A CLEAR-CUT PATH
Three editing facilities on their success in post

WINNING STRATEGY
Boosting sports broadcast with AR

SPACE & SATELLITE NEW LAUNCHES ACROSS MENA

TV SHOPPING REIMAGINED
Citruss TV gears up for 2019 at Dubai Studio City facility with Blackmagic Design
Welcome

I don’t know about you but grocery shopping or meandering through traffic and waiting endlessly for a parking spot so I can purchase a household appliance never ever held any charm for me, I suppose it’s the same for many others going by how Citruss TV has bucked the recession trend in the region. The Dubai-based shopping channel, which was recently renamed Citruss World of Shopping under its new majority stakeholder Shark Shopping, one of the three biggest home shopping majors in China, had a windfall last year and its biggest target audience is 35-45-year-old Arab women.

The channel has had more than a decade-and-a-half to perfect the art of discovering what sells on TV. With a well-stocked warehouse, well-organised logistics, an excellent after-sales service and the ease of purchase even on WhatsApp, it has fared well. And now, a month ago, competition has opened up next door in the guise of Ellay.com. It will be interesting to see how the new entry, said to be a partnership with German home shopping network HSE24 Group, will fare in this market.

That aside, some of us will be preparing for CABSAT 2019 as this magazine reaches your desk. One thing you can do in advance is send us information about your participation and the products you intend to showcase at the Middle East’s largest broadcast show. With the vast potential of Saudi Arabia to be explored, CABSAT promises exciting new avenues of growth.

2018 may have been tough but challenges often compel us to think creatively and I’m certain this will result in several new ideas this year. In 2019, BroadcastPro will also have several new events around new topics never addressed before in this market. Stay tuned for more details.

Until then, I wish you a happy and prosperous New Year.

Vijaya Cherian, Editorial Director

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Twitter has announced the launch of a two-part Arabic series: #YallaGoal Asian Cup, sponsored by Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) and produced by football news brand Goal. AFC will take place January 5 - February 9. The preview episodes in the second half of December followed TV personality Rawan Daher (@Rawan_Daher) and Saudi football superfan Mohammed Alghamdi (@Mohammedg84) as they explored Dubai landmarks such as Rashid Stadium – site of the AFC Group E opener on 8 January. They discussed the upcoming tournament, played football-related trivia games and showcased what fans in Dubai can do. Commenting on the initiative, Issam Kazme, CEO, DTCM, said: “The eyes of all football fans in Asia will be on the UAE for the 17th edition of the AFC Asian Cup as a record 24 nations go for glory, and Dubai will play an integral part by hosting 11 matches at its two venues – Al Maktoum Stadium and Rashid Stadium. We are hugely excited to be staging AFC Asian Cup 2019 matches in Dubai and #YallaGoal Asian Cup will have football fans covered.” The live episodes will include reviews and previews of the key fixtures, with a focus on the UAE and Saudi national football teams, video and data-driven content, as well as exclusive interviews from Goal Arabia.

Netflix will commission original series from Africa in 2019, Erik Barmack, Netflix VP of International Originals, said last month. This is part of its intention to make its content library as diverse as its worldwide audience. Netflix is planning to offer users outside the US and Europe original content highlighting their local stars. Its first Arabic original, Jinn, a six-episode series based on Middle East folklore, is expected to debut next year. 2018 marked the debut of Sacred Games, its first original from India, and the company has six more original shows from India either planned or in production. Netflix has purchased Lionheart, its first original Nigerian film, in September. The company projects that within years, “Half of the top 10 most-watched shows in a given year are going to come from outside of the US.”

DISCOP MENA has announced a shift in its 2019 dates. The event, initially slated to be held in February 2019 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, has now been shifted to December 15-17, 2019. Patrick Zuchowicki, CEO of DISCOP Markets, said: “Ten years ago, we chose to hold DISCOP MENA at the end of February at a time when Ramadan took place in the fall. By moving dates, and for the next ten years, we want to give the region’s broadcasters, premium cable channels, mobile operators and streaming platforms more time to pick and choose Ramadan content with widespread appeal in the Arabic world.”

Netflix to boost 2019 library with African originals

Shock Middle East appoints Cameron Plant as new Group MD

DISCOP MENA moves dates to focus on Ramadan programming
Mena.tv Content Hub kickstarts Ramadan campaign with new titles

Mena.tv Content Hub, a ChannelSculptor venture, kickstarted its Ramadan initiative at the Dubai International Content Market (DICM) last month. The dedicated Ramadan 2019 section of mena.tv hosts 20 brand-new titles that are in production or not yet seen by the Arab world. The aim of the initiative is to enable TV content rights holders and producers to directly market their content to broadcasters and OTT platforms for Ramadan 2019.

“The Ramadan 2019 campaign solves the two main challenges that the industry faces as the Holy Month approaches—timing and deal transparency,” commented Heba Korayem, Head of Broadcaster Relations at ChannelSculptor.

“With the help of mena.tv, broadcasters and networks can now browse Ramadan 2019 titles much sooner, gain a buying edge over their competitors, and plan their programme grids for the Holy Month more effectively. At the same time, these buyers know they are contacting the rights holders directly, without paying additional commissions to middlemen that often don’t add any value to the deal.”

The platform has a variety of titles, but those related to the Ramadan campaign have been placed in a separate section.

“Unlike other titles listed on the website, the Ramadan projects are a mix of finished and unfinished works, as some of them are still in the preparation phase, with only a synopsis and proposed actor names available. The artwork and promos will be uploaded as and when they are produced,” said Korayem.

A number of regional production companies, including Eagle Films, Rotana and Cedars Art, as well as broadcasters such as Majid TV, Ro’ya TV and Al Aan TV, have listed their works on the website.

These dramas are also targeted at global audiences, as part of mena.tv’s mission to promote Arabic content in international markets. The Ramadan 2019 titles featured on mena.tv will also be promoted at the NATPE Content Market in Miami (USA) in January 2019.

The Ramadan campaign offer is priced at $710 per title and lasts for six months, until the Ramadan buying season is over.

ChannelSculptor also celebrated its tenth anniversary in Dubai last month with a small gathering of industry professionals.

MBC Action acquires MENA Formula E rights

MBC Action has acquired the rights to beam Formula E across MENA for the next two seasons. Alongside live coverage of the final practice session, qualifying shoot-out and the E-Prix itself, MBC Action will also show post-race highlights and programming between races, including preview segments and the Street Racers magazine show. MBC Action has acquired the rights to cover 19 territories. The network will also air the new Jaguar I-PACE eTROPHY support series – the first production battery electric vehicle category using modified road cars – live across its channels. Riyad hosted the Middle East edition at Ad Diriyah.

