

A seamless AVIT systems solution for Rotana TV, heralding a new age of Music Television delivery



Background

Rotana TV is a division of the Middle-East's number-one music producer, Rotana.

Customer challenge/ business needs

Rotana TV required a complete & integrated solution to facilitate the broadcasting of 3 Music Television channels from their new Beirut transmission centre. In addition to the production and play-out transmission requirements Rotana have a substantial tape library archive (4,000-5,000 Betacam tapes) which requires migration onto a play-out server, and archiving. Therefore it was important to provide an automated system that would accomplish this demanding task as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The Sony solution

Rotana TV chose Professional Services (System Integration Division of Sony Europe) to provide their state of the art project. It incorporated the following core elements:

- **Material Migration** — The material from 4,000 – 5,000 Betacam tapes is automatically ingested in file format into the playout server and digital archive. A Sony Flexicart with 3 x Sony MSW-M2100P e-VTRs controlled by Sony AutoCat (automated cataloguing s/w) interfaces with the Harris automation system to enable transfer of material in MXF whilst retaining all associated metadata.
- **Scheduling & Playout** — A SAN architecture based on Pinnacle Media Stream Servers with Palladium SAN Storage are provided for the transmission & production server element in the system. All material throughout the system is stored as MPEG 30i to retain a high quality through the post and transmission chain. Ibis and Harris are integrated to provide the program scheduling and automation layer for the system. The Harris layer controls the movement and tracking of material and metadata throughout the system.

Product(s):

- Sony Flexicart with Sony MSW-M2100P e-VTRs controlled by Sony AutoCat
- Sony S-Petasite digital archive utilising high density S-AIT drives

‘The system installed by Sony at our new Playout centre in Beirut uses cutting edge technology & is installed to the highest standards by a professional team. This gives Rotana confidence the system will prove reliable for many years to come.’

Joseph Saade, Technical Director, Rotana TV.

The Sony solution continued

- Archive — A Sony S-Petasite digital archive utilising high density S-AIT drives is integrated seamlessly with the transmission server, providing for automated archiving and restoring of material to the transmission sub-system.
- Digital Post — Three Pinnacle Liquid Blue NLE’s connect into the system allowing material from the SAN storage to be edited and the resultant file to be pushed back to the video servers for transmission.
- MCR — A state-of-the-art Master Control Room is provided at the heart of the system offering full manual intervention for non-automated events such as live feeds, concerts etc.

The implementation

This project presented a significant challenge to the Sony Professional Services team, drawing upon many years of experience in solution design and implementation. It was a complex system involving Tape Migration, Transmission, Archive and Post Production, and there were a large contingent of state of the art third party components from IBIS, Pinnacle, Harris and Thomson/GVG. Sony’s top priority was to offer a sophisticated and integrated solution yet still remain user-friendly.

Sony were one of very few system integrators who had the technical expertise and understanding of the customer’s business and technical needs to deliver such a complete and integrated solution.

Customer benefits

The delivered solution moves through the complete workflow from content creation to transmission and eventually archive, all on a network automated platform. This has revolutionised the way Rotana TV work, reducing production time and cost and enabling new creative possibilities.

Sony — the market leader

‘Rotana TV chose Sony due to their proven track-record & professional approach to Systems design / integration’ comments Joseph Saade, Technical Director, Rotana TV.

‘One of the key attributes of this project is the tape-less and file-based workflow throughout the operation, from automated file based ingest via Sony e-VTR through to the SAN server transmission architecture, digital archive and file based post environment’ comments Karl Hijazi, Project Manager, Professional Services, Sony MEA. ‘This is indicative of the AVIT world we now live in and Sony Professional Services specialises in delivering real business and technical benefits to our customers through our understanding of customers needs in the media industry.’