

Sports News TV

Jointly owned by TWI and Associated Press, Sports News Television (SNTV) strives to be the first to provide television broadcasters, broadband and mobile companies with top quality fast turnaround footage of daily sports news. Its crews are present at all major sports events such as the Olympic Games, World Cup, Grand Slam tennis and major golf tournaments. SNTV operates as part of the Associated Press Television News service.

The Challenge

For television clients, SNTV transmits multiple daily bulletins and is organised to meet tight production deadlines. Each bulletin contains four to five event highlights and one or two original reports. Bulletins are regionalised, so that an "Asian" edit of Wimbledon will feature, for example, Japanese and Australian players.

SNTV used to edit from video tape which often required multiple copies for parallel editing which was inefficient and difficult to scale up. Furthermore recording of event segments or whole matches and games had to be completed before the tape could be distributed for editing. On any one day, they had about six or seven journalists working to produce five or six 15 minute news feeds. They decided to phase out tape in favour of a server-based system. Most of the SNTV journalists were already talented and capable video editors. Now journalists and the entire production team have access to all material held on the Quantel sQ server system via six Quantel QCut journalist editors and four QView browse editors. The new system enables editing to start immediately rather than waiting 90 minutes until the final whistle or score. Simultaneous events such as a football tournaments and major golf matches can now start editing side by side. However SNTV wanted to further extend this new functionality with better integration with the existing newsroom and an automation playout system.

The Solution

Incoming content is ingested and edited live on Quantel workstations where the completed stories and metadata are picked up by Pharos Playtime and passed directly to the Electronic News Production System (ENPS). The stories are added to the ENPS running order or "rundown" from where Playtime generates a list of the items scheduled for each bulletin, totalling anything from 15 to 45 minutes. Playtime then manages unified playout of all the media using Quantel server ports.

Playtime also automatically creates an individual slate for each item. Previously the operators had to produce these slates manually, keying in the title, a short description, dates, line, restrictions, language and so on: all of this is now handled by Playtime.

Business Benefits of Playtime to SNTV

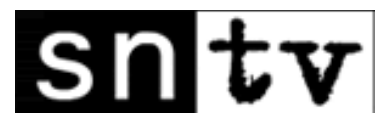
- Forms the heart of a versatile production system delivering six bulletins of sports news every day.
- Uses an edit timeline as the basis of a unique toolset for the creation and playout of broadcast media publishing channels.
- Allows a scheduler to create television channels that would otherwise require extensive post-production.
- Can be scaled to handle anything from one to literally hundreds of channels.
- Frees operators to learn new creative skills rather than having to work with lists of names, numbers and times.



SNTV MCR using Pharos Pilot desktop control

Richard Allingham – Chief Engineer, TWI

"SNTV wanted to invest in a digital solution to improve workflow. We suggested that a degree of playout automation would also be worth including. The new system enables playout by pressing a single button at the start of each news bulletin. Playtime also automatically archives each story as a record of daily output."



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Why Pharos?

Playtime allows packages to be assembled manually or automatically. In automatic mode, a schedule is imported or events are sourced directly from a newsroom system. Individual event timings can be checked and adjusted before the package is committed for transmission. Video can be sourced to a package from any file without re-ingest to the server. Clip in/out points can be edited for a specific purpose without affecting the stored copy. The system can be configured to provide a backup video channel automatically matched to an incoming programme schedule, providing an alternative signal source.

"SNTV had been operating for about 10 years using a system based on analog tape. They wanted to invest in a digital solution, preferably server-based, to overcome generation-loss and dropout difficulties and to improve workflow. We suggested that a degree of playout automation would also be worth including. We looked at the various suppliers and Pharos won on both cost and on the flexibility of their attitude to what we were asking for. They were willing to provide what we wanted rather than what they had in mind! The new system enables playout to be achieved by pressing a single button at the start of a news bulletin. In addition, Playtime automatically archives each story as a record of daily output"

Richard Allingham, Chief Engineer, TWI



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Key Functionality of Playtime for SNTV

- Increased production speed.
- Easy expansion into 720p or 1080i.
- Highly cost-efficient
- Very high reliability
- Easy interfacing to third-party equipment

This case study:

PHCS-2001.02 Pharos Playtime SNTV

Related documents:

PHDS-1001 Playtime

PHDS-1003 Playtime Modules

PHDS-1004 Playtime Overview

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