



Broadcasting centre in London

Following the installation of MTG's multi-playout centre in Latvia, BCE was selected for the installation of their broadcasting centre in London. Modern Times Group (MTG), an international company which produces, buys and shows entertainment. With a presence in over 130 countries on television, radio and digital platforms, MTG is among the leading international broadcasters of channels with the largest coverage area in Europe.

With one of the largest content portfolios in the industry, MTG delivers high quality programmes to its viewers through free-TV channels in 11 countries and pay-TV platforms and packages in eight countries plus a number of thematic documentary and entertainment channels in over 140 countries.

In 2013, BCE was selected in a tender procedure for the installation of a new **playout centre** in London, a **post-production hub** and a **disaster recovery platform**.

Leveling their presence in Europe

The multicast infrastructure in Latvia led to a centralization of their activities in the Baltics. Working as the heart of the region it allowed synergies with MTG's other sites and became a single point of contact for the headquarters in Stockholm.

With the rapid growth of the company and an increasing number of channels, MTG's premises in London were getting too small and the technical infrastructure nearing obsolescence. As a result MTG decided to move from West Dray-

ton to a new and modern building in Chiswick, adjacent to the most active media hub in the London area.

Leveling the broadcasting centre with the one in Latvia, the new building would include a new post-production hub, playout centre, media management and storage hub along with a disaster recovery platform for the centre located in the Baltics.

Developing their footprint globally

The project was integrated within a

two year time-frame. Starting in March 2013 with the platform installation and finishing in March 2015 with the channels migration.

Integration and moving

For the first phase of the project, BCE's experts worked in London at both new and old MTG sites. On the one hand it was important to install the new 43 channel infrastructure in the new building and on the other hand to analyze and understand the actual channel workflow to ensure seamless migration.

Based on file-based workflows, the new broadcasting centre receives the content by satellite and IP. With an extended ingest platform, MTG can deal with any programme reception, including

"We are glad to contribute to the evolution of MTG activities, the new playout centre in London is an impressive project with advanced tapeless workflows and an intelligent doorway to new media and globalization" comments Tun Van Rijswijk, COO at BCE.

ad-hoc events such as live transmissions.

The heart of the workflow is built around the digital archive and two storage systems managed by a common Media Asset Management (MAM). The three items are interconnected with one another ensuring faster working times as well as content and programme availability for the whole site.

Comprised of the video and audio post-production suites as well as the ingest platform, the creative services work on the post-production storage. In order to deal with the post production of the content of MTG London's 43 channels, the creative services are working from 80 editing workstations and four audio suites, by

"Thanks to the perfect interconnection between the post-production storage, the playout storage and the archive, the team reactivity is much more effective and can answer to last minute playlist changes very close to the transmission" comments Patrick Bernard, head of technical services at BCE.

way of Apple workstations and adobe Premiere for the video editing suites and Pro tools for the audio editing suites.

Transmitting in both HD and SD, MTG broadcasts 43 free TV and pay TV channels with 29 regional advertising insertions. Fully connected to a Central Media-Grid, the playout centre is kitted out with a common transmission control room dealing with all the channels and five single closed control rooms dynamically assigned to the desired channel.

The complete operations and transmissions of the broadcasting centre are monitored in a master control room (Network Operations Centre).

"MTG's disaster recovery platform is now fully operational, working on two completely separated locations in Riga (Latvia) and in London (United Kingdom), with the mirroring of the content between both sites, it is the perfect configuration to ensure security of content and continuity of programmes" comments Claude Conter, Project Engineer at BCE.

Redundancy and recovery

Seamless operations are the priority to ensure the best experience for the MTG viewers. To do so, the playout servers are supported by backup servers and both pieces of hardware are constantly transmitting.

In addition, the centre has two extra broadcast channels to take the lead in case of breakdown of both main and backup servers of a channel.

As for the infrastructure in Latvia it

had a disaster recovery platform (DRP) for the channels broadcasted from London while BCE installed a DRP for the channels



Video router

broadcasted from the Baltics in MTG's broadcasting centre in London, completing the loop between both infrastructures. The London DRP has a capacity of eight channels to easily cover any situation.

Migration and launch

After the complete integration of their new premises, it was of the utmost importance to migrate the channels from the old to the new site.

During the migration phase the content was copied in the new digital archive and the two archives were perfectly synchronized between the two locations, avoiding any content loss.

The migration of the channels and the launch of the new ones took place during the last two weeks of March 2015. The Free TV channels' migration was organized during a four day-marathon with full support of BCE's operational experts in order to support MTG's team.

BCE's operational team stayed on site during the first stage of operations to train the teams and ensure transfer of knowledge. Following the channels' migration, the DRP for the Baltics channels was configured and launched. ■

"The migration was a great success; the transition to the new platform was seamless to our viewers and a great moment in MTG's history."

Rachel Bernard, Vice President of Broadcast Operations, MTG.