050s with the 7070 sub, as well as a pair of the classic 3010s). My main DAW is Logic X, which I have been using since 2004. I use plug-ins from Universal Audio, Waves, and for this project I mainly used sample libraries for EastWest, Native Instruments, Omnisphere and Spitfire.”

**On sound design and Foley work:**
“I did a lot of Foley and sound design for this film. Besides creating an authentic Punjabi village atmosphere, from quiet mornings to bustling market scenes, I also had to recreate almost every ‘action’ sound you hear in the film. This included everything from birds chirping, ladies sweeping, motorcycles driving by, cooking on open fires, footsteps, etc. In some cases, such as a street vendor preparing a local snack known as pani puri, this ended up becoming quite an elaborate project. Overall, I would say that the Foley and sound design took almost as long as it did to compose all the music, but in the end I think it really contributed to making the film sound real and authentic.”
Sennheiser’s best performing analogue and digital receiver system in one compact pack.

The EK6042 two-channel camera receiver handles analogue and digital transmitters simultaneously.

A BROADCAST MASTERPIECE

THE NEW SENNHEISER EK 6042
TWO CHANNEL CAMERA RECEIVER

One Receiver Fits All

sennheiser.com
ME-info@sennheiser.com
THE MEDIA ARCHIVE AND AI: MINING THE POTENTIAL

AI search will monetise archives in new ways and AI data management will move data and data processing algorithms to where they need to be, writes Jon Morgan of Object Matrix

Once upon a time, there was an industry that called programmatic code ‘software’, not artificial intelligence. In media storage you’ve probably heard AI used in the context of image searching your media archive to find a matching actor’s face. Because AI has become an almost ubiquitous phrase, and therefore somewhat grating, it would be easy to dismiss it from our thoughts – but is there anything behind the term that we should be taking notice of?

Search: The final frontier
Google processes a lot of data. Some estimates say Google handles 1.2 trillion searches per annum. I don’t know, but I’d imagine 99.999% of those searches are based around language. However, in a world where an estimated 80% of data is unstructured and the vast majority of that unstructured data is video data, it’s clear that search has a long way to go.

The next stage is to be able to search video and, for reasons we will briefly touch on, the techniques used to analyse and allow for the meaningful search of video are often called AI.

Why AI? A few years ago, we would have called it image searching, video searching or software algorithms, but since the success of Apple Siri, Amazon Echo, etc, the general public psyche and lexicon has begun to consider any such technology to be artificial intelligence – even if it doesn’t have a self-learning feedback loop or some other mechanism of analysis enhancement over time. So, though it irks me, let’s join the bandwagon and call it AI video analysis and search.

What cannot be ignored is that this is exciting. Video archives
that previously sat dormant can now be queried for all types of things. What footage of Princess Diana do we have? Have we ever shot a news item on that street before? Who has played number 10 for England?

Those image-searching algorithms are nascent but quickly being realised. On the other hand, semantic video analysis is more basic but will provide more and more answers. For example, this part of the movie is a car chase; look at this CCTV stream, because a street fight has broken out; this movie is a remake of The Magnificent Seven; cars on this road have gone from 100% driven to 30% self-driven in the past five years.

So AI video analysis and search is beginning to unlock the value in media archives, and importantly this allows better reuse of media assets for all types of analysis, documentary making, sports fan look-ups and countless other usages. This will only go from strength to strength.

But is that really what AI in media archiving is all about?

**AI: Beyond image searching**

The tendency is to think about AI in the context of search, which certainly limits our definition. One of the key challenges with storage today is data gravity – having the video data where and when it needs to be processed – which is a mixture of moving data to where it needs to be, and moving processing to where the data is. Ingenious storage systems are needed to manage this. Take for instance a shoot post-produced by teams in different countries. Assets should be available to those teams as and when they are ready to work on them. That’s where AI intelligence comes in: moving assets around for us.

Furthermore, AI can manage this in a manner that also protects data against any kind of loss, with security in mind. AI storage becomes your 24/7 super-administrator so that you don’t need to spend your days making data transfers or worrying about data security.

The AI in media storage concept should not be purely limited to AI searching; it is also about AI data management.

**“AI search will monetise archives in new ways; keeping archives offline will no longer be viable”**

Jon Morgan, CEO, Object Matrix

**Can video search change industry dynamics for video owners?**

All in all, the media industry should be hugely excited about the new video search techniques coming on to the market, for the simple reason that they allow holders of media archives to better monetise and re-use content.

But could this be just the beginning? Will AI production mixed with video search be able to cut new content? Will video search allow a whole new analytics industry to develop – new Googles, new Facebooks? Will the owners of video archives gain more of their revenue from them than they do from new content?

The future is uncertain, but the foundations of that future are here and now.

The term AI will quickly become redundant (again), since it is being used too ubiquitously! However, AI search will include image search, object search, semantic analysis and speech to text. It will revolutionise how and why we hold video archives. It will monetise archives in new ways – keeping archives offline will no longer be viable. It will move from niche to mainstream over the coming years.

AI data management will move data and data processing algorithms to where they need to be, and will automate the protection and security of assets. The future potential for media archiving is more exciting now than it has ever been.