Morocco’s King appoints Latifa Akharbach as President of High Authority of AV Communication

Morocco’s King Mohammed VI has appointed Latifa Akharbach as the new President of the High Authority of Audiovisual Communication (HACA). Akharbach replaces Amina Lamrini El Ouahabi. The HACA is responsible for all audiovisual communication services in the country, including the granting of licences for AV as well as the allocation of radio frequencies for broadcast programmes. Akharbach is a Moroccan diplomat and journalist. She previously served as Morocco’s Ambassador to Tunisia, prior to which she was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. She also headed the Higher Institute of Information and Communication (ISIC) for 20 years, and was co-CEO of state-owned radio channel SNRT.

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Viacom International expands digital footprint across Turkey and Africa

Viacom International Media Networks is expanding its digital footprint across Europe and Africa. The media house has announced new distribution deals with key multinational players abroad. New partnerships include the launch of MTN in Africa, the MTV + Prime Video channel in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and SVOD deals with Vodafone in Turkey.

Commenting on the expansion, Raffaele Amecchio, President and MD of Viacom’s Southern and Western and EMENA business cluster, said: “We are pursuing a diversified and extensive multiplatform strategy. We are working very closely with all three groups: MTN in Africa and Vodafone, as we continue to evaluate each market for new opportunities and unlock value through both traditional and non-traditional distribution partners.” The Turkey deal is a multi-year distribution agreement with Vodafone SVOD content, versioned in Turkish, from Nickelodeon, MTV and TeenNick, exclusively available on mobile via the Vodafone TV app.

In Africa, in partnership with Atrial View Nigeryia Limited and MTN, Viacom will launch several global brands, including Nickelodeon, MTV, MTV Base and Comedy Central, on MTN’s Hotshot streaming platform. Viacom will also launch the Interactive Grid, a new Exterity system that covers the entire Hotshot service. Viacom is looking for more ways to unlock opportunities and unlock new markets for new distribution partners.”

MTN Group Limited and MTN Africa, MTN’s South African subsidiary, have announced a new agreement with Viacom International, a leading media company renowned for its extensive portfolio of entertainment brands and distribution networks, to launch a new video-on-demand service in its territories.

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Image Nation felicitates filmmakers at Arab Film Studio 2018 awards

Hind Anabtawi, Mariam Al Awadhi and Salma Sherry emerged as the winners of the 2018 Arab Film Studio programme at an awards ceremony on 11 December.

Hind Anabtawi secured the Best Film – Narrative award for her documentary short “Eclectic Dafna” and her relationship with her dying mother. The Best Film – Documentary award went to Mariam Al Awadhi for “We’re Not in The Mood,” a 10-minute film about an estranged daughter and her relationship with her dying mother.

To date, more than 120 emerging filmmakers have participated in Arab Film Studio and these films have been screened at film festivals around the globe. Image Nation CEO Michael Garin said: “Each year, the quality of projects created during Arab Film Studio is incredibly impressive. It’s very gratifying to see the depth of talent and passion these young filmmakers bring. The region’s film and entertainment sector is becoming a significant driver of the creative economy. Arab Film Studio is a platform for rigorous training and reflects Image Nation’s commitment to meeting this need for home-grown professionals with world-class skills.”

Ncam has new VP of Sports and Broadcast

Ncam has appointed Peter Timmons as Business Development Director across EMEA and India. Timmons will focus on new and existing customer and partner relationships, with an eye on strengthening brand visibility and market share region-wide.

Andy Giles joins Pebble Beach Systems

Andy Giles has been appointed General Manager of Pebble Beach Systems, an automation, content management and integrated channel specialist, as Pebble Beach Systems continues to grow.

Sheraton Kuwait chooses Sennheiser for upgrade

Sheraton Kuwait has chosen Sennheiser’s latest wireless conferencing system for two of its conference facilities and several meeting rooms.

The audio specialist’s ADN-W system has been deployed to deliver audio conferencing with secure wireless connectivity.

Eng Mohamed Monies, Maintenance Manager at Sheraton Kuwait, explained: “We conducted a test between ADN-W, our existing system and another manufacturer’s solution. This showed superior sound quality, and addressed our concerns around interoperability.”

Ryan Burr, Head of Technical Sales & Application Engineering, System Solutions at Sennheiser Middle East, added: “Sheraton wanted to use the system in multiple rooms throughout their premises. Through meticulous planning and modelling, we settled on permanently locating the antennas and control units in three of the rooms and then providing a floating system with accompanying wireless microphone units that can be easily moved between meeting rooms as required.”

Etsalat doubles speeds on eLife plans for free

Etsalat has doubled its broadband speed across the board on its eLife Unlimited plans. The entry-level plan will now offer speeds up to 100Mbps. The unlimited Sports and Entertainment plans offer speeds up to 250Mbps, and Premium plans offer speeds of up to 500Mbps and up to 10Gbps. This is the first time 100Mbps has been offered in a base-line plan in the UAE, the company claimed.

Turckell expands with Metrological platform

Turckell has chosen Metrological to deliver a personalised Turckell TV App Store for all Turckell TV subscribers. Using Metrological’s Application Platform, Turckell will source localised and international content from Metrological’s library of more than 300 TV apps. Turckell will use Metrological’s back office for real-time monetising and optimisation of the app lifecycle.

Inside Secure to acquire Verimatrix

Inside Secure has entered into an exclusivity agreement to acquire Californian firm Verimatrix, Inc. With the acquisition, Amdeed D’Angelo, Chairman and CEO of Inside Secure, said: “Verimatrix is the perfect fit to strengthen scale and reach of our value proposition to the market and lead the transformation towards software and cloud-based security solutions, while video content consumption is becoming multi-device and multi-format. We look forward to combining both businesses to offer our clients the best value proposition in security, starting with entertainment and moving towards IoT and connected cars, and to continue to create value for our shareholders.”

The audio specialist’s ADN-W system has been deployed at several areas within the facility.

NEP Group acquires Ay specialist BSI

NEP Group has acquired Ay specialist BSI Entertainment. With the acquisition, CEO Arturo Vicari stated that the company can now offer the complete audio chain to professionals, from microphones to speakers.

Abu Dhabi locations in new Ryan Reynolds film

Filming began in Italy on 20 August, continued to Abu Dhabi on 12 November, and moved to sites in Al Ain, Liwa and Ras Al Khaimah before completing principal photography on 5 December in Abu Dhabi city centre.

The region’s film industry has been fantastic partners.”

Netflix and Skydance Media have completed principal photography in Abu Dhabi on an action-adventure feature film directed by Bay and starring Ryan Reynolds, Mila Kunis, Cory Hawkins, Adria Arjona, Manuel Garcia-Rulfo, Ben Hardy, Lior Raz, Payman Maadi and Dave Franco.

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GatesAir announces new EMEA appointment

GatesAir has appointed Petur Timmons as Business Development Director across EMEA and India. Timmons will focus on new and existing customer and partner relationships, with an eye on strengthening brand visibility and market share region-wide.

GatesAir (in pic) has joined Ncam as VP Sports and Broadcast. Ncam will lead the Global Business Development and sales function for the Sports, Esports and Broadcast sectors. Ncam has also appointed Ben Dair as Head of Product Management to develop and deliver solutions for the company.

