

Czech TV

The Challenge

Brno Television Studio produces daily news reports and bulletins for both regional and national broadcasts. Although the regional facility had already been using an Avid NewsCutter® non-linear news editing system for some time, the studio still relied heavily on linear videotape and paper systems. Media was ingested locally into the editing workstations, then recorded back to tape and taken to the other side of the building for playout. Metadata had to be entered, printed out and re-entered into all the various component systems in the workflow.

Czech TV is very proud of its policy to utilize the latest technology and knew that by moving to a tapeless environment it could increase productivity and efficiency, and ultimately reduce costs. The requirements for the playout server in Brno were simple, it had to be cost-effective, robust, and integrate easily with the Avid iNEWS® system being rolled out across the organization. Czech TV wanted to reduce its reliance on these inefficient transitions between acquisition, production, and playout.

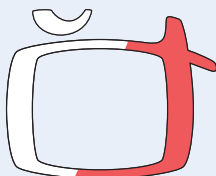
The Solution

Incoming material is now ingested into the Avid Unity™ (Lanshare EX) using Xdeck. The media is registered with MediaManager and then digitized and streamed directly into the Avid Unity media network. Alternatively, material can be ingested locally at the NewsCutter XP editing client via IEEE 1394. The central Unity media network has a fully mirrored 240 hours of storage at DV25. Using the Avid MediaBrowse™ timeline, users can mark in and out points and change the order of clips and then generate a broadcast quality version of a sequence. The NewsCutter edit system provides a comprehensive set of tools to the operator to allow a complete “package” to be finished, ready for transmission. The Omneon Spectrum media server is connected to the Unity media network via the Transfer Manager over Gigabit Ethernet. The Omneon TransferTool AO plug-in supports transfers of material between the Avid NewsCutters and the Omneon playout server. The plug-in becomes an invisible part of the editing workflow. Users can open the Omneon file system right in their NewsCutter editing bin and can easily export the final edit directly to the Omneon media server. Once an edited package is complete, the editor simply clicks the ‘Send to Playback’ command in the NewsCutter menu to send the media and metadata to the playout server.

News playout at Czech TV is under Avid iNEWS control. The Avid iNEWS newsroom computer system can create a playlist based on machine events within the body of the rundowns. This playlist is then downloaded to Avid iNEWS ControlAir automation-assist system, and continually updated based on any changes to the iNEWS rundown. Status messages are sent back to the iNEWS NRCS by the ControlAir server.

As opposed to an automation system, the Avid iNEWS ControlAir is an automation-assist system. A transmission running order is downloaded from the iNEWS NRCS to the ControlAir system whereby the play-list and associated transmission devices can be accessed and controlled from any ControlAir workstation. Users can “reserve” active play-lists, giving the user cue, take and cancel control over any device and in any order the operator chooses. Normally the order is dictated by the playlist and sequential operation and automatic cueing of following events is normal.

With the Omneon Spectrum media server it is possible to select output channels manually or use automatically assigned channels in the iNEWS rundown. ControlAir uses Device Manager software developed for each of the individually supported devices. Czech TV Brno uses the Louth DM to control the Omneon media server using the industry-standard VDCP



ČESKÁ TELEVIZE

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Founded in 1992 under the Czech Television Act, Czech TV is the public service broadcaster for the Czech Republic. It is primarily funded through a television license fee scheme – with commercial advertising limited to 1% of the total output – and broadcasts two channels 24-hours a day on both terrestrial and satellite. Czech TV’s regional studio in Brno integrated the Omneon Spectrum™ media server into its Avid-based news production environment which creates daily half-hour news reports and bulletins. The Omneon system provides a central shared-storage infrastructure for file-based workflows and enables fast time-to-air in Czech TV’s busy news production workflow.

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■ CASE STUDY

protocol. Two channels of the Omneon playout server are under the control of the iNEWS ControlAir system. Parallel Inscribe character generators are also under Avid iNEWS control. To simplify control of the Omneon server and Inscribe CG via iNEWS ControlAir system, Visual Connection, the systems integrator for this project, developed a custom-made control surface for this installation. This interface is much smaller than a standard "QWERTY" keyboard and liberates space in the production area.