Jon Morgan is CEO of Object Matrix
From growing sophistication in hybrid solutions to confident migrations to the cloud, the broadcast industry at IBC2018 appeared at ease with technologies no longer considered disruptive. Our experts and editorial team offer an overview of the innovations that attracted 55,884 visitors to the annual event.
Cooney was the co-creator of the global phenomenon that is Sesame Street 50 years ago, and her trophy was collected on her behalf by one of the street’s longest residents, Ernie.

Commenting on the show, Michael Crimp, IBC’s CEO, said: “The show is about engagement, engagement, engagement. All of the initiatives this year have been aimed at bringing together the best minds, the original thinkers, to network and share their knowledge. As all communication becomes video and audio, IBC continues to be the place to debate the future of media, technology and entertainment.”

Guiding the renewed focus this year was a new content steering group, drawn from across the industry and chaired by Keith Underwood, Chief Operating Officer at Channel 4 in the UK.

Elaborating on the conference, IBC Head of Content Jaisica Lapsiwala said: “This year, we have worked closely with the industry to create a programme that is not only reflective of the changes in the ecosystem, but which also paves a path forward for our industry. This has resulted in an engaging and diverse 2018 edition of IBC.

“An example of this was our Global Gamechangers day, which brought creative, technology and business chiefs such as Peter Salmon from Endemol and Lindsay Pattison from WPP to the stage. Threaded through the programme were the cutting-edge technologies transforming the industry.”

Alongside the conference, IBC hosted three invitation-only executive forums. The Leaders’ Forum looked to the future, considering what the new ecosystem could be following consolidation, acquisition and collaboration. From the region, Martin Stewart, CEO of OSN, was a key speaker.

Once again, IBC was the venue for an examination of the intersection of craft and technology in The Big Screen. Sessions included an in-depth look at the effects in Game of Thrones and Pixar’s Dominic Glynn talking about the animation marvel that is The Incredibles 2.

At the Future Zone, among other innovations was UK-based White Light demonstrating next-gen immersive technologies. This year also saw the addition of a theatre stage, presented by the IABM, with a rolling programme of presentations discussing the ideas in more detail.

As always, the drama on the stands literally stopped us in our tracks as we made our way through the various halls. From live music and other programmes demonstrating real-time streaming at the Akamai stand to the breathtaking sets by camera manufacturers, IBC2018 was at its engaging best.
Another year on, and this year I made another trip back to Amsterdam. I try to get over from Dubai every three years or so to attend the IBC conference and trade show. Although I follow the product launches announced at the NAB trade show in Las Vegas in April every year, IBC offers better opportunities to get your hands on the actual kit, rather than looking at it on a stand. The products are usually shipped following the IBC event in September.

This year, I was excited to see a number of new products, meet the tech guys and product developers on the stands and go through the pros and cons of their new technology. My main priority was researching options for live streaming equipment and services. I was also window shopping for the ideal streaming encoder. Following several meetings with Teradek (CUBE755), LiveU (LU300 HEVC), Quicklink (Mobile Encoder), Aviwest (AIR) and a number of other suppliers, I’ll arrange some demo

Another Dubai-based DoP Paul Mongey does some serious legwork through the busy halls of IBC2018 to identify innovations, both hardware and software, that lend immediate value to the industry
tests in the field before investing.

My company, Media971, already produces corporate films, social media campaigns and broadcast television programmes, but now we also want to offer our clients live streaming of events and product launches in the region. So on my IBC trip, I was looking for ideas on streaming software, and one thing I noticed this year is that more software and SaaS (software as a service) products were on display than broadcast hardware. There’s an ongoing shift in the industry from physical equipment to increasingly sophisticated software systems.

So here are some of the interesting pieces of kit that caught my eye – hardware first.

Monitor/Recorder:
On arrival, I made a bee line for the soon-to-be-released Atomos Ninja V – or 5, to you and me. The Ninja 5 is a small five-inch monitor/recorder with the new ProRES RAW recording format. It comes with a 1900x1200, 1000 nit bright screen. This HDR monitor costs $695 and will be shipping from October. It will work very well on our FS5 or a7s range.

Atomos also had some of its new Atom X modular expansion adaptors for the Ninja V. A small multi-pin expansion port between the battery contact points allows NDI control (AtomX GigE/NDI), timecode/Bluetooth sync control (AtomX Sync) or even an SDI input adaptor (which they’re planning to announce at NAB2019).

“**This year, more software and SaaS products were on display than broadcast hardware**”

Paul Mongey, DoP, Media971

Lens/Adaptor:
On a recent shoot, I hired a set of Tokina primes, so I had an interest in dropping by the Tokina stand as well. Tokina had a couple of new product launches this year to add to its collection of Vista primes. As part of its Vista Prime lenses, it is releasing the new 105mm T1.5 cinema prime lens, which costs just under $6,000. This 105mm adds to the current collection of 8K T1.5 lenses of 18mm, 25mm, 35mm, 50mm and the 85mm. They come in PL, MFT, Canon’s EF and SONY’s E mounts.

The second new bit of kit from Tokina is the 8K 1.6x extender adaptor with either PL to PL or PL to E mount, with a 1.5x stop light loss. At this stage, I’m interested in getting one of the PL-PL adaptors for my Canon CN7 (17-120mm) PL lens.