Phil Ventrü (in pic) has joined Ncam as VP Sports and Broadcast. Ventrü will lead the Global Business Development and sales function for the Sports, Esports and Broadcast sectors. Ncam has also appointed Ben Dair as Head of Product Management to develop and deliver solutions for the company.

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Majid TV brings Arabic version of Pablo around the World to MENA

Majid TV, owned by Abu Dhabi Media, has catalysed the start of an international animated production named Pablo around the World. The plot revolves around a young autistic boy named Pablo whose drawings come to life and enable him to face the real world with confidence. It is the first children’s series to feature a central character with autism.

“Pablo is about an autistic child, and we could have potentially just dubbed it with any Arabic voice,” Ahmed Abdelhamid, Head of Programming at Abu Dhabi Media, told BroadcastPro. “Instead, we scouted for an autistic child to dub Pablo’s dialogue, so as to be as authentic to the role as possible. We also regionalised the design and graphics in the production.

“When we sent our version back to Cake Entertainment and the producer, they liked it so much that they created Pablo around the World and started to compile regional versions from around the world to be part of this programme. That’s where we have made a difference.”

The TV channel also has big plans to launch two new shows next year and aims to distribute its exclusive programmes on OTT and in-flight entertainment platforms.

FREEJ to be broadcast in Japan

Dubai-based company, Lammtara Art Production, has licensed the series to the Tokyo MX television channel, where it will air weekly with a reach of up to 15m households. Japanese actress Atsuko Takahata heads the Japanese voice-over ensemble, voicing the character of Umm Saeed. Takahata is known for her wide body of film roles as well as for voicing iconic anime characters. She is expected to put the Japanese spotlight firmly on the debut of FREEJ.

Reel Palestine at Cinema Akil

Cinema Akil has announced the return of Reel Palestine’s annual film festival, which will run January 18-26, 2019. Films will be screened at Cinema Akil’s venue at Alserkal Avenue in Dubai and Warehouse 421 in Abu Dhabi. The festival will include at least two screenings each day, talks and a market with Palestinian crafts and flavours, organised by the not-for-profit Reel Palestine.

beIN appoints Martin Aurenche as VP of Sports Content

beIN Media Group has appointed Martin Aurenche as VP of Sports Content, responsible for the group’s media rights acquisitions and distribution around the world. The move comes weeks after Yousef Al-Obaidly was appointed as CEO of the group by Chairman Nasser Al-Khelaifi, signalling a new phase of development for the global media company.

Aurenche, a lawyer, has been responsible for securing the rights to many of the games for the network and will now lead and manage beIN Media Group’s Central Acquisitions Team globally – responsible for both rights acquisition and distribution. He will principally spend his time in the key group offices in Paris, London and Doha, but will also focus on the group’s important interests and operations in the Americas and Asia.
Dubai International Content Market hosts 700 visitors over two-day event

The Dubai International Content Market (DICM), formerly called MYCONTENT, concluded last month with more than 700 visitors in attendance, according to Index, the event organiser. Index also said in a statement that more than 250 buyers from 35 countries attended the market, and engaged in 845 meetings with the exhibitors. The conference brought together 20 local and international speakers, who spoke about the challenges facing the content market locally and internationally. Exhibitors included OSN, Rotana, Egyptian Media Production City, MBC, Netflix, Twitter and Etihad Airways, showcasing their latest projects and ventures.

Speaking about the event, Vlad Borovina, Project Manager of DICM, told BroadcastPro ME: “The MENA region is a huge market of 20+ countries with more than 1,000 broadcasters and numerous SVOD platforms. Many of the region’s 75 telecoms companies are also delivering content services. With the opening of the Saudi market, home to one of the biggest untouched markets, it’s obvious that MENA is on everyone’s agenda. In the Middle East, there is no place like Dubai in terms of logistics, safety, facilities, technology and travel. If we are to have such an event, it needs to be in Dubai.”

Speaking about the changes to the structure of the event and the venue, Borovina added: “We have made a lot of changes in the past year, and we are happy to see the positive reactions from our participants. Despite launching the event quite late in the year, the turnover was impressive from both exhibitors and non-exhibitors. This was possible thanks to strategic partnerships established with the likes of Dubai Media City, DFTC, BroadcastPro Middle East and mena.tv, which created a solid and healthy base for this event to grow in the coming years.”

Besides exhibitors from the region, DICM also attracted new exhibitors from Canada, the UK, France, Nigeria, India and Japan, among others. “We have expanded our target audience to Central and Eastern Europe in terms of buyers, creating a diversity of interests for the two-day event. We also allocated more resources to the matchmaking platform, which is managed now by my colleague Irina Deaconu, who comes with many years of experience in this key element of organising an exhibition. “As the only one in the region focused 100% on buyers and sellers, there is a huge responsibility to deliver a successful platform for media professionals to meet and network. We have already started planning the 2019 edition, and we will share all details with the industry shortly,” Borovina concluded.
Within seconds of browsing through the Citruss World of Shopping website, my Arab friend decided she wanted the Balzano air-fryer. The compelling visuals of grease oozing out of traditional fryers, as the presenter extolled the virtues of healthy cooking, appealed to her current eat-healthy goals.

At the newly appointed studios of Citruss TV in Dubai Studio City, we see the air-fryer, along with samples of jelabiyas (traditional attire for Arab women), mixers, beauty products and slimming pills, among other staples of home shopping television.

As Amr Moustafa, Head of TV Operations at the 14-year-old channel, takes BroadcastPro ME on a tour of the new studios to explain the Blackmagic equipment he has recently had installed, there is no mistaking the real hero of the story. It isn’t the new studios or even China’s Shark Shopping, one of China’s top three home shopping majors, which has purchased a 51% stake in Citruss TV, marking the very first overseas acquisition in the Chinese TV shopping industry.

It is, unmistakably, the Balzano air-fryer and the 400 other brands Citruss TV stocks in its warehouses and markets on its network. In 2017, the Dubai home shopping channel received 600,000 calls, increasing in 2018 to 720,000 calls (at the time of going to press). Despite the entry of rival brands such as ellay.com, Moustafa says, “We have enjoyed year-on-year growth of around 40% and these are numbers only for the five Gulf states of KSA, UAE, Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait.

“We have a spot on Nilesat and Arabsat,” explains Moustafa, who has been with the channel since 2011. Having cut his teeth in the equally brutal world of music and sports broadcasting, he recognises the critical importance of placing the shopping channel in the appropriate content bouquet. “We launched our HD channel on December 9 on Arabsat 12111 Mhz. We also have two spots on MBC transponders, with four channels – the daily 2.5-hour slot on MBC4, with an hour in the afternoon and 1.5 hours in the night.”

For the product-savvy Arab woman aged 35-45, the product-sourcing team at Citruss TV, also housed in the boutique studio, scan the globe for exclusive products. “A lot of our high-sellers are exclusive,” reveals Moustafa. “These products are available only with us in the region and we also offer after-sales service. Lately, we have been doing very well with high-end brands such as Versus from Versace, among others. Colourful jelabiyas are a huge hit. The big challenge for any home shopping TV network is establishing credibility with the buyer. We have to make sure the product is really good, the price point is correct for the market and after-sales is a guarantee.”

