

Channel Five chooses Pharos Mediator to help increase efficiency

Multichannel broadcaster begins 12 months rapid implementation of integrated content management and workflow to save hundreds of thousands of pounds annually and dramatically increase productivity and capacity

Reading, UK - 30th June, 2009 - Pharos, a leading content management and workflow provider, announces pioneering broadcaster Channel Five has selected Pharos Mediator to improve efficiency and reduce cost.

The deployment of Pharos Mediator is the culmination of a two-year project led by Chris Anning, Chief Technical Officer for Channel Five Group, in response to the launch of two new channels in 2006 and a VOD service in 2007. "Our workflow is the heartbeat of our organisation," explains Anning, "without it we have no business so we needed to find the right long term solution to improve it, as mistakes could have deep repercussions to our operations."

Channel Five, working with external consultants from Farncombe Technology and Marquis Consulting began a 6 month project involving every internal department to analyse and document its existing multi-channel and multi-platform workflow and operational procedures. This detailed analysis was then used to formulate a set of key requirements and produce a 128 page RFP that detailed the productivity improvements.

"Mapping our content management processes and multi-site workflow gave us a deep understanding of our business, where we can improve and how we can better prepare for more challenging market conditions," explains Anning.

The selection of Mediator follows a further extensive six-month process, which assessed in detail fifteen rival solutions. "We used a scoring system with input from operations, technology, IT and finance, organised demonstrations and met the developers at each of the four short listed vendors," explains Anning, "We also spoke at length to reference customers, performed financial due diligence on the final contenders and looked carefully at the culture of the people we could be working with."

Only after this exhaustive process did Channel Five select Pharos to implement its flagship Mediator content management and workflow platform. "In the final round of assessments, Mediator was judged to be the most suitable across almost every area including reliability, performance and flexibility," comments Anning, "We were also impressed by the openness of Mediator as a platform, the technical expertise of Pharos and their proven track record in the field."

Pharos solutions help multi-channel broadcasters and service providers quickly adopt and benefit from file based multi-platform distribution. With Pharos, organisations can simplify workflow processes, unify operational teams and better utilise the technology infrastructure across the entire broadcast value chain. Millions of media assets across hundreds of television channels are powered 24/7 by Pharos' software architecture, integration expertise and comprehensive support services.

"Channel Five is one of the most innovative broadcasters in the UK," says Russell Grute, Marketing Director at Pharos. "The technical team is well respected for their use of next generation technology and for an in-depth appreciation of process improvement. This project will enable Channel Five to capitalise on its long term technology investment and improve workflow processes to secure key relationships with service providers including RedBee and Ascent Media."

A schedule of carefully scoped implementation work streams is due to come on stream in August. The first phase will deliver a more efficient ingest process between Channel Five and RedBee Media, the broadcaster's play-out service provider for its Fiver and Five USA channels.

"Initially, Mediator will save us hundreds of thousands of pounds each year in tangible costs around tape dubbing, ingest and content transfers," explains Anning, "But these savings are probably smaller than the significant productivity gains and operational capacity Mediator will deliver in the longer term - in essence, the system will allow us to do much more with less." He adds.

The Pharos solution will integrate key technology from Apple, Isilon, Pilat and Signiant with Mediator providing a new and unified browser based user interface for every department. The implementation phase is expected to finish in the Summer 2010.

"Every channel funded by advertising is looking hard at its cost base," comments Anning, "Today we need to get more value from our content and get it onto as many platforms as possible - this project will help us to achieve that goal by providing a solid operational foundation for the future."

About Pharos

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.

Contacts

Russell Grute, Pharos
+44 (0)118 950 2323
russell.grute@pharos.tv

Anne Harding, The Message Machine
+44 (0)1895 631448
anne@themessagemachine.com