Camera:
We recently purchased the new Sony PXW-FS5M2 camera, part of the Sony super 35 range, as a B camera to work with our Sony PMW F55. But for those interested in smaller sensor cameras, Sony was showing the new ‘handycam’ PXW-Z280. It records 4K 4:2:2 10-bit, has a fixed 17x lens and allows 4K/12G-SDI output. I feel this would make a great run-and-gun camera, ideal for shooting news or for running around a conference. The camera has adopted several features from the PXW-FS5, including SLog3, live stream direct from the camera and built-in electronic variable ND filter.

The only competitor is Canon’s new XF705 pro camcorder with similar specs. The main differences are the one-inch sensor and the capacity for H.265 internal recording.
first pro camera to do this. Both cameras cost just under $7,000. The Sony Z280 will be available in early October, and the XF705 should be available from the end of the year.

DIT:
Another piece of kit for shooters could be the NEXTO DI Card Batcher. This is a multi-card back-up device which transfers camera files directly to a USB thumb drive or a portable USB 3.0 hard drive. There are two models of the NCB-20 – the first offers SD card, and the second CFast card back-up. Either version costs $758, or $967 with the optional attached V-lock battery mount.

Tripod:
The Vitec Group launched the Flowtech 75 tripod at last year’s IBC. The 75 was created for smaller pan/tilt heads ideal for DSLR cameras and so on. I’ve been waiting for a 100mm bowl version for the larger Sachtler 18P pan/tilt tripod heads – the firm has built its own factory to mould and engineer the carbon fibre tripod legs in the UK, and will be delivering the new Flowtech 100 in early October, for approximately $3060. The Flowtech 100 has been launched as both a Sachtler and Vinten carbon fibre tripod. The Sachtler model number 5585 has red quick-lock handles, and the Vinten model number V4160-003 comes with blue quick-lock handles. Both brands are part of the Vitec Group.

The new model with the 100mm bowl will allow a heavy camera load of up to 30kg. Designed for ease of use, it has a single quick release lock for each leg at the top. This makes it easier on the back when deploying the tripod legs, with a height of 26-155cm, making it ideal in the field. The tripod folds down to only 68cm in length and is easy to carry on your shoulder, with strong magnets to lock the legs together while in transit.

Editing:
Apart from getting a hands-on with some of the new equipment coming to market this year, I did have one main question for Adobe. Where is ProRES RAW? Adobe told me it originally hoped Apple would release the new ProRES RAW for use with the Premiere Pro CC and other NLEs, but now suggests it may be available only after NAB2019 in April.

Virtual Switcher:
I remember someone at Sony telling me a couple of years ago that Sony was going to invest more energy in developing software, looking at a possible 50/50 software and hardware development going forward. The firm demonstrated its brand-new Virtual Production multi-cam/multi-location SaaS, starting at $300 for four hours of production each month. This is a switcher based in the cloud that allows you to cut between live cameras or playback feeds from around the world. Sony’s Virtual Production is based on Amazon’s AWS and claims to have no new infrastructure, no set-up costs and a flexible subscription. It has been called a social media switcher.

Overall thoughts on the IBC2018 visit: it’s always great to catch up with old friends and network with new ones. There was not a lot of new kit since the NAB product launches in April, but it’s always great to get your hands on the kit and chat in detail with the product managers.

Looking forward to my next IBC.
Capturing unique moments.
ZEISS LWZ.3 21-100mm

ZEISS Lightweight Zoom LWZ.3 21-100mm/T2.9-3.9 T*

The new ZEISS Lightweight Zoom LWZ.3 21-100mm/T2.9-3.9 T* strikes the perfect balance between weight, size and optical performance. Combining a rugged, splash-proof housing with a weight of just 2 kg, it truly embodies the much-anticipated cine-style ergonomics. Its outstanding optical performance delivers razor-sharp structures, vibrant colors and excellent contrast.
Industry veteran Dominic Baillie believes Hall 14 was the destination for all things new at IBC this year. He gives us an exclusive overview of what’s changing and what’s not in the world of broadcast.

Another year, another IBC. I wonder how many more there will be before broadcasting is no longer the word that best describes our industry.

The old world
IP – I still don’t see many advantages of the move to IP, other than for those of you with remote production needs or disparate sites. If you’re thinking of a system revamp for 4K/8K distribution, I urge you to sit down and think about what you’re really trying to achieve and what your future needs will be, rather than buying into the traditional manufacturer rhetoric.

If you’re making 4K/8K productions and want to go down this route, there are a wealth of products offering an upgrade path, hybrid modes or interfacing. Highlights are Embrionix for its SFF SDI/IP converters and Axon’s Neuron packing an impressive amount of processing power into a single rack space.

The consensus from those in the know is that an IP-based system is the biggest security concern, barring medical devices. It is important to design your system with security first, and that you’ve prepared and rehearsed an incident response and invested in the right skills and experience. We have yet to see what happens when a malicious party breaches the security of an IP television system. Unlike IP, SDI was largely unhackable.

