



### Harris Corporation releases IconMaster

Harris Corporation has released version 3.0 of IconMaster, a feature-rich master control switcher that is fully configurable between SD and HD formats.

Harris said the latest version offers advanced features that enable broadcasters to streamline workflow, centralise media management and lower per-channel costs in multi-channel environments.

Together with Harris' Centrio multi-viewers and Platinum routers, IconMaster v3.0 can simplify the workflow solutions. With Centrio and IconMaster, the operator can control the multi-viewer directly from the master control switcher.

### Exanet selects Chelsio adapters

Israel-based Exanet said its customers can enjoy high-speed and improved productivity after it has announced that it has chosen Chelsio's 10Gb Ethernet adapters.

ExaStore combined with Chelsio's 10Gb technology allows Exanet customers to use their standard local area network to create a high-speed storage network, operating up to 10 times faster than a standard system.

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# Shift to digital media requires reliable servers

Making the big leap to digitisation demands fast and reliable servers. **Veronica C Silva-Cusi** tells more.

**T**he trend to digitise media content is putting pressure on newsroom systems, particularly on servers which act as the heart of the system. Heading the call of broadcasters and production houses, suppliers and manufacturers have introduced their own solutions, promising greater flexibility and scalability.

The broadcast industry owes it all to the information technology (IT) industry which has tried and tested a wide range of server solutions in many of the large commercial enterprises which demanded great flexibility and scalable systems.

Some of the region's top broadcast networks have relied on these server systems to help them make the big leap to digitisation. Omneon, for instance, helped MediaCorp in its successful trial for its shift to HD back in 2007. The Singapore station chose Omneon Spectrum HD server system with its open and advanced architecture that combines a common server with the storage infrastructure.

Omneon merged its years of expertise in the broadcast industry with the best practices in IT to come up with a breadth of solutions that are cost-effective and flexible.

MediaCorp senior vice-president Yeo Kim Pow earlier said that the network relied on Omneon's track record to help it decide on the type of server system to use for the trial. Yeo particularly noted Omneon Spectrum's scalable architecture which leaves room for expansion when it is needed.

The broadcast and media industry is said to be undergoing major transformations to keep up with the latest technological developments in response to the demands of more sophisticated consumers. The industry would require a reliable, scalable and flexible server system to address the demand while keeping in check its investment.

CNBC Pakistan also chose the Omneon Spectrum media server system for the transmission of the channel's 24-hour mix of local and international business news programming broadcast in two languages — Urdu and English.

CNBC Pakistan's technical consultant Aaron Shaw earlier said that Omneon's cost-effective solution allows easy integration with legacy to grow in the future.

The global market for media and technology is expected to grow at 11% compounded per annum, according to a study conducted by industry group IABM.

"We are seeing an explosion of content, many, many more channels, and many more delivery platforms," said IABM director Roger Crumpton in a 2008 industry report.

As the industry evolves, IABM suggests that broadcasters look at very flexible infrastructures, particularly

as the move to digitise is something that traditional broadcasters are not too familiar with.

Broadcast companies are also looking for a server that can work with their existing systems while allowing them to go forward into the digital domain.

One such solution available in the market is Harris Corporation's Nexio advanced media platform (AMP), a server system that integrates a server, storage, software codecs and conversion.

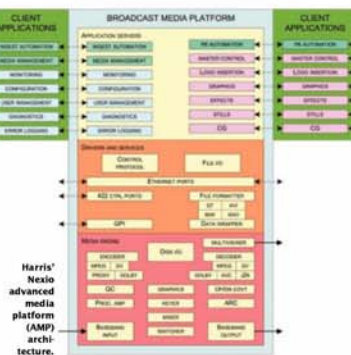
Harris says the Nexio AMP simplifies the workflow while speeding up the deployment of new channels.

At the 2008 International Broadcast Equipment Exhibition (Inter BEE) conference and exhibition in Tokyo, Japan, last month, Harris featured its line of solutions including its server and storage area network (SAN) editing solutions.

Harris says the move to digitise content and even the workflow calls for an advanced media platform that can combine file-based workflow in a video server and other older media in just one box.

This capability allows companies to cut down on cost while taking the evolutionary leap to digital technology.

"The advanced media platform provides the infrastructure to add new media applications, processes and services with the ease of installing software-enabled functionality. Integrated applications also reduce the costs of installation, operation and maintenance," Todd Roth, vice-



president technology, Nexio Server Systems Harris Broadcast Communications, states in a white paper.

Just last November, Harris had installed seven Nexio AMP at Spanish broadcaster Television de Galicia (TVG) as part of TVG's expansion project "to extend its digital transmission capabilities and create a foundation for future growth".

TVG engineering director Antonio Posse said the broadcaster chose Nexio AMP because of its reliability and its capability to allow the company to evolve from its legacy systems.

Silicon Valley-based Hewlett-Packard (HP) is also offering the media and entertainment industry its digital media solutions and services "that allow media companies to digitise, store, process, manage, distribute and archive complex media assets securely and efficiently".

HP's server offering for the media and entertainment industry is the BladeSystem server using an open architecture, meaning it can easily work with existing systems and newer ones available in the market.

"High-density HP BladeSystem c-Class architecture recognises the changing requirements for the media and entertainment marketplace," states HP.

Among the server's features which make it ideal for the demanding requirements of the media and entertainment industry are the serialised I/O technologies for greater I/O bandwidths and processors featuring multi-core architectures. The BladeSystem also features virtualisation technologies that improve server capacity and the ability to handle higher power loads.

HP is working with OmniBus Systems for the latter's iTX production, master control and automation software. The companies say their partnership helps them deliver solutions that reduce complexity of transitioning to digital technology while reducing

resource costs and energy usage.

#### Industry collaboration

Collaboration among suppliers and manufacturers in the broadcast and media industry has been the recent trend as it helps the industry to address some challenges in its move towards digitisation. One of these issues is interoperability, which includes addressing how older systems — such as tape or reel — can be integrated into the new digital systems.

Related industries which have similar challenges are those involving post-production for movies, documentaries and commercials.

UK-based EditShare is offering its XStream Series, which is designed to support the high-performance environments of post-production houses and the broadcast industry.

Last September, EditShare installed a 32TB XStream server in Zurich-based film company Condor Films.

Condor Films, which uses a mix of Avid and Final Cut Pro facilities, says it found that XStream works seamlessly across the two systems.

"With the new XStream, we're going to include our documentary, commercial and corporate video production units so they can also benefit from the improved workflow," says Markus Röthli, manager of the Infrastructure and Service Center at Condor Films.

Perhaps one of the testaments to the importance of servers in today's broadcast industry was during the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Over 500 video servers were deployed from EVS alone!

Belgium's niche broadcast video server com-



pany, EVS, also configured a giant media server from a cluster of servers to provide the video infrastructure to handle 40 channels of full HD TV and hold some 1,600 hours of content online.

Using a giant media server was an EVS concept whereby all 40 HD feeds were recorded in both high and low resolution. These feeds were logged and indexed as they came in, and essential metadata was added. This resource was then shared and became a library of all media created during the Olympics. It also became a keyword searchable archive.

Whatever the challenges, there is no other way for these industries to go but to pursue the digital revolution. The demanding audience across the globe is putting pressure on broadcast and media companies as well as post-production companies to make the big leap quickly.

To serve today's demanding audience demands fast, reliable servers! **APB**

— With additional report from Karl K Rosstler

MediaCorp chose Omneon Spectrum HD server system with its open and advanced architecture that combines a common server with the storage infrastructure during its shift to HD in 2007.

# BENCHMARK

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