Overall, the tight integration between the Avid newsroom systems and the Omneon transmission servers ensure a seamless ingest-edit-playout workflow.

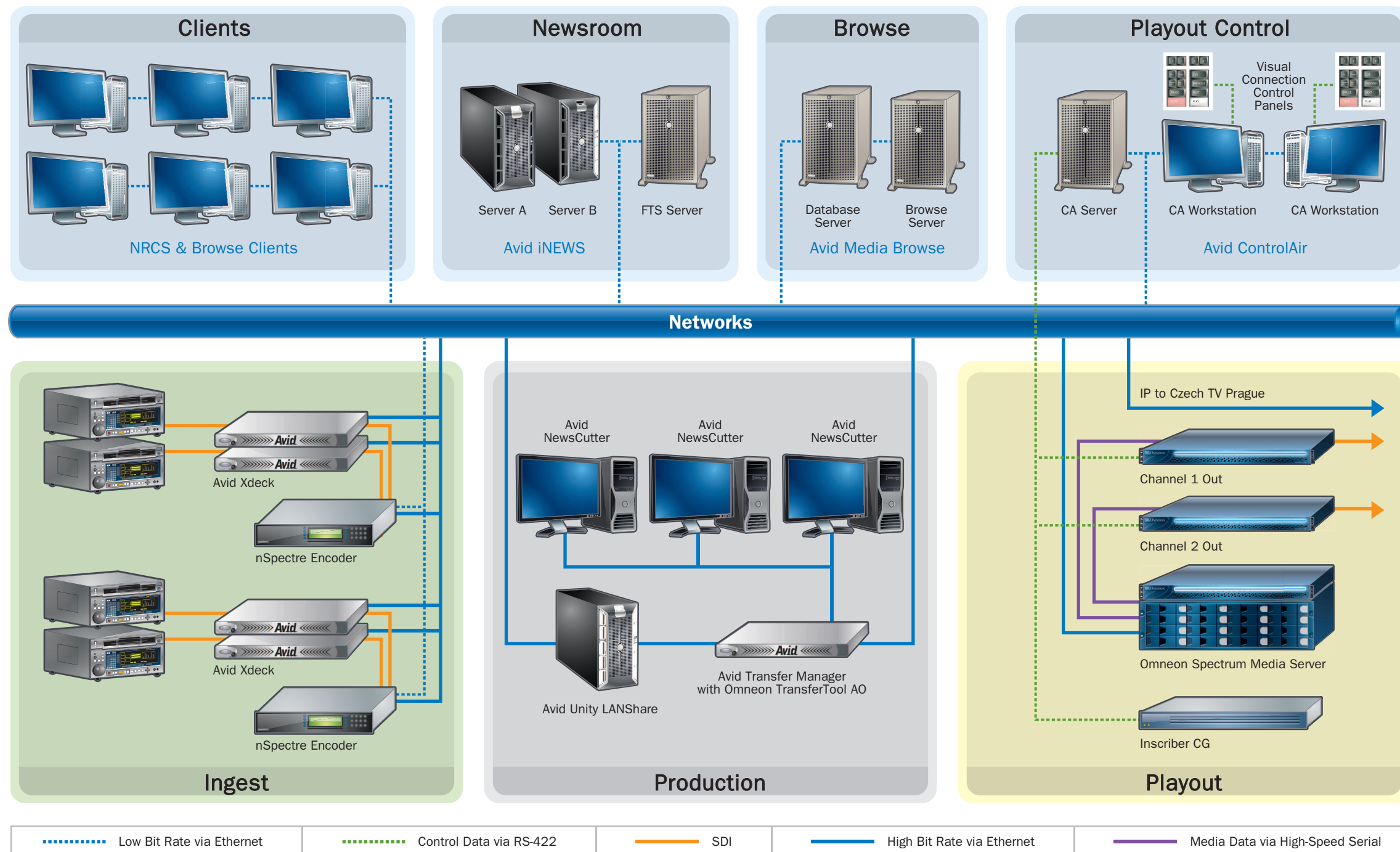
The Result

Czech TV chose Omneon Spectrum media servers for the project because the modular nature of the system allowed Visual Connections to specify a system that exactly matched Czech TV's requirements. "The modular structure of the Omneon system made it very

cost-effective, we weren't paying for options we didn't need," said Pavel Cermak, Czech Television chief engineer, "this allowed us to purchase a higher-specification system than the competition at the same price."