The cloud – Why have I put this with the old world? Because that’s largely what it still is at present. It’s a containerised or virtualised lift and shift of the way we do everything already. No imagination required here, just familiar names and GUIs.

There are some notable exceptions and safe bets for a move in the right direction and away from building and running your own datacentres. According to me, these are: Coralbay – What better way to step into the cloud than a purpose-built vehicle from the guys who disrupted automation.
all those years ago at Pebble Beach Systems? There are some ideas of how to improve their product to take advantage of a true cloud architecture; if implemented, this could be a great product for a couple of years.

Qvest.Cloud – For a long time, there has been a skills gap between those who have a cloud product and those who would like to consume one. Qvest Media has built a strong reputation for delivering workflows that work. (Although you’d be excused for thinking this is the norm, it isn’t.)

With Qvest.Cloud, I assume we can expect the same. The trade-off is always between something proven and something that differentiates. If you want the latter, you have to invest in your own dev-ops teams and DIY. For those who visited AWS, Microsoft and Google, there are some great tools out there but very few people integrating them into complete systems.

**The new world**

Hall 14 – The once bolt-on, seldom-visited space full of weird acronyms and never-heard-of companies has become a vibrant hub of diversity. I don’t know whether IBC does a floor analysis of visitor footfall, but it would be interesting to see how this has changed over the years. Hall 14 is the home of cool kids like Google and Facebook; notably, AWS and Microsoft are choosing to throw their lot in with the old-school manufacturers. Read into that what you will.

In here, you find 24i, which has been on an acquisition spree in the past year, buying Mautilus and the excellent Vigour. I believe that the creation of unique experiences will be the only way to differentiate in the future, and this company is acquiring the tools to help you do that.

In that vein, if you’re keen on building your own distribution network and require a CDN, you need zero latency to deliver personalised experiences. Limelight was showing its offering, and a quick chat revealed a well-thought-out product.

Also of note was Wowza, showing its new encoder controlled from a central API – this is an interesting option for those deploying a fleet.

I see huge opportunity for making television simple and cost-effective. Grabyo and Simplylive have both been tested in the field and have come of age, each offering a different approach for this. I was also impressed by the potential of Nikon and MRMC to automate production.

Finally, if you’re a content creator and want an instant distribution partner with scale and reach beyond anything you can reasonably build, why not take the advice of Viacom’s Kelly Day and go social?

A few weeks ago, Facebook launched Watch globally, with more than two billion active users. That’s quite a reach. The future of television is shared experiences, and this social network is uniquely placed to power them.

**Who wasn’t there?**

The traditional (though consolidated) players are often a good barometer of the industry, and they were active in their historical home halls. Those I noted missing? Many start-ups did not attend IBC, and not because they’re no longer trading; is it because we need to accommodate them more cost-effectively, or do they think the visionary changemakers aren’t present at this show?

In a climate of consolidation and scale, we have to question the ability of huge companies to innovate internally. Our industry prides itself on constant innovation, and we need to find a way to support and showcase start-ups with something interesting to offer. There’s an absence of incubators and early stage investment within broadcast technology vendors, one well worth bridging.

Dominic Baillie is the Founder of UK-based Disruptive Ideas Ltd. using the latest ideas in serverless technology, data science and AI to help companies challenge and disrupt. Having worked for many years in the MENA region, he offers strategic consulting on the move to the cloud and building systems ready for the future.
G & D unveils new KVM-over-IP matrix

At IBC2018, G&D unveiled the new matrix for KVM-over-IP that allows video servers and other broadcast computers to be remotely controlled from any workstation.

Speaking to BroadcastPro ME, Marketing Director Jochen Bauer said: “This year, we are presenting our new KVM-over-IP matrix systems. Earlier, our KVM system was based on dedicated cabling. Now, our solution can share the network infrastructure with other processes, lending critical flexibility to broadcasters. That aspect has always been top-of-the-mind with all our innovations. Also, we have ensured that there should not be delay when operating the system. The current capabilities of the network infrastructure have helped us offer this degree of flexibility to our customers.”

Bauer also highlighted the need to keep the classic portfolio alive and the growing need for hybrid solutions.

Lawo announces Ultra-High Density audio and other world premieres at IBC2018

Lawo had ten new products at IBC this year. There were also some world premieres at the show. The big launch that caught our attention was the ultra-high-density audio Lawo A__UHD Core with over a thousand fully featured IP DSP channels on 1RU. This network-based, software-defined audio DSP engine with unparalleled processing density takes the mc² 56 and mc² 96 consoles to the next level.

Using the IP network as an extension of the console core’s backplane, Lawo’s UHD Core can be located anywhere on the network. Its ultra-high processing density can either be used by a single mc² console for coping with even the most challenging productions, or be shared among up to four consoles. Due to a flexible licensing model, the UHD Core is ideal for both mobile applications and facility use. For mobile productions, the scalable DSP performance with temporary licences helps to turn CAPEX into OPEX, while in facility applications, the possibility of resource pooling and flexible allocation of DSP resources to multiple consoles can significantly increase utilisation of the audio infrastructure investment.

A__UHD Core’s total network I/O capacity equals 40,000 48kHz/24bit audio channels. For management, the unit provides two redundant RJ45 1GbE management ports. In addition, full hardware redundancy is achieved by a second hot spare unit which permanently mirrors all settings.