Much like its online retail counterparts, Citruss TV shopping in MENA

With one of the top home shopping platforms in China purchasing a 51% stake in Dubai-based Citruss World of Shopping, MENA home shopping channels have picked up pace. BroadcastPro ME takes an exclusive tour of the new Citruss TV studios in Dubai Studio City.
TV has a straightforward money-back return policy. Payment can be made by credit card or cash on delivery, among other options. “Viewers can just WhatsApp a screen grab to us to place an order,” says Moustafa, underlining the ease of making a purchase.

There are challenges, however, that MENA-based home shopping TV networks must contend with.

While recent figures show that more than a quarter (29%) of Middle East consumers shop online, the majority are aged 15-25 and use mobile devices to do so. In response to evolving trends, the Egypt-based technical team at Citruss TV has developed an app for mobile devices, and a global online web portal handles e-commerce.

From left: Sahl Beldi, Marketing Manager at UBMS; Amr Moustafa, Head of TV Operations and Production at Citruss World of Shopping, and Raed Obeid, Territory Sales Manager at MediaCast.

“Citruss TV was at a major crossroad, needing to relocate to new studios and to upgrade from SD to HD with 4K-ready infrastructure”
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Kit list
• Cameras & Production Switchers: Blackmagic URSA Broadcast
• Lenses: Fujinon
• Video Mixer & Switchers: ATEM
• Talkback: ATEM talkback converter 4K, with CCU software
• Recorders & Readers: Smart Videohub, HyperDeck Studio Pro 2, CFast memory card and card reader
• Audio System: Marantz Soundlive12
• Intercom System: Datavideo with beltpacks, headsets and Tally light set
• Headphones: Audio Technica
• Display Systems: SmartView 4K
• Lighting: LED fresnel lights

highlights the efforts being made. “To create word-of-mouth publicity, we have influencers who recommend us, and we have invited our shoppers to our studios for makeovers and day-long shopping with our presenters. The biggest challenge for home shopping channels, besides getting exclusive deals, is to have credible presenters who can persuade viewers to buy a product.”

With the average basket valued at $160, products are aimed at Arab women in Saudi Arabia, followed by the UAE and Kuwait, among other GCC countries. While people do not necessarily sit down to watch home shopping, Citruss TV enjoys MENA-wide visibility, positioned as it is with popular MBC channels. Acknowledging that viewership has almost doubled since the slots were purchased, Moustafa reiterates: “When viewers browse between the MBC channels, they come upon our home shopping channels.”

A pioneering name in home shopping, Citruss TV enjoys MENA-wide visibility, positioned as it is with popular MBC channels. Acknowledging that viewership has almost doubled since the slots were purchased, Moustafa reiterates: “When viewers browse between the MBC channels, they come upon our home shopping channels.”

The biggest challenge for home shopping channels, besides getting exclusive deals, is to have credible presenters who can persuade viewers to buy a product”
Amr Moustafa, Head of TV Operations, Citruss World of Shopping

MBC Group has signed a five-year MoU with Citruss World of Shopping to enhance the existing TV shopping experience, promote branding across multimedia platforms and to promote investment opportunities mainly in MENA. MBC Group CEO, Sam Barnett (l) seen here with Jason Kong, Chairman of Citruss World of Shopping.

“Not everything works,” reveals Moustafa as we talk about the samples stacked in the buyer’s department. TV shopping experts will tell you that a product needs to be demonstrable, a problem-solver and easy to understand, among other factors. Also, with customers bombarded with myriad options, Citruss TV needs to offer its viewer “the best option.”

Amr Moustafa, Head of TV Operations, Citruss World of Shopping

― The company has a rigorous three-month testing phase, he says. But to an audience that typically

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Dubai’s United Broadcast & Media Solutions (UBMS) completed the implementation of a turnkey Blackmagic Design-equipped broadcast studio for Citruss TV in Dubai Studio City last month. The project was designed to equip Citruss TV’s post-production and live broadcast facility with lighting, studio integration, online video editing, digital broadcast cameras, camera support systems, video server, character generator, recorders, audio system and wireless microphones, with players and an end-to-end routing system. The project was installed and integrated by UBMS with the assistance of MediaCast, Blackmagic Design’s distributor for the Middle East.

Elaborating on client requirements, Sahl Beldi, Marketing Manager at UBMS, says: “Citruss TV was at a major crossroad, needing to relocate to new studios and to upgrade from SD to HD with 4K-ready infrastructure. All this needed to be delivered on a tight schedule and on a budget. Simplicity of operation and workflow was also a consideration, so we needed to design a solution that met all of those requirements.”

With the contract awarded in August 2018, the live test took place on October 25, 2018. During our visit to the Citruss TV studio, Amr Moustafa was in his praise of the fast and efficient execution from the UBMS/MediaCast team. Commenting on the client’s priorities, Beldi says: “Citruss TV’s main priority was delivering high-end picture quality to its viewers. This required a ground-up redesign of their production workflow, from cameras and lenses to camera control, signal routing, switching and recording for post.”

Throwing light on the division of work between regional Blackmagic distributor MediaCast and UBMS, Beldi says: “MediaCast is our trusted partner in projects involving a complete turnkey Blackmagic Design solution. UBMS provided the overall system design, with input from MediaCast on key elements. The UBMS team performed the installation and MediaCast assisted with some post-installation configuration and training for specific Blackmagic Design products.”

Offering an overview of the solutions deployed, Beldi says: “We fitted out both Studio A and B with new LED lighting and lighting control. The PCR/MCR control room is fitted with a complete Blackmagic Design 120 4K-ready solution. The studios are equipped with Blackmagic URSA broadcast cameras and Fujinon lenses, and the supporting infrastructure includes Blackmagic ATEM 4K broadcast switchers, HyperDeck recorders, SmartView monitors and scopes, with Newtek plugout, ingest server and graphics.”

The UBMS team implemented the new turnkey solution from scratch, from consultation to design and to the final stages of installation, configuration, testing and training. Acknowledging some challenges with civil works, Beldi says: “Implementation, testing, commissioning and training stages were completed in only two weeks. The live test happened on October 25, and the system went into full live production in the following days. The timeline for the project was tight, so the project management aspect was important. Efficient scheduling, planning and managing resources ensured it was delivered on time, on budget and passed system tests quickly.”

The current studios are a stepping stone to bigger things, Moustafa asserts. “As a shopping channel, you have to understand that every single category of product that you sell has specific needs in the studio. For vacuum cleaners, I need carpets, ceramic tiles, etc to show that it can work. For fitness equipment, I need space for the equipment, the presenter, a guest and two models behind her. For fashion, I might need catwalk space. A bigger studio in the future would complement these new studio spaces.”

For an appropriate video wall.”