The ease with which the Omneon server has integrated into the Avid system had a dramatic effect on the time required for installation. "We installed the Omneon Spectrum in a very short timeframe," added Cermak. "In fact, in just a few months after placing the order, we were ready and able to go to air."

Similar facilities using alternative media servers have commented on the robustness of the Brno system, the ease with which files move through the system and the significant effect that this has on the overall productivity of the facility. "When planning this facility, we realized that we needed an end-to-end solution that would provide us with the fastest possible time to air for our news stories," continued Cermak. "Of all the solutions we evaluated, the Omneon product came out on top. It is cutting-edge technology that integrates extremely well with our other production systems."



Visual Connection

Visual Connection Ltd. specializes in the supply of equipment, services and complete solutions for the digital media industry. Operating primarily in the Czech and Slovak Republics, and often internationally, the company is focused on implementing solutions that complement the surrounding environment. A key to Visual Connection's success is its continuous customer support and friendly responsiveness. Customers often ask for an approach that is not standard, and Visual Connection is always willing to listen and provide support in these cases.

Avid iNEWS

Avid iNEWS is the news management system that provides journalists with all the tools necessary to plan, create, publish and archive a news broadcast from the desktop. With tight integration between newsroom system, editors and the Omneon Spectrum media server in a unified news production environment, Avid iNEWS products are the heart of television newsrooms all over the world.

Reading wires, writing scripts, and communicating instantly with others in the newsroom can all be performed with a single, coordinated system. A powerful built-in newscast rundown retrieves continuous feedback on every program's timing and event status and performs fast, drag-and drop rundown re-ordering. The effortless control, speed and reliability of Avid iNEWS enhances the newsroom with advanced machine control, the ability to store computer graphics with the script and the synchronicity of words with pictures inside both Avid NewsCutter and Media Browse.

Czech TV's production and playout environment takes advantage of the robust playout capability of an Omneon Spectrum media server and tight integration with a complete Avid production environment.

■ CASE STUDY

Smart Scalability™:

Redefining Flexibility Many server systems claim to be flexible, but when the time comes to add storage or new channels, getting what you need more than likely means exchanging hardware rather than adding to it – an expensive and disruptive process. Omneon Spectrum media servers are designed with Smart Scalability ensuring that your investment is always protected. Virtually every function of the system is independently scalable so you're never locked into a system that doesn't fit your needs. Because of Smart Scalability your initial system configuration precisely matches your requirements, grows in smart manageable increments as your needs change and can easily be added to or modified as new data, audio and video formats become available. In many cases these upgrades and additions can be performed on your system without taking it off the air.

An Open Platform for Today and Tomorrow

The Omneon Spectrum media server system leverages industry-standard formats and protocols to enable the broadest range of applications, giving broadcasters the freedom to choose best-of-breed applications for an end-to-end solution. With support for leading, well-known tools, operations staff can quickly begin to take advantage of a shared storage infrastructure. Departments can share files at the same time and deliver content directly from storage to the target applications without having to convert formats. For some applications media is manipulated directly on the server eliminating the need to move large content files over the network. The Omneon Spectrum media server's open platform approach protects investments even further by enabling broadcasters to easily add new services to an existing operation. Supporting both SD and HD broadcast formats enables broadcasters to deploy a media server for SD channels and add HD operations at any point in the future. HD channels can utilize an existing Omneon server and storage investment, eliminating duplicate storage costs and minimizing disruption to on-air operations. You want the most out of your investment with the least barriers and headaches – no other solution comes close.

Rock Solid Reliability

Media servers are complex and incorporate a huge number of both moving and nonmoving parts – all of which are susceptible to failure. The measure of reliability for a media server is not how rarely a component fails, but rather what happens to the overall system when a component does fail. Omneon Spectrum media server systems are designed specifically to eliminate all single points of potential failure. Omneon's built-in resiliency ensures that if a component fails for any reason, the overall system continues to function.



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