System latency is comparable with conventional architectures connected via the backplane: a special high-performance RAVENNA profile provides network roundtrip latency in the sub-millisecond range, while the processing power and speed of the UHD core outperform the processing latency of multiple DSP devices. As the UHD Core’s functionality is defined by its software, it’s a future-proof investment with a feature set designed to expand. Lawo also launched a 4K format converter – a new virtual module for V__matrix providing format conversion between SD, HD and 4K – and presented what it claims is the world’s first infinitely expandable multi-viewer.

Essentially, Lawo demonstrated at IBC that all of its video products are now 4K/HDR compatible, and all of its video and audio solutions are SMPTE 2110-30/31 compatible and WAN capable. They support ST2022-7 seamless protecting switching.
Features include:
• Kelvin presets & custom settings, 2500K-9900K
• Dimming without color shift
• Green/Magenta control
• Dial in any color through Hue Angle and Saturation control
• Kino Flo presets and Gels
• RGB control
• FX (Effects) control
• Universal input 100VAC~240VAC
• Manual & DMX Dimming
• DMX wireless (Lumen Radio)
• Gel Frame, Louver
• Yoke Mount & Pole-Op

Authorized Representative:
Amaranthine Trading LLC
Motion Picture & Broadcasting Equipment
M-39, The Curve Building, 63 Sheikh Zayed Road
Al Quoz 3, P.O. Box 124137 Dubai - UAE
Tel.: +971 4 339 0944 / 339 0945
Fax: +971 4 339 0922
info@amaranthine.ae
www.amaranthine.tv
Rohde & Schwarz showcased a new storage solution called the R&S SpycerNode, which combines enterprise-class hardware with state-of-the-art software technologies. It offers an easy-to-use interface, HPC file system and erasure coding mechanisms. In addition, Rohde & Schwarz has expanded its web-based device manager for use with R&S SpycerNode, to simplify system configuration and maintenance.

R&S SpycerNode features IBM Spectrum Scale. It simplifies and optimises storage workflows, using features such as single namespace, online scalability and information lifecycle management. The R&S SpycerNode stores files intelligently, based on performance requirements. All R&S SpycerNode storage tiers are presented under a single namespace, which greatly simplifies file handling. The storage solution can be scaled as needed, even during operation. R&S SpycerNode provides scalability irrespective of the system size – starting with the smallest unit up to large systems. As a result, there is no need to exchange or replace existing units. The combination of a de-clustered array and erasure coding, in the event of disk failures, speeds up rebuilding compared with traditional hardware-based RAID approaches. Critical error conditions are detected and errors are rectified immediately. Many conventional storage set-ups provide full redundancy only when multiple units are involved. In contrast, R&S SpycerNode offers full redundancy even for single units, ensuring that media files are securely stored at any time. R&S SpycerNode exhibits no single point of failure – neither in terms of hardware nor software. It protects the customer’s business right from the start, no matter what the system size, thus protecting the customer’s investment.

ARRI enhances multicam for TV studios

“Enlarge your vision” was the theme at the ARRI stand welcoming visitors to experience ARRI’s big-screen experience. Through showreels and images, visitors experienced first-hand the image quality of ARRI’s new large-format camera system featuring the ALEXA LF camera and ARRI Signature Prime lenses. Focusing on ARRI’s solutions for the broadcast market as he spoke to BroadcastPro ME, Markus Duerr, Product Manager, Camera Systems at ARRI, said: “For the broadcast sector at IBC, we have the AMIRA Multicam system and we have introduced a couple of innovations. “One was to make the cameras controllable with industry-standard Sony Remote Control Panels, allowing technicians to continue to use the tools they are comfortable with. It is a great extension for the usage of our camera, which is increasingly popular in the studio setting, given the growing trend to raise production standards and bring a cinematic look to TV shows.”

Valentijn Diemel, Marketing Manager of Datavideo walked us through the company’s new mobile video studios. HS-1300, a six-channel mobile video studio, has been updated with a streaming encoder and onboard SD card recorder to make it a full turnkey solution. Also on display were the HS-3200 with a streaming encoder and a built-in SD card recorder, and the HS-1600T, a single workstation to control cameras, switching and broadcasting.

Rohde & Schwarz adds more spice to storage with SpycerNode

Markus Duerr, Product Manager, Camera Systems at ARRI.

SPOTTED AT IBC2018

“Enlarge your vision” was the theme at the ARRI stand welcoming visitors to experience ARRI’s big-screen experience. Through showreels and images, visitors experienced first-hand the image quality of ARRI’s new large-format camera system featuring the ALEXA LF camera and ARRI Signature Prime lenses. Focusing on ARRI’s solutions for the broadcast market as he spoke to BroadcastPro ME, Markus Duerr, Product Manager, Camera Systems at ARRI, said: “For the broadcast sector at IBC, we have the AMIRA Multicam system and we have introduced a couple of innovations. “One was to make the cameras controllable with industry-standard Sony Remote Control Panels, allowing technicians to continue to use the tools they are comfortable with. It is a great extension for the usage of our camera, which is increasingly popular in the studio setting, given the growing trend to raise production standards and bring a cinematic look to TV shows.”
Getting RAW with Blackmagic Design

Blackmagic Design showcased the public beta version of Blackmagic RAW, a next-generation hybrid codec that features multiple new technologies such as an advanced de-mosaic algorithm, extensive metadata support, highly optimised GPU and CPU accelerated processing and more. It can be used from acquisition throughout post-production for editing and colour grading, all from a single file.