Moustafa hopes the new studios will be a stepping stone to the ultimate dream of every home shopping channel – to go live and interact in real time with the end users so that viewers know “we don’t Photoshop anything and what they are seeing is the real deal.”
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*Source: Saudi General Entertainment Authority (GEA) Announcement – Feb 2018

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POWER TO CREATE
INSPIRATION - ACTION - REACTION

360-DEGREE CONTENT EXPERIENCE

Discovery Channel MENA draws on its success with Fatafeat to create original long-form content for its pay-TV channel TLC HD, and bespoke short-form content for digital platforms. In conversation with Nahla Elmallawany, Head of Content, Discovery MENA

Tell us about the 360-degree approach you have adopted to creating content for Fatafeat. We first applied it during the Holy Month of Ramadan. In 2018, our Fatafeat Ramadan strategy was truly 360, with a diverse line-up of locally produced shows on the linear channel, plus a fan-focused digital strategy. But we now apply the ‘360’ model to all our campaigns on Fatafeat. Whether it’s producing new shows for linear, including the television series May’s Kitchen, Matbahna Al Arabi (Our Arabic Kitchen) and Ma’a Sou Atyab (So Delicious), or the digital-first content we produce (more than 800 short-form videos in 2018), our strategy is to ensure we’re always engaging with our Fatafeat fans across every touchpoint.

How has the digital opportunity impacted your workflow? We started with short-form recipes and now we’ve customised

PROCONTENT
our production and editing based on the digital platform the content is showcased on. We have adapted our deliverables around digital. Our in-house crew produces bespoke digital content as part of its workflow with the allotment of additional time. With this strategy, we have a fan base of half a million on YouTube, around 700,000 subscribers on Instagram, and around five million on Facebook, among others. To keep our fans engaged, we now produce an average of 800 bespoke pieces of content each year for digital platforms, and each platform has its requirements: with Instagram you have glossy, magazine-quality style of production; on YouTube, it is more spontaneous; and with Facebook you have article-style content with recipes, and so on.

Our digital platforms also offer immediate feedback from the audiences. If a video performs better, we analyse what aspects helped – from the recipe and talent to the editing style, among other aspects. We are able to monitor and fine-tune our content based on feedback. We have recently signed a partnership with Snapchat as part of their ‘Discover’ feature; they have a very collaborative approach towards content creation. What has allowed us to move so strongly into digital is the permission from management to ‘fail forward’, otherwise we won’t learn and grow. Moreover, something that works today may not tomorrow. Trends evolve. We have permission to experiment, so there is a certain fearless approach to our new initiatives.

For the second season. In the third season, the host Darine El Khatib takes us through little-known facets of life in Jordan over 10 episodes. While the show is in Arabic, there are English subtitles catering to the mixed audience "TLC" reaches out to.

You are working with local partners on My World to You. Tell us more about the content creation process. We are working with Jordan-based broadcasters Roya TV. We wanted a local partner, because they know the hidden gems in the country and they know how to facilitate logistics. The Roya TV crew is working under our supervision – our executive producer flew in and attended the shoot. Overall, it is a very collaborative approach. These partnerships are a win-win for both pay-TV and FTA channels such as Roya. We share expertise and we cater to different audiences. While we can have the programme premiere on pay TV, the content can air on FTA channels after a period, to a different audience. For us, it’s important that we bring locally relevant content to Arab audiences, that’s why we’ve invested in producing 300 hours of original long-form programming this year alone.

Social and Digital Initiatives
- 325 original digital shorts from nine TV talents
- 280 digital shorts [Hands and Pans format]
- 200 digital cut-downs from year-round shows.
- 30 Ittbar menu videos for each day

Social users reached:
- 30.2m fans reached
- 3.5m fans engaged

Website statistics:
- 8.2m sessions, 4m from Saudi Arabia
- YouTube Statistics: 175k + subscribers
- Social and Digital Initiatives
Tanna elaborates: “The basic challenge for a company like production is rarely appreciated and understood even less. Tanna, owner of KKDD Film Production LLC in Dubai.
can engineer with the tools at hand, almost seem like magic soon. In fact, the skills of a colourist or for that matter a colourist are not in danger of being usurped anytime automating the grading process, the deft skills of a manual things and it is hugely time-consuming. For instance, three such ‘magical’ technologies in terms of replicating or moving "images that needs to be replaced is actually the mastering, cutting and moving of 75 frames.” After a six-year working break in Mumbai where he produced around 65 commercial films, Tanna has returned to his home base of Dubai with a revamped studio, KKDD Film Production LLC, that has facilities for both production and post-production. Apart from the occasional feature-length film, the company has been doing a lot of hair and skin commercials, with the films being shot in Bangkok and Mumbai for the Middle East market. And with clients that are increasingly price-sensitive, companies such as Tanna’s have come up with ingenious solutions. "A lot of times we end up doing rotoscoping for packs when clients say that the offer has changed or a pack design has changed. At times, we shoot using a plain hand. However, any movement of the hand makes the post-production work tricky. The main challenge is to explain to the client that we are not being difficult but there is a lot of work involved!” The issue with clients is echoed by Neelay Shah, Managing Director at Dejavu Pro LLC. Established in Dubai in 2007, Deja vu has won prestigious awards, including two Bronze Lions at Cannes. While it
projects, as our clients generally engage us as an agency that provides video content solutions. We have a staff size of 45 people, including 20 artists who are specialised in VFX, CGI, motion graphics and traditional animation. We also have a corporate video film production department. We have a wide spectrum of creative tools to pick from to develop our video proposals.”

Outlining the solutions the company offers, Ajib says: “We have four FCP edit suites and a Smoke suite. We also use DaVinci Resolve as an editing tool and a separate DaVinci Resolve studio system for colour grading. For CGI, our 3D and VFX artists use Maya, while the motion graphics artists prefer Cinema 4D. “For digital compositing, it’s mostly up to the artists, typically it is Nuke, AE and Fusion. Our rotoscoping and tracking department also uses a range of products, from Nuke, Fusion, Mocha and recently PtoXbox. Our traditional animators stay traditional, sometimes working on paper and then transferring to Adobe Flash. For architectural visualisation, we use Max.

“We are equipped with one of the most powerful render farms in the region, but we also have a dedicated GPU-based computer using the Redshift rendering system. This has come in handy for a lot of the motion graphics work which require fast previausalisation.”

The one-stop service approach is a common feature – most post-production houses are also production houses, or the other way around. Explaining this phenomenon, Tanna says: “In other parts of the world, you have specialised post. Dubai is a very competitive market, and for me to be viable, I need to have offline, online and grading in-house. It helps me save cost and gives me a competitive edge.”

Comparing the region with bigger, more established markets, Tanna observes: “When you have a market like India where you have so many feature films and shows being made, an average production studio will have four to five offline suites, five to seven online suites, two grading suites … the scope of work justifies it. Here we do not have that volume of work to justify having a stand-alone post-production house.

