

Pharos to help Adventist World Radio deliver content globally for iTunes and Podcasts

Global programme syndication and content validation will enable AWR to offer its programmes as internet-delivered podcasts and audio-on-demand

Adventist World Radio (AWR) has selected Pharos to provide a global content production and distribution solution using its Mediator content management and workflow platform. The new solution will drive global programme syndication and content validation that will enable AWR to offer its programmes as internet-delivered podcasts as well as Audio-On-Demand, in addition to its current shortwave broadcasts. The AWR contract was confirmed following discussions at the NAB 2009 Convention where Pharos Mediator 4 made its US exhibition début.

"Rather than broadcasting via AM-shortwave or FM radio to one service area only, the new system will enable listeners to hear any of our programmes over the internet," explains AWR president Ben Schoun. "AWR has been experimenting with podcasts for nearly four years but the content processes have proved so labour-intensive that only about 10 of the 75 languages we transmit by radio could be handled. Pharos Mediator will greatly increase productivity, allowing each programme to be made available worldwide immediately on completion rather than having to wait in a transmission queue."

"Preparing content using Mediator will allow our audience to search our programmes using keywords in their own language," adds AWR web manager Marvin King. "Someone interested in Russian programmes addressing smoking, family life, or salvation will be able to search for those topics. Mediator will also provide us with key productivity features, such as automated quality control which makes it easier for managers to check file integrity before programmes go online. Mediator's elegant browser-based user interface will allow our staff to oversee content production and publishing from anywhere in the world, and manage file transfers based on the broadcast schedules. These programmes are listed in popular podcasting services such as iTunes that will make our content more accessible than ever before rather than being limited to visitors to our web site. We will also be able to syndicate our podcasts through other web sites, blogs, and social networking sites."

"Mediator will integrate AWR's global content production and distribution using the Amazon S3 Cloud infrastructure," explains Russell Grute at Pharos. "This is a key milestone in broadcast and network convergence that many broadcasters have been waiting for. AWR's programme content can be uploaded from regional studios and producers, many of them in almost inaccessible locations. Mediator will process hundreds of programmes a day, transcoding as required using Rhonet's Carbon Coder."

With Pharos Playtime playout automation, AWR will also be able to automate the distribution and aggregation of shortwave radio and podcast content to 13 distribution sites worldwide. Seven of these pass content to various third-party automation systems, while the remaining six distribute transcoded audio and metadata to staging media for the web as podcasts. Mediator's remote approvals workflow using desktop browse will provide the trigger to generate a cumulative export XML of new and approved content. This will be picked up by Google's Feedburner and transformed into Apple iTunes and other metadata-rich podcast formats.

Adventist World Radio is the international broadcast ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Its mission is to broadcast the gospel to the people of the world in their own languages. AWR and its affiliates broadcast more than 1,000 hours a week via short-wave and AM/FM radio, podcast and the internet. Its programmes are produced at locally-operated studios in over 70 languages.

Pharos delivers content management and workflow to broadcasters and service providers in television, radio, VOD and mobile distribution. Pharos solutions help global media companies rapidly adopt and benefit from file based multi-platform distribution. With Pharos, organisations simplify workflow processes, unify operational teams and better utilise the technology infrastructure across the entire broadcast value chain.

The picture below shows AWR representatives on the Pharos booth at the NAB 2009 Convention. From left: Karl Forshee (AWR Engineer, Guam Shortwave Transmitter site); Daryl Gungadoo (AWR Global Resource and R&D Engineer, Bracknell, England); Randy Shorenstein (Adventist Media Productions, Simi Valley, California); Greg Scott (AWR Senior Vice President); Dowell Chow (AWR Vice President for Finance).



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