Blackmagic RAW has been in development over the course of the last two-and-a-half years, Stuart Ashton told BroadcastPro ME. Traditional RAW codecs have large file sizes and are processor intensive, making them hard to work with. Video file formats are faster but suffer quality problems due to the use of 4:2:2 video filters that reduce colour resolution.

Blackmagic RAW solves these problems with a design that moves part of the de-mosaic process into the camera, where it can be hardware accelerated by the camera itself. This results in efficient encoding that gives customers the same quality, bit depth, dynamic range and controls as RAW, but with much better performance and smaller file sizes than most popular video codecs. Because the processor intensive partial de-mosaic is done by the camera hardware, software such as DaVinci Resolve doesn’t have to do as much work decoding the files. In addition, GPU and CPU acceleration make decoding of frames incredibly fast, so you get extremely smooth performance for editing and grading,” Ashton explained.

Blackmagic RAW understands the camera and the sensor. This means the image data and the unique characteristics of the image sensor are encoded and saved into the Blackmagic RAW file, giving customers much better image quality even at higher compression settings, as well as total control over features such as ISO, white balance, exposure, contrast and saturation.

Blackmagic RAW features two types of file compression. Customers can choose either constant quality or constant bitrate encoding options, depending on the kind of work they are doing.

The camera native quality of Blackmagic RAW Q0 and 3:1 are perfect for effects-heavy feature film and commercial work. Blackmagic RAW Q5 and 5:1 are extremely high quality, making them great for episodic television and independent films. Blackmagic RAW 8:1 and 12:1 offer high quality and speed, making them suitable for productions that wouldn’t normally consider shooting RAW. Now, more customers than ever will be able to use high-quality RAW images in an incredibly efficient way that was impossible before.

Blackmagic RAW dramatically simplifies and speeds up post-production workflows. DaVinci Resolve 15.1, also released at IBC, includes full support for Blackmagic RAW.

Deepakjit Singh, CEO of Amagi, told us at IBC that the company broke even in August 2018. Amagi showcased advances in playout, live orchestration, machine-learning based content processing, and media commerce.

Christian Bockskopf and Joe Commare of Riedel Communications GmbH focused on the Bolero wireless intercom solution, which can support 10 beltpacks per antenna and up to 100 antennas in a single deployment.
Nagra fights piracy with NexGuard QuickMark

Nagra demonstrated NexGuard QuickMark, a subscriber-level watermarking solution to fight piracy of premium live sports on open devices. This is a watermarking solution for open client devices. When combined with a secure player, it gives service providers and content owners the ability to detect which subscriber is restreaming their live sports event and put a stop to it in real time.

“NexGuard QuickMark complements the existing NexGuard watermarking solution for set-top boxes and is part of NAGRA’s suite of anti-piracy services,” commented Simon Trudelle, Senior Director Product Marketing at NAGRA. Its detection capabilities enable near real-time identification of the subscriber at the source of the piracy and the appropriate action to stop it. Using state-of-the-art content identification technologies such as real-time fingerprinting, Nagra can capture pirate streams from the internet, social media and illicit streaming devices, and feed them into the QuickMark detection platform via an automated interface. NexGuard QuickMark does not require any modifications to the encoding, DRM or CDN systems. NexGuard QuickMark will be available to premium sports service providers in late 2018.

Tektronix powers monitoring in the cloud

Media testing, monitoring and diagnostics solutions provider Tektronix had a range of demonstrations around an array of solutions including Aurora, Sentry and PRISM. Tektronix equipment was in use in nearly a dozen partner stands, including those of Sony, Cisco, Evertz, Harmonic Inc and EVS. The company demonstrated enhancements to its live and VOD cloud video monitoring solutions at IBC2018.

Tektronix also introduced new cloud-based pricing options for live and VOD quality assurance, including subscription-based, per video stream and on-demand options, among other innovations.

Giving us an overview of the key trends in the industry, Ian Valentine, Business Director, Video Products, said: “The key trend in content creation that we see is the transition from SDI to IP and the adoption of ST2110 as a standard for this. The second major trend is the increasing adoption of HDR (High Dynamic Range) and Wide Color Gamut (WCG) with 4K formats. When considering content delivery, linear cable networks are gradually giving way to an DTT-streamed environment. Coupled with this, we are seeing an increase in requests for virtual implementations (VM) of our monitoring software, and this in turn is becoming a transition to cloud content monitoring. Our solutions such as Sentry and Aurora give customers the visibility and control that they need to deliver quality live and VOD content to customers across complex workflows, reducing the risk of churn and brand damage.”

Valentine added: “As a business we are aiming to work towards integrating our products in a cloud-native environment offering broadcasters flexibility to scale up and down quickly as per usage. With the infrastructure provided by the likes of Microsoft, AWS and Google, among others, along with standardisation, achieving high-quality broadcast video through a cloud platform is becoming a reality.”