“There is an amazing amount of work to be done in Dubai, though,” he stresses. “A lot of the work has shifted to digital. We have clients who have two-week campaigns and they are not looking at a typical $200,000 commercial that will run for six months; they would rather spend 10-15% of that budget for a short period of time.”

Tanna revamped an existing studio and upgraded everything, from Pro Tools and Final Cut Pro (FCP) to the DaVinci Resolve software. “We did a couple of hardware upgrades as well. Today we work on the latest FCP and Adobe platforms. We are fully geared to handle all types of post-production and CGI, along with lip-sync, radio commercials, jingles, music composition, language dubbing facilities and so on. For colour grading, we have Da Vinci Resolve. With skill shortages, rising rent and increased competition among the big concerns, companies are minimising their physical footprint with concepts such as pop-up post-production houses and remote post-production.”

Earlier this year, KKDD Film Production became the first regional company to successfully attempt remote colour grading on DaVinci Resolve, with colourists in Mumbai post-production company Nube Studio. Kajal recalls: “We worked on a TV commercial. The company in Mumbai uploaded the files with no conversion or generation loss. We had to upload the XML files along with the rushes of the film. Other than having the same XML files and offline edit footage, the timelines also had to coincide perfectly.”

“Remote grading increases our reach and gives us the benefit of working with differentcolleagues around the world. We are not restricted anymore, having ironed out the technical issues,” he says.

The incessant pace of using sophisticated video post-production has been made more complex by different digital camera technologies. New compression formats, 4K monitoring and growing content libraries have not made it easier. Also, with the exponential rise in viewers watching 480p content on smartphones, production houses have to accommodate a wide range of resolutions, formats and codecs to keep up with consumer viewing preferences.

A recent project Shah’s team worked on highlighted workflow complexities. “We just did a brand campaign for a regional telco. It was shot in four countries with five cameras. There was a lot of footage, images and tapes. In addition, on the ground we were collaborating with local crews in those respective countries. We had to deal with footage from Alexa film cameras, digital cameras and still cameras. To manage, assemble and edit the footage was quite challenging.”

But he keeps going despite perennial issues around budgets and micromanaging clients and agencies: “We do enjoy the adrenaline rush of working to create the best work under deadlines and other constraints.”

Acknowledging those constraints, Ajib of Real Image says: “There is not a single film we’ve done that didn’t come with challenges. The thing is, we create our own briefs and we’re always trying to outdo the project we had done before – which is like challenging yourself to constantly do more and do better.” Supriya Srinivas
Augmented reality is enjoying significant industry buzz this year, and rightly so with the virtually unlimited possibilities it offers to add visual interest and excitement to live broadcasts, particularly live sports broadcasts.

The enabler for augmented graphics, besides a real-time 3D graphics engine, is of course the camera tracking technology used. Camera tracking positions the 3D graphics in the real world, irrespective of camera movement or lens setting, giving the illusion that the 3D graphics are actually part of the real scene in view.

The most versatile camera tracking systems are those that offer markerless tracking across the full six axes of camera movement (pan, tilt, roll, plus XYZ rotation). Markerless systems track natural features in the environment, whether in a studio or outdoors on location; they build up an understanding of the 3D space in front of the camera, and as a result offer a far greater range of applications than systems that require markers to be added.

Two particular uses gaining in popularity with sports broadcasters are tracking for aerial camera systems and tracking for hand-held stabilised gimbals. The first offers the ability, for example, to fly through augmented sports players standing on the pitch. The second offers, for instance, the ability to walk down a line of racing cars preparing to start a race, with the real drivers in the cars and their augmented avatars standing beside them.

So what’s next?

Reality ... this is where today’s AR technology is headed: mimicking the quality of feature film VFX, where you can’t tell what is real and what is augmented

Nic Hatch, Chief Executive Officer, Ncam

“Reality ... this is where today’s AR technology is headed: mimicking the quality of feature film VFX, where you can’t tell what is real and what is augmented”

Nic Hatch, Chief Executive Officer, Ncam
Yahsat announces JV with Hughes

Yahsat and Hughes Network Systems, a subsidiary of Echostar Corporation, have completed a joint venture arrangement to provide greater access to commercial Ka-band satellite broadband services across Africa, the Middle East and Southwest Asia. The JV was announced in September 2018 and was at the time subject to regulatory and other approvals, which have now been obtained.

Khaldoon Al Mubarak, Group CEO & MD of Masdar, Mubadala, and Charlie Ergen, Chairman of Hughes and EchoStar, along with Masood M. Sharif Mahmood, CEO of Yahsat, and Ramesh Ramaswamy, Senior VP and GM of Hughes’ International Division, were present in Abu Dhabi to ink the deal.

Yahsat and Hughes will combine their knowledge as a satellite broadband solutions provider within its current markets with Hughes’ expertise in broadband satellite networks and services. Together, the two companies will provide underserved and underserved communities with reliable, high-speed internet services via Yahsat’s Al Yah 2 and Al Yah 3 Ka-band satellites, using the capabilities of the Hughes systems, designed and optimised for large-scale high-throughput satellites. The newly formed JV company will go to market as ‘YahClick (powered by Hughes)’ and will be operational with immediate effect.

The company’s Board of Directors consists of three members from Yahsat and two from Hughes. Masood M. Sharif Mahmood, CEO of Yahsat, will serve as Chairman of the Board and Pradman Kaul, CEO of Hughes, will serve as a Board Director. The JV will provide direct-to-premise services to homes and small-to-medium sized enterprises, and to community centres and schools served under local government programmes across the focus regions. The agreement also offers community hotspot solutions to make satellite-enabled broadband more accessible to many more users across Yahsat’s global footprint, which covers more than one billion people. Furthermore, the agreement enhances the trend within the mobile network operator community of benefiting from the efficiencies provided by Ka-band backhaul and carrier solutions.

In other news, Yahsat also launched its Ka-band satellite broadband service in Brazil last month to address the country’s shortage of reliable internet connectivity, which traditionally relies on terrestrial internet connectivity.

New satellite launch in Morocco

Morocco launched the Mohammed VI-B Earth observation satellite last year, almost a year after the launch of the VI-A satellite. The new satellite can take images in less than 24 hours with a resolution of up to 70cm. Designed for civil use, it was produced by Thales Alenia Space as system prime contractor and Airbus as co-prime. The Mohammed VI-B satellite has an estimated lift-off mass of 1,108kg and will be deployed into a sun-synchronous orbit. It will be used for mapping and land surveys, monitoring regional development, agricultural monitoring, the prevention of natural disasters and maritime surveillance.

Connectivity

Connectivity is one of President Raisi’s 127 tasks launched last year, and was one of the main objectives of his administration. The government aims to provide internet access to all provinces of the country. The minister met with representatives from the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations, the World Bank, the World Economic Forum, and various companies to discuss the country’s plans to develop its space programme. The agreement also offers community hotspot solutions to make satellite-enabled broadband more accessible to many more users across Yahsat’s global footprint, which covers more than one billion people.

