

The Workflow



Alongside three pedestal cameras, Steadicam plays a part in creating a different dimension for news

HD news to Denmark

Switching to HD allowed TV 2 opportunity to create a new on-air look and change working practices. **Philip Stevens** investigates what was involved

LOCATED JUST over 160km (100 miles) west of the Danish capital Copenhagen is the city of Odense. It is one of the oldest cities in the country and in 1988 celebrated its 1000th anniversary. In the same year, publicly owned TV 2 began nationwide broadcasting from the city, effectively ending the monopoly previously held by Danmarks Radio.

Today, TV 2 operates a main entertainment channel, plus others specifically catering for youth, the older audience and movie enthusiasts. There is also a 24-hour news channel based in Copenhagen. Alongside that 24/7 channel operation, there is a newsroom and studio in Odense that provides programmes for the main TV 2 channel. This operation is supplemented by eight autonomous regional stations, linked to the central newsroom via dedicated IP lines.

Earlier this year, a project to upgrade this news output to HD was completed by Danish Systems Integrator, Danmon Systems Group. "Our brief was to design,

integrate and bring into commission a 1920x1080 HD news studio at the Odense facility," explains Søren Bruun, operations manager at Danmon.

"This was a new build and involved a studio measuring 630sqm, which includes the main presentation sets at one end and the weather presentation area at the other. Sony provided the camera units, three of which are mounted on Vinten Radamec robotic pedestals, while a fourth is linked to a Steadicam system."

Accent on automation

Bruun says that choice of equipment frequently came down to good user experience in the past. "For that reason, TV 2 also opted for a Mosart automation system to support the daily news programme production. The initial system was installed in the 24-hour news channel facilities back in 2007, so this upgrade presented an opportunity to standardise on the equipment in Odense."



The new 11m videowall is illuminated by three Barco HDF-W26 projectors

The production of news programmes is co-ordinated within the newsroom via an LSB Virtual Studio Manager and Mosart news automation. This arrangement allows operators access to control panels,

interfaces and external devices by means of an IP infrastructure linked to a VSM-Studio server.

Kjeld Skovlund, TV 2's head of Development explains more. "When we

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were looking for an automation system, we chose Mosart because we could see from the way it is designed and the way that it worked, that it was made with producers in mind. Mosart uses a template-based structure that provides the security and predictability essential for our news service.

“Once those templates are set up for each of the scenarios we might face during a programme, you are guaranteed that everything — graphics, audio, video, DVEs and so on — will happen the way you expect each time. The Mosart system has been created with production workflow foremost — and is designed to help operators who work under pressure when they are live, on-air.”

Feeding the Mosart system is an iNews system. Other Avid solutions in place at TV 2 include ISIS 7000, Interplay PAM with Assist and Access. Avid NewsCutter XP is used for editing, which is carried out by journalist/producers at their desktops on news packages and by craft editors for more complex projects. Graphics are supplied by three VizRT systems that drive the full-screen, overlay, and studio monitor displays.

Managing manpower

Using the automated system allows for the possibility of reducing the number of gallery production staff. And in that connection, TV 2 has introduced new job functions in the form of producer and co-producer. Beyond that, the automation has allowed the gallery operation for regular news programmes to be situated in the newsroom itself.

“We have removed the need for directors, vision mixers, graphics people, tape operators and so on,” reports Michael Jensen, project manager for TV 2’s news department. “The producer sits in front of a three-screen display. The right hand screen shows the output of the graphics system or any other source we care to select to view.”

He goes on to explain that the middle screen shows the output of the studio cameras, the incoming feeds, the prompt, the programme timer and all the other images associated with a traditional gallery set up. He admits the multiviewers images are small — but that the producer is sitting close enough that size isn’t a problem. Immediately in front of the multiviewers is the Mosart console that replaces the normal vision mixer.

So, what happens if a live event in the news programme overruns? How does the producer take over from the automation?

“You can use the keyboard to cut between different sources, such as live signals, cameras, servers and so on. When cutting out of running order, the timing is instantly recalculated. We normally set up one Live item in the iNews rundown to allow for timing such situations, and then use the F10-F11 on the keyboard to go back to DVE setup and live sources,” says Jensen.

The third — left hand — screen shows the iNews system where the producer can follow the rundown and, if necessary



Up close and personal: testing Steadicam moves with dummy news presenter

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Kjeld Skovlund

make any script amendments. Jensen continues, “When we go on air we simply go to the centre keyboard and GUI and it all operates very simply. The producer can control all that happens during a show. If he or she decides to amend an item during the show, everyone is aware of that change, because everything is connected through the Mosart system. Furthermore, the system keeps the audio, video and graphics all in sync.”

Updating the look

The VizRT system is also employed to provide images to the new 11m videowall incorporated into the new studio. This videowall is illuminated by three Barco HDF-W26 projectors that provide blended back projection on a curved screen.

“Upgrading the TV 2 news service from standard definition to HD presented us with an opportunity to create a more visually attractive and versatile on-screen look,” states Skovlund. “Using the videowall provides numerous opportunities for many creative options for studio interview programmes as well as presenter-to-camera shots.”

He continues, “A number of options were considered before selecting Barco — plasma, fluorescent, LED and backlit LCD technologies. But in the end the image quality of the Barco, together with the brightness closely matching the studio lighting, led us to our choice. It is also very important for the news programmes that there are no visible transitions between screens in the videowall. The Barco solution provides the means to achieve this result, while creating a realistic background without receiving shadows from talent.”

Although the newsroom-based gallery operation works well for regular news

programmes, a more conventional control room linked to the news studio has been built for special events. “Again, there is an emphasis on equipment that has proved reliable in the past,” confirms Bruun. “This additional equipment includes a Grass Valley Kayenne vision mixer, two Studer Vista audio control desks, Miranda multiviewers, Gunterman & Drunk KVM systems, TC Electronic audio interfaces, Genelec stereo and surround-sound monitor loudspeakers,

Miranda glue, plus Omneon and EVS studio servers.”

He concludes, “The news operation of TV 2 continued without a break during the build and operator training was carried out without the regular output being affected.” **TVBE**

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