David Cohen, Senior Director, Market Development, Live Production Platforms, Grass Valley, spoke about hybrid and cloud solutions, among other things, at IBC2018. The company launched the new GV Flex cloud-based playout platform, which offers cloud playout orchestration using microservices, provided as SaaS. Also introduced at the show was the GV Convergent, which enables users to manage SDI and IP routing on one familiar interface with simple visualisation of COTS IP network bandwidth and parallel support of SDN and IGMP.
9-10 December 2018
Jumeirah Beach Hotel | Conference Centre

DICM 2018 PRESENTS
PLUG & WORK

Deliver your Inspiring Content to MENA
mycontent.ae
Cloud innovations with AWS Elemental

At IBC2018, AWS highlighted cloud advancements along the entire content chain. From the Royal Wedding to Formula 1 and the Indian Premier League finals, AWS showcased how media customers innovate with reliable cloud services that make it fast and easy to develop multiscreen video offerings, with pay-as-you-go pricing and without significant capital investment.

Commenting on the opportunities in the Middle East and the imminent opening of a data centre in Bahrain, Simon Frost, Head of Marketing and Business Development EMEA, said: “The MENA is important to us. We have key customers in the region and a lot of them are using Elemental products. We see growth in the region, which is why we are setting up data centre infrastructure in Bahrain. The consumers in the Middle East are mobile-centric and broadcasters have to focus on getting great content to viewers and monetising that content.

“Concerns around supply chain operations and managing expensive infrastructure should no longer be a worry as the industry migrates to the cloud.”

“The products Avid is showing at IBC, and our innovation in areas such as IP connectivity, 4K and cloud, have been shaped by our customers, who are counting on the vendor community to help them overcome the massive shift impacting every aspect of their business. We’ve accelerated our delivery of open platforms, tools, apps and services to end disparity among technology in customer operations, so they can work faster on smaller budgets and retain viewers on any platform”

Jeff Rossica, CEO of Avid

Imagine’s strategies for business transformation

Imagine Communications had experts on hand to demonstrate practical innovation and migration strategies that will enable media companies to personalise the path and pace of their transition to next-generation architectures and business models. IBC attendees were invited to bring their technical, operational and business questions to Imagine experts who would share their insight on key industry issues – from how SMPTE ST 2110 actually works in the real world, to how value can be extracted from remnant advertising inventory, to when it makes sense to virtualise playout operations or transition content origination and distribution to a public cloud.

Visitors to the Imagine stand could explore a portfolio of integrated inventory management and optimisation, data analytics and targeted delivery solutions designed to help media companies increase revenue and decrease costs across multichannel, multiplatform and multimarket operations.

The company showcased its latest innovations for live production, including high-capacity 100Gbe network links, a live sports control panel that provides enhanced automation break manipulation, and SMPTE ST 2110–capable processing for HD, UHD and IP.

Lastly visitors to Imagine got hands-on experience with next-generation playout innovation, such as Versio Platform, the cloud-native, microservices-based playout ecosystem; Versio IDX, the parity stack, multi-petabyte storage solution designed for the reliability and performance demands of broadcast; and Nexio+ AMP, the media server with hybrid SDI/IP and H.265 capability.

Imagine also demonstrated various transition scenarios for migrating from traditional to next-generation playout operations at a pace that works for each individual customer.
Akamai demos new OTT Edge technologies

At IBC, CDN provider Akamai demonstrated how it can help broadcasters transition to OTT delivery using edge services that provide what the company claims are the highest levels of fidelity, agility, intelligence and security. Akamai streamed its Akamai TV Live service in 4K HDR from the IBC show floor, showing how it can help customers deliver content such as news programmes from almost anywhere, anytime.

Speaking to BroadcastPro ME about the demonstration, Product Marketing Manager Thomas Stark said: “We put ourselves in the shoes of our customers – we have been producing around five to six live shows per day at our stand that we live stream into an iOS app and on Android devices. Everything is produced in 4K and HDR and is being encoded on-site and streamed back to the stand via our content delivery platform.

“We are not just demonstrating low latencies, which is critical for live sports and consistency in high-quality delivery, but offering real-time threat monitoring to protect against a range of threats – that is a great concern for broadcasters in the cloud environment.”

Dejero collaborates on cloud workflow

Dejero collaborated with partners Microsoft Azure, Avid, Haivision, Hiscale, Make.TV and Signiant at IBC2018 to showcase how live production workflows in the cloud can deliver greater flexibility, scalability and budget efficiencies to broadcasters. Visitors to Dejero’s stand and Microsoft’s stand witnessed a low-latency live feed from a Dejero encoder transported over blended IP connections and received in Azure by Dejero’s video on-ramp technology.

Through this ingest, broadcasters can enable new customisable cloud-based workflows including the curation and routing of content, transcoding, near-live editing, automated closed captioning, metadata enrichment and distribution, supported by collaborating technology partners.