The Challenga, a cross-country Algerian rally, in November 2018. Speaking about Arbat’s involvement, Wael Alliout, VP and CEO at Arbat, said: “Arbat provided these services as part of our commitment to offer satellite connectivity in Algeria, where broadband connectivity can not only strengthen such events but also ensure economic growth.”

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The Switch and Eutelsat to deliver satellite and fibre video network

**CONNECTIVITY**

The Switch and Eutelsat have joined forces to deliver a satellite and fibre video contribution network. The partnership will provide The Switch’s 800-plus user community of the world’s leading content producers and distributors with the ability to transmit feeds on a minute-by-minute basis to any part of the globe. Simultaneously, content producers and broadcasters within Eutelsat’s satellite footprint will gain access to The Switch’s extensive global fibre network, including 53 physical points-of-presence, as well as connections to US tech leaders, major global broadcasters and more than 180 sports organisations, venues and rights holders. This partnership leverages the resources of three Eutelsat satellites, covering Europe, Africa and the Americas, with The Switch’s global video transport network. Customers will be able to schedule transport to and from each region via SwitchIT, its patented customer-control software platform. Integration between both systems will enable customers to deliver content faster, more smoothly, to more regions around the globe. Michael Antonovich, CEO of Eutelsat Americas, said: “Having greater first-mile access to literally hundreds of additional broadcasters, venues and content producers in the US and beyond greatly strengthens our position in the media landscape.”

Over the past year, The Switch has invested heavily in expanding its network, products and services internationally, including the launch of The Switch Access, a broadband IP connection enabling low-cost connectivity from anywhere in the world, the addition of strategic partnerships on several continents, and increasing the size of its team to include dedicated personnel in key international locations.

**African telecom operators choose Jupiter System**

**BROADBAND**

Three African telecom companies have chosen Hughes’ Jupiter System to power delivery of satellite broadband services for their customers. Botswana Telecommunications Corporation, Satcom Networks Africa Limited (SatCoNet) and an East African telecoms firm chose Jupiter based on its high-performance, operational efficiency and better customer experience. Botswana Telecommunications Corporation is using the Jupiter System to expand its high-speed business broadband service in Botswana. The first phase of deployment includes hundreds of remote terminals connecting businesses and homes. SatCoNet, the only native VSAT operator in Tanzania, chose Jupiter to improve its service offering for the market. The telco in East Africa will implement the Jupiter System for video and broadband service in schools.

**Morocco attracts students to space**

The Scientific Morocco Association has partnered with the US Embassy in Rabat to host the fifth annual Race2Space competition, aimed at young people aged 15-18. Applications will be accepted from December 16, 2018 to January 19, 2019. Winners will be announced on March 20 and win an all-expenses-paid trip to NASA’s Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama in July 2019.

**Turksat tests Ultra HD 8K**

Turksat has launched an Ultra HD 8K test broadcast channel, via the Turksat 4B and Turksat-3A communications satellites located at the 50- and 42-degrees East orbital locations. The test was successfully carried out with the cooperation of Turksat, Rızd Elektronik, Vestel and Sisconet. During the process, images of historical locations in Istanbul were captured in Ultra HD 8K, making it possible for realistic UHD images to be obtained.

**Capture**

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Nigerian satellite operator chooses Newtec modems

Newtec's technology will be used by Nigerian satellite operator NIGCOMSAT as it expands its business, government and consumer Ka-band broadband services in Nigeria. Following on from its continued success with Newtec's VSAT platform Newtec Dialog, NIGCOMSAT will deploy a second hub and thousands of Newtec's MDM2210 IP satellite modems and MDM2510 IP-satellite modems. Newtec’s long-term certified business partner Content Oasis Ltd will serve as systems integrator, maintaining the Newtec Dialog platform and the modems installed for NIGCOMSAT.

As a multiservice VSAT platform, Newtec Dialog enables operators to build and adapt satellite network infrastructures according to specific needs. With Newtec’s modems, a choice of three return technologies is provided, including MF-TDMA, SCPC and Newtec's unique, dynamic Mx DMA, which claim to combine the best qualities of both, promising dynamic bandwidth allocation with a high level of efficiency.

beIN switches to Eutelsat

beIN Media Group is migrating its satellite transponder capacity in MENA from Nilesat to Eutelsat. From 1 January 2019, subscribers’ set-top boxes will need to be reconfigured to avoid any interruptions. Most will be reconfigured automatically, beIN Media said.

“The switch provides an increase in platform security and control and improved resilience overall. These efforts were made to ensure beIN Media Group can continue to provide its viewers and fans with the library of entertainment, live sport action and major international events in the highest standards available across all its platforms,” the company said in a statement.

beIN channels have been distributed between frequencies MHz 11035, MHz 11054 and MHz 12664. The move comes ahead of the pay-TV operator’s coverage of the Asian Cup football tournament, which kicks off on 5 January 2019.

Azerbaijan and Iran to co-develop satellite

Azerbaijan and Iran will jointly develop a satellite probing the Earth, Iranian Minister of Communications and Information Mohammad Javad Azeri Jahromi announced. Iran also hopes to send its first cosmonaut into space in 2019. Azerbaijan’s Azerocosmos OJSC manages Azerispace-1, launched in 2013, and Azerispace-2, launched more recently in September 2018.

Panasonic and TRT World tie for in-flight TV

Panasonic Avionics Corporation (Panasonic), a major player in in-flight entertainment and connectivity (IE&C), will extend TRT World’s live broadcast to many of the world’s leading international carriers, including Turkish Airlines as part of an agreement between the two parties.

“IT is important to stay informed and up-to-date on world events. Passengers tune in to TRT World for news and it’s vital to have variety in your sources to have a more well-rounded view of current events. Thanks to Panasonic’s latest technology, making this challenge a lot easier during flights,” commented Fatih Ozcinar, Director of News and Programmes, TRT World.

Akie Lichte, Head of Digital Solutions and Services at Panasonic Avionics, added: “Panasonic is proud to offer the world’s only truly global in-flight television services. We believe that TRT World is a significant enhancement to our portfolio and will enhance our airline customer passenger experience.”

Virgin Galactic inches closer to space tourism

Virgin Galactic, in which Abu Dhabi’s Aabar Investments has a stake, successfully conducted a test flight of its rocket-powered SpaceShipTwo space plane, which touched the edges of space before returning safely to Earth. The landmark flight gives a boost to Virgin Galactic’s space tourism ambitions. SpaceShipTwo, dubbed VSS Unity, was on board Virgin Galactic’s WhiteKnightTwo aircraft before separating and taking off under its own power. The winged spacecraft reached a height of 82.7km above the surface of Earth and achieved a speed of Mach 2.8.

Virgin Galactic announced four NASA-sponsored experiments, including a vibration-isolation platform and an experiment that simulates how the surface of an asteroid reacts to an impact in microgravity. Virgin Galactic intends to eventually carry space tourists. Virgin Galactic is the world’s first commercial space line, founded by Sir Richard Branson and owned by the Virgin Group and Aabar Investments PJS (Abu Dhabi).

