

Rack-front: view of the screen at a monitoring station

Monitoring news output in a fragmenting market

Guest Opinion

By Andy Nobbs,
President, Teletrax

The broadcast industry is in the midst of an evolution, brought about by the fragmentation of traditional media. Technological advances such as the introduction of new delivery and viewing platforms have caused the industry to experience rapid and dramatic transformation, changing the way audiences receive and gather information.

With broadcast content such as news video now accessible across a wide number of media channels and viewing platforms, the availability and amount of user-generated content is significantly increased. This growing number of options makes it progressively more difficult for organisations to keep track of their video.

Many industries are affected by the evolving media landscape, though news organisations face their own set of challenges brought on by the changing environment. Because there is such a large amount of content generated by the news industry, organisations need to have a sense of which stories are distributed to what specific affiliate stations, as well as what portion of each segment aired, or even if it aired at all.

In order to remain ahead of the competition, organisations need to embrace new technologies and services that can be used to their advantage. The news sector can benefit from deploying broadcast intelligence services that utilise digital watermarking technology as a means of monitoring and tracking broadcast video. Digital watermarks are imperceptible and indelible codes that are inserted into video, enabling the content owner to keep track of its whereabouts.

In the past, news organisations had no way of knowing how their broadcast inventory was used by clients, or if it was being used illegally by non-clients. They used air checks and surveys as a means of understanding who was using their news segments and packages, but could not identify what percentage of a client's newscast used their video. There was no way to tell if archive footage provided to clients was used once during a newscast or 20 times in a promotion. Business decisions and investments were made based on best judgments, rather than scientific evidence of proof-of-airing.

Broadcast monitoring solutions can solve these problems, and provide organisations with valuable media intelligence detailing how their video is being used, resulting in a better understanding of their clients' needs. They can determine exactly what news stories are being used, and as importantly, what stories are not being used.

Reuters intelligence

Reuters Television, a worldwide news service that provides video news reports to the world's leading broadcasters, had a need to receive timely information on usage of the news footage it supplied to broadcasters around the world to gain a better understanding of its served markets. With more than 80 locations globally, Reuters provides quality video coverage that powers newsrooms around the world.

It is crucial for an organisation of such size and calibre to take steps to ensure it operates in the most effective manner possible. Before the amount of video content processed by the organisation became unmanageable, Reuters decided to take action to keep track of its news stories and streamline the planning process.

Reuters called upon Teletrax to monitor and track news video dis-

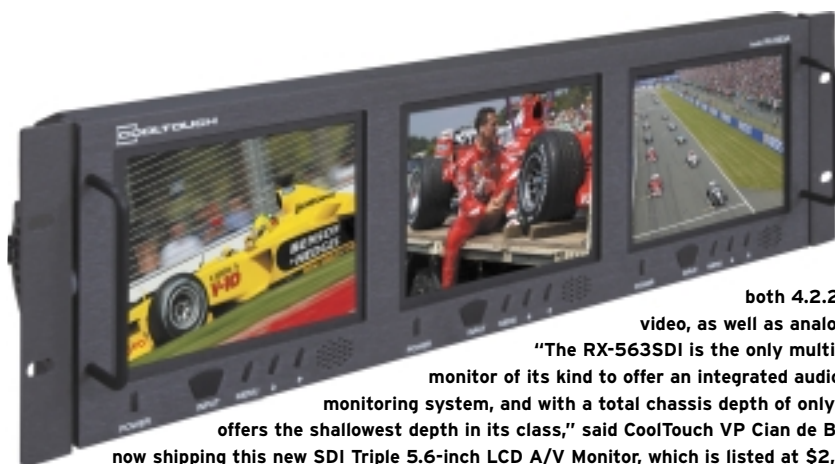
seminated to broadcasters around the world, and determine which news stories are used by specific broadcasters. The Teletrax service provides Reuters with scientific evidence of what broadcast content is aired, aiding in the planning of relevant news gathering and marketing initiatives.

Reuters uses the information received as a management decision tool, allowing the organisation to determine which types of stories generate the most interest in specific markets. The results are used as a marketing tool to fine-tune the planning process and determine the types of stories that should be fed to particular broadcasters, resulting in increased efficiency and greater return-on-investment.

Picture the following scenario. The Italians have a yearly celebratory tradition where hundreds of people gather to jump into the Tiber River in Rome. Traditionally, every year Reuters would allocate resources to produce a news segment on the ritual, telling the complete story of the tradition and background behind it, ending with footage of the participants jumping into the river.

Once the organisation starting using Teletrax, they found that their affiliates were editing the footage to exclude the background information and would concentrate on the more dramatic footage of youngsters jumping into the river. By using Teletrax, Reuters is able to determine which news stories are being used by their customers, as well as what portion of the video ran.

Media organisations that have a need to protect their assets and determine proof of airing should consider how digital watermarking technology could work to their advantage. Broadcast intelligence services are becoming an intrinsic part of the broadcast chain, and helping deliver increased revenue and improved return on investment.



Shallowest depth in class: CoolTouch Monitors, a private company based in California, has announced a new triple 5.6-inch rack-mounted LCD monitor. The RX-563SDI offers

both 4.2.2 SDI and composite video, as well as analogue audio inputs.

"The RX-563SDI is the only multiple screen SDI monitor of its kind to offer an integrated audio confidence

monitoring system, and with a total chassis depth of only 2.1-inch (53mm), it offers the shallowest depth in its class," said CoolTouch VP Cian de Buitléir. CoolTouch is now shipping this new SDI Triple 5.6-inch LCD A/V Monitor, which is listed at \$2,649 USD.

www.cooltouchmonitors.com