Speaking to BroadcastPro ME, Rob Waters, Director of Sales EMEA at Dejero, said: “This is a live production workflow in the cloud. Deploying solutions proven in the market and collaborating with great partners have allowed us to demonstrate to broadcasters a solution that opens up new possibilities in the cloud, including a more flexible infrastructure that scales according to their needs. In cases where you have a large news event or a big sports event, you can work to scale and this can be done in a short amount of time.”

Commenting on the solution, Sudheer Sirivara, General Manager for Media on Azure at Microsoft, said: “The adoption of cloud-based workflows, especially for live content, has been hindered by connectivity concerns. Dejero addresses this challenge by efficiently moving live content to the cloud where it can be managed, processed and ultimately distributed anywhere.”

The overall solution presents users with a single interface, pulling relevant data from collaborating partner technologies.

NewTek launches NDI 3.7

NewTek launched NDI 3.7, which includes an embedded software development kit (SDK) for manufacturers of video devices including cameras, monitors, converters, game consoles, video conferencing solutions, projectors and smart boards.

With the NDI-embedded SDK, manufacturers of hardware devices are now able to natively implement NDI in their products to work alongside video products that automatically detect each other, and share video, audio, metadata and more bi-directionally across a standard Ethernet network with near-zero latency.

Speaking to BroadcastPro ME, Brian Olson, VP of Product Management, NewTek, said: “This is the third anniversary of NDI, and it has exceeded our expectations in terms of adoption by the industry.

“The ratification of the SMPTE standards last year opened the floodgates for IP video of all types, and customers are now talking of NDI-enabled facilities, not just islands. With the NDI 3.7 and the new embedded SDK, the ecosystem will continue to expand into a variety of hardware devices, making interoperability amongst IP production components even better.”
Streaming piracy has become an existential threat to the premium sports and entertainment pay-TV business around the world, and the Middle East has some especially acute challenges with respect to content theft.

Unfortunately, streaming piracy has become more prevalent as broadband speeds to the home have increased and as cord-cutting has become more widespread among consumers.

The impact on the television business can be seen in the InformTV Multiscreen Index, which found that the top 10 US pay-TV platforms lost a combined 1.6 million subscribers last year. This resulted from cord-cutting and a move from traditional set-top boxes to OTT. This data also suggests a move towards cherry picking content, including streaming piracy, since people are still avidly interested in live sports.

However, streaming piracy is a menace that can be addressed with concerted action. When it is prioritised by rights holders and television platforms, content theft can be stopped with a combination of subscriber watermarking and global channel monitoring.

Watermarking enables content owners, broadcasters and pay-TV platforms to identify the specific individuals responsible for illegally redistributing content. This allows the content theft to be terminated in minutes by revoking the access of the subscribers responsible for streaming content illegally.

With a track record to evaluate, the early adopters of the latest watermarking technology can now see the real value with respect to controlling piracy and boosting the number of paying subscribers. For instance, one major broadcaster was the source for 60% of sports channel piracy within its market, and this was reduced to less than 1% within a couple of weeks of deploying subscriber watermarking. Hence, this technology can be transformational.

The value of watermarking for protecting content has recently been emphasised by the Streaming Video Alliance in its paper Forensic Watermarking Implementation Considerations for Streaming Media.

Watermarking can address the whole spectrum of streaming piracy, including the Kodi and Android illicit streaming devices that dominate the space, along with content sharing by mobile apps, websites and social media.

The technology is suitable for live, pay-per-view and on-demand content, and this breadth of coverage is important for delivering end-to-end security. After all, there’s little point securing a broadcaster’s content on an OTT platform if the satellite set-top boxes are not secured as well.

Watermarking is vital because CA and DRM content protection systems, while essential for security, are not enough by themselves to prevent content theft. Pirates can access set-top box content via the HDMI output using an HDCP stripper, and OTT content can also be captured using freely available screen recording and streaming software.

To be successful in the most challenging live sports environment, it’s essential that global monitoring and watermarking offer rapid extraction and identification of the subscriber illegally redistributing the content. In view of the short duration of the action with major sports like boxing, piracy needs to be stopped within the first few minutes to be most effective.

Another key watermarking performance metric is scalability, in view of the huge audiences that live sports can generate. Typical weekend major league action can result in literally thousands of pirate feeds, and this demands highly automated and responsive systems to take action against this scale of problem.

There’s also a need for rights holders to mandate standards for protecting premium content, and for a high level of cooperation across the key players. There’s also a role for consumer education about the value of protecting the creative industries. However, while these essential steps come to fruition over a period of years, watermarking technology can make a very tangible difference in just a matter of weeks.
HARNESS THE POWER OF THE CLOUD — WITHOUT LOSING CONTROL

Layered, cloud-based protection that enhances performance and strengthens customer trust.

Trust Akamai’s deep experience:
DDoS Mitigation | Web Application Firewall | Scalable DNS
Credential Stuffing Protection | Targeted Threat Protection
Bot Management | Application Access

To learn more visit:
Akamai.com
Insta360™ Pro 2 with FlowState™ Stabilization

Better from every angle.

Farsight Live Monitoring FlowState™ Stabilization 8K 3D VR HDR Video + Photo 120 Mbps Per Lens CrystalView 8K Playback “No-Stitch” Editing in Adobe Premiere Pro Spherical Audio

www.amt.tv