

Norwegian Broadcasting Company (NRK)

Promoting a particularly bright view on the world news



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Dag Gulbrandsen,
project manager, NRK

Flashy presentations, live shots, stunning graphics: today’s news studios feature far more than the black-tied presenter of times past. When NRK, Norway’s leading broadcaster, decided to rebrand its main news show, news studio 5 got a radical makeover. A large glass Barco rear-projection CADWall and powerful projector now ensure crisp, dynamic images that bring the world to people’s living rooms, in lively colors. For Barco, this project was an exceptionally successful cross-departmental job. For NRK an unbeatable solution that will surely help the broadcaster keep its edge in today’s competitive European broadcasting market.



Innovation is a core value at NRK, the Norwegian state-owned radio and television broadcasting company. Founded in 1933, NRK was one of the 23 founding members of the European Broadcasting Union in 1950. A resolute choice for innovation, in its broadest sense, made it Norway's largest media organization and amongst the most successful in Europe. Every day, 8 out of 10 Norwegians use NRK's program offering, whether on TV, the radio, the Internet or mobile phones. The programs are developed at NRK's headquarters in Oslo and Trondheim and in 12 more regional offices.

NRK's motto summarizes its mission: "Something for all. Always". To achieve that aim, the broadcaster continually invests in new and experimental programs and formats and puts new technologies to work. The makeover of "Dagsrevyen", NRK's main news show, fitted perfectly within that strategy. As part of that effort, news studio 5 was refurbished. However, the backdrop solution that was installed back then, in 2007, did not fully meet NRK's expectations. "Adapting to the color temperature in the studio reduces brightness by 50%," explained project manager Dag Gulbrandsen, "and the cube projectors were not bright enough to compensate for that. Besides, we disliked the gap between the cubes. We really needed a better-quality solution."

Room for rear projection

When the extra room next to the news studio became available, it opened the perspective for a rear-projection video wall to replace the cube solution. NRK submitted a tender, to which seven suppliers responded. VIDEO 4, Barco's broadcast distributor in the Norwegian market, best met NRK's requirements. "We wanted to use a black screen as a backdrop, which implied that the projector had to be exceptionally bright. The demos we saw at the Barco headquarters in Kuurne proved that Barco was up to that job," Gulbrandsen recalled.

CAD Wall meets FLM R20

The solution proposed - and its implementation - was a fine example of close cooperation between several Barco divisions and NRK. Gulbrandsen: "Our team first designed a special frame to put around the large 4m x 2.25m screen. Barco then fitted the glass CADWall into the frame and configured the projector. All within a very short timeframe." What made the project unique, was the combination of a CADWall, which is mostly used for Virtual and Augmented Reality solutions, and an FLM R20 projector, specifically designed for the rental and staging market. Grouping both solutions provides NRK with the accurate, vibrant colors, contrast and high resolution it was looking for.

Maximum light output

The secret behind the wall's uncompromised image quality is the Barco-patented stereoscopic filtering technology. In addition, Barco's super-flat glass screen technology maximizes the image quality, resulting in excellent contrast levels, wide viewing angles and no hot spots. The FLM R20, for its part, features a high contrast 3-chip DLP engine, has a true native HD (SXGA⁺) resolution, 20,000 center lumens and a contrast ratio of 1800:1.

Everyone is enthusiastic

With the new solution, there is no limit to the type of images, graphics, live feeds, etc. NRK can put up on the wall. "It is really a step-change difference. Everyone here in-house is happy with the result, from the Management, the newsreaders and the production team right thru' to the cameramen," Gulbrandsen highlighted. He illustrated this with a practical example: "The people who operate the cameras can now get much sharper images, because the screen brightness allows us to raise the lighting level in the studio." The main benefit, however, is the new viewing experience NRK can offer now, which is entirely in line with the broadcaster's mission to create value by informing, challenging and entertaining Norway.

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