

Kabel Deutschland, Germany

Extended video monitoring

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Claus Beck, Leader of the Playout Center,
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Kabel Deutschland, the largest system operator in Germany, operates the cable network in 13 states and supplies approximately 10 million subscribing TV households in Germany. The company develops Triple-Play offerings for digital TV, High speed Internet and telephone services over the cable, and offers an open platform for all program providers for digital television. The company operates the grids, markets cable connections and provides comprehensive services for the cable connection.

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With the advent of digital TV, Kabel Deutschland decided to extend its offering with digital program packages in the broadband network. As a consequence, the company's existing monitoring concept and infrastructure had to be revised thoroughly. This revision coincided with the move to a new location, from Usingen to Roedelheim, Frankfurt.

After a detailed technology and market analysis, Kabel Deutschland selected Barco for the installation of a new monitoring system which could meet the needs of the future. Barco delivered a monitoring system consisting of 22 rear-projection modules from the OverView D series, driven by 11 Hydra multiviewers.

The old monitoring center not only coped with an outdated workflow, with a lot of manual interventions, the center was also architecturally limited in its extension possibilities. The new center needed to be capable of handling much more than the 110 signals represented on the CRT displays of the old Usingen

center flexibility was of key importance in the design. A large number of signals, from various sources and formats needed to be represented in a much more efficient way as before. In addition, the new system needed to be fully integrated into the existing SNMP management system. Claus Beck, Leader of the Playout Center, Kabel Deutschland, commented: "An important element, apart from the flexible expandability, was the simple and complete integration into the existing SNMP management system. Barco's monitoring solution meets these requirements on all topics." Thirdly, there was an important need for qualitative status reporting. Finally, to obtain independ-

ency from future software upgrades and technology evolutions, the monitoring system needed to be based on standard products and open interfaces.

The Barco solution

Based on several offers, Kabel Deutschland analyzed the screen technology, the efficient use of the existing surface, the flexibility according to the representation of video signals of different formats and sources, the advantages and disadvantages of the different systems, the technical proportions of the existing monitor wall, the flexibility concerning the visualization of the video signals of different formats and sources and the planned energy consumption. After considering all pros and cons Kabel Deutschland decided to choose the rear-projection technology in connection with the Split screen technology.

This simplified the signal wiring and hence reduced the installation costs. The modular structure of the video wall



Kabel Deutschland



featuring frameless screens offers operators a uniform and homogeneous display. At the Roedelheim Kabel Deutschland center, Barco installed 50-inch rear-projection modules, which make it possible to visualize approximately 230 video signals on the new video wall instead of 110.

The market analysis performed by Kabel Deutschland examined the rear-projection modules and Split screen systems from different providers.

The systems were presented in Usingen or at the manufacturer's location. Based on the technical information and as result of the presentations and delivered offers, Kabel Deutschland settled for the 50" rear-projection modules of Barco's OverView D series in combination with the Multiviewer system Hydra.

The result is astonishing. The rear-projection video wall offers outstanding image quality. The DLP™ technology and Blackbead screens cause no burn-

in effects and guarantee a high viewing angle and an optimal contrast, even in daylight viewing conditions.

The rear-projection modules feature a dual redundant lamp system, which ensures worry-free operation upon lamp failure. There is always one lamp in operation, the second lamp serves as a replacement. In case the operating lamp fails, the spare lamp automatically takes over without a significant time delay.





Barco's Multiviewer Hydra recognizes the signal errors by means of detailed video and audio signals. The SNMP Traps are fed to the higher system Netcool of Micromuse over the existing SNMP interface. The error conditions can also be represented as on-screen messages and can be stored as log files. Each Multiviewer is supplied via redundant power units and is equipped with four fan modules.

Each unit (two displays and a Split screen computer) allows the visualization of up to 24 video signals and replaces two 19" racks, which were equipped with ten conventional CRT monitors in the old monitor wall. The size of the video signal remains nearly unchanged. Each Split screen computer is configured with six

video cards and three audio cards and is equipped with two independent monitor/video outputs. Via optical fiber cables with integrated DVI to LWL converters, the Multiviewer supplies the connected rear-projection modules with the appropriate monitor signal. When a projection module fails, all signals attached to the Multiviewer, can be shown on another module.

The future

In the first phase of the upgrade, Kabel Deutschland decided to purchase three Multiviewer systems with six rear-projection modules. This allowed the entire digital cable program to be

switched to the new monitoring system without disturbing the current operation. Thanks to this strategy, only one signal class of the rearrangement was affected and a trouble-free reporting rearrangement and transition to the current monitoring technology could be realized.

After the move of the Kabel Deutschland to the new location in Roedelheim, the first stage of the system development was finalized in October 2006 and the equipment was ready to be taken into operation. But the activation and installation of more programs will mark the extension of the video wall with more Multiviewer systems and the appropriate projection modules.



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