Global VSAT Forum announces new Board

New members have been elected to serve for a two-year term on the Global VSAT Forum (GVF) Board. Those elected include Vasti Haasen, Director of Transmission Operations at ARABSAT; Arunas Slekys, VP, Corporate Marketing, Hughes Network; Paul Deedman of Inmarsat; Nick Dowsett of Intelsat; and Keith Johnson of SpeedCast.

Intelsat Direct offers FlexAir for military aircraft

Intelsat General Communications LLC has launched FlexAir, a managed end-to-end service offering in-flight broadband connectivity to a wide range of military aircraft to support enterprise communications and business development activities in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Russia and the CIS, from its Dubai base. Its responsibilities will include retaining and growing S&D’s market share, overseeing customer support services and expanding the service portfolio across the regions. Both and its firms provide global connectivity solutions for general aviation, military and government and head-of-state aircraft.

Satcom Direct announces new hire

Satcom Direct, a business aviation solutions provider, has appointed Evgeny Pakhkov as regional director for EEMEA. In his new role, he will oversee STX’s sales and business development activities in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Russia and the CIS, from his Dubai base. His responsibilities will include retaining and growing 5G’s market share, overseeing customer support services and expanding the service portfolio across the regions.
ATTENDEE SUMMARY

ECONOMY FOR A GLOBAL SPACE VISION & PARTNERSHIPS

The Global Space Congress provides unrivalled networking opportunities with over 600 key decision makers from space agencies, commercial space, academia and end users of space services.

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Pascale Ehrengard
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Anu Ojha
Director
UK National Space Academy

Mark Biggott
Managing Director
ESA Capital

David Meltzer
Secretary General
Global VSAT Forum

Michael Gold
Vice President
Maxar Technologies

The 2019 SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

RED Digital Cinema Launches Dragon-X

RED Digital Cinema launched the Dragon-X 5K S35 camera last month, and also announced that the DSMC2 Production Module and Production Kit will be out soon in 2019. The DSMC2 Dragon-X camera uses the Dragon sensor technology found in many of RED’s legacy cameras, with an evolved sensor board to enable RED’s enhanced image processing pipeline (IPPP2) in-camera. RED’s DSMC2 Production Module is designed for professional shooting configurations. This accessory mounts directly on the DSMC2 camera body and incorporates an industry-standard V-lock mount with integrated battery mount and P-Tap for 12V accessories. The module delivers an array of video, XLR audio, power and communication connections, including support for three-pin 24V accessories. It has a smaller form factor and is more lightweight than RED’s REDDOLT EXPANDER with a battery module.

The DSMC2 Production Module is available for order and is expected to ship in early 2019 for $6,750. It will also be available as a DSMC2 Production Kit that will include the DSMC2 Production Module, the production handle and the DSMC2 production top plate. The DSMC2 Production Kit is also available for order and is expected to ship in early 2019 for $8,300.

www.red.com

EditShare poised to release Flow 2019

EditShare has released Flow 2019, a MAM solution that simplifies media sharing and collaboration with easy-to-use tools to manage media acquisition, assembly and delivery beyond the confines of the facility.

Flow currently supports on-premise storage vendors such as Avid ISIS/NEXIS, as well as any SMB shared storage. It also connects to archive providers such as Amazon S3, Generic S3, StorageDNA and MassTech FlashNet. The new version improves storage compatibility with new support for Amazon Glacier, Archiware PRe, Backblaze and Microsoft Azure. Flow connects siloed storage pools to facilitate file ingest, asset tracking, search and retrieval, storyboarding, media transcoding and migration policies, as well as delivery for editors, colourists and creative everywhere.

www.editshare.com

LTE broadcast by Rohde & Schwarz, Kathrein

Rohde & Schwarz and Kathrein have teamed up to advance the world’s first high-power high-tower LTE broadcast and undertook a test transmission last month.

The test saw an R&S THK450 transmitter go into operation at Bayerischer Rundfunks (BR) Wurzburg transmitter station while a special Kathrein antenna was tested at BR’s transmitter site in forming near Munich.

The R&S FaHMBMS transmission addresses broadcast applications for video and IP data in HPHT topologies with bandwidths of 5 MHz and 10 MHz. Kathrein and Rohde & Schwarz are investigating large-scale TV broadcasts using the FaHMBMS mode over 5G Broadcast networks as part of a Bavarian research project called “5G TODAY.”

www.rohde-schwarz.com

www.kathrein.com

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“With hybrid workflows that are able to apply the advantages of both cloud and on-premise platforms, media companies will be able to maximise the capability of storage”

Hybrid workflows for a cloudy hemisphere

We are living in a content-driven world. The explosion of multiscreen and OTT platforms means the TV landscape has never looked so overwhelmingly content. We are witnessing a rapidly expanding waist belt of content creators, as well as delivery platforms.

So – how are providers managing all this storage?

A few years ago, cloud was the hot thing, and many providers threw all their content onto the proverbial cloud train, steaming ahead with a complete migration. There was very much a ‘the cloud is the future and nothing else’ attitude.

Using cloud for storage was new and exciting, but the rising costs of storing thousands of hours of content is revealing itself, along with the inefficiencies of the platform.

Luckily, we are starting to see a tear of only using the cloud for storing a large amount of data, as many media companies do, in a big drawback. No one wants to pay large amounts to store content that isn’t being used.

On-premise is great at providing quick access, which can be crucial for certain scenarios. For example, the morning news makes reference to a short and obscure clip from decades ago. Fast access to that clip is required, without using tons of main hours. With quick and automated access, you can have it online or on screens within the hour, and generate revenue – exactly what every provider wants to do with its content.

Additionally, on-premise has strong capabilities for integration into new and existing workflows. And yet, the platform lacks the capacity for global sharing and distribution. By introducing hybrid workflows that are able to capture the requirements of a business model and apply the price of both cloud and on-premise to meet them, media companies can easily streamlines workflows and maximise the capability of storage.

How can harmony be achieved?

The key to successfully manifesting hybrid workflows for storage is the integration layer. Organisations rely on the third-party orchestration layer to synchronise the content between private and public cloud platforms. Automated workflows and tight integrations ensure organisations benefit from the operational efficiencies and elastic scale of hybrid environments.

A hybrid workflow with a media focus is specifically designed to overcome the challenges that media companies face. Hybrid workflows can be built around a company and tailored to provide the best possible service of storage for the customer, and demand for the hybrid workflow has grown. We are seeing a need for round-the-clock, round-the-world editing, as well as back-up off-premise to take advantage of on-demand services, but companies cannot simply use the cloud as a one-stop shop.

Before media companies jump on the bandwagon (once again for some), it is crucial that they consider their business model. What exactly does your company require, and how can that be accomplished with both the cloud and on-premise platforms? Proper and tight integration can be accomplished – it just needs to be considered. When applied and integrated correctly, hybrid workflows have the opportunity to revolutionise media storage workflows, changing the way that content is managed.

Nick Pearce-Tomiesen is Sales and Marketing Director at Object Matrix.
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