



THREE MEDIA ASSOCIATES

PRESS RELEASES

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Content Processing

Implementation, support and development of a content processing platform

The client

A blue-chip telecommunications company that provides a hosted content processing platform to broadcasters and content owners.

The brief

The client asked us to develop a detailed project plan, provide implementation support, and supply a management team for the global content processing and storage platform. Three Media Associates was selected due to our proven broadcast operations experience, familiarity with the requirements needed and our understanding of the changes involved to the customer in moving from a tape-based to a file-based platform.

What we delivered

This brief required Three Media Associates to provide a comprehensive support service, which included several elements:

- Customer requirements capture;
- Designing new workflows;
- The specification of solutions across multiple software and hardware vendors;
- Managing the launch, roll-out and on-going support of the platform to customer sites.

This required a combination of broadcast engineering and IT skills, to define and implement, complex file-based workflows and handling of MXF-wrapped content supplied by the customers. In addition to the operational work, Three Media Associates assisted the client in pre-sales preparation when the client bids for new projects. This has included rapidly building Proof-of-Concept platforms to demonstrate client workflows and metadata management processes.

We also advised the client on product strategy by defining system roadmaps and designing new functionality for the next generation of the platform.

Channel Launch

Channel Business Case

The client

A major (non-media) UK service facility.

The brief

The client was interested in evaluating options to launch a UK TV service including future expansion in terms of platforms and regions.

What we delivered

Using a combination of workshops, facility visits and secondary research we identified the most suitable range of technical and operational choices.

The assignment included:

- Evaluating the market potential for the intended service, including an analysis of any similar existing or previous services;
- Building a suitable service template, including a schedule for likely mix of acquired / own-origination / promotional content, repeat factors, branding, etc;
- Establishing the likely revenue sources and profile for the service;
- Proposing an appropriate technical platform;
- Establishing the right mix of operational support, in terms of third party service provision and in-house resourcing;
- Planning for a lead-in marketing campaign and on-going support from a website.

The deliverable consisted of a summary document covering the bullet points above, a formal report, a detailed / configurable Excel business plan and a presentation covering conclusions and next stages.

Channel Management

Replacement of channel management system

The client

A European multi-channel satellite and cable broadcaster that needed a new Channel Management System (CMS) to replace a bespoke application that had been in place for many years and was deeply embedded into existing workflow processes.

The brief

The CEO wanted a quick, no-nonsense procurement of a commercial off-the-shelf solution capable of extension to manage Pay Per View (PPV) and Video On Demand (VOD) requirements.

What we delivered

We provided project management and business analysis to gather business and IT requirements for a replacement CMS capable of non-linear scheduling as well as the Pay TV operator's traditional linear channels.

Based on the requirements, we wrote an RFP, identified a short-list of four suitable vendors and helped the client evaluate vendors.

To rationalise this process, we defined a formal scorecard that considered several relevant variables:

- Total Cost of Ownership (TCO);
- Standard functionality;
- Supplier resource capabilities;
- Application customisation and localisation requirements.

Based on our recommendations, our client chose a vendor and a replacement system which was successfully implemented six months later.

Multi-Project Programme

Multi-project programme for a play-out facility build

The client

A major pan-European content distribution and play-out uplink facility.

The brief

At the start of the project, the client's requirements were summarised as the following for a multi-lingual digital media content factory:

- Central broadcast play-out of up to 64 broadcast channels, each with up to 12 audio language tracks, up to 11 sub-title languages and up to 24 EPG languages;
- Mass scale language processing - up to 24 languages on any acquired programme;
- 12,000 hours new programming per annum - acquisition, scheduling, live production and play-out;
- Downlink / localisation & pass-through of non-client international channels;
- Centralised per-territory NVOD scheduling and content propagation;
- Cost-effective, scalable, flexible, reliable architecture;
- Localised distribution to hundreds of both digital & analogue cable-heads across Europe;
- Broadcast channels - relevant language extracted at every affiliate head-end;
- NVOD - Automated unmanned 72 channel remote content play-out per each cable head-end with multiple language audio, subtitle and EPG and including Dolby Digital AC3 Surround Sound.

What we delivered

Our team led the operational and technical launch of a suite of Pay TV channels across Europe over a period of 12 months. The launches coincided with the implementation of a new Channel Management System (CMS) and the change of play-out facilities. In addition to managing the launches, we were instrumental in training the broadcast operators in how to run the platform.

Reporting directly to the CTO, our team provided programme and project management, system integration and implementation resources as part of the set-up of a new play-out centre managing content in dozens of languages played out across Europe.

There were several different work streams being managed simultaneously, including Channel Management System, NVOD, Set Top Box (STB) Integration, EPG, and Audio / Subtitling.

Playout & Post-Production

Selection of new play-out and post production provider

The client

A major international media brand.

The brief

The client wanted a new type of services partner to deliver and support a post-production, play-out and content distribution to help drive its European brand expansion programme.

What we delivered

We established the client's key objectives for change and agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). We introduced the client to the potential of radical change, a collaborative style of working with the outsourced service provider. This concept identified the balance between immediate deliverables and continuous improvement where both parties to the contract had measurable rewards over time.

We captured our client's business, functional and technical requirements and developed these into a "Request for Integrated Services" that promoted partner-style thinking and evangelised new approaches to secure a successful win-win structure.

This resulted in a comprehensive procurement process including presentations, workshops, simulations, scoring and analysis, volumes and variations calculations. We mentored our client throughout the process and worked with key stakeholders to select a preferred service provider.

We also worked, with our client's approval, to mentor the candidate companies thus guarding against any misunderstanding of the requirements and expectations of the client. This approach secured mutual improvements throughout the selection process; enhancing sales pitches in terms of cost and quality, while identifying significant long term benefits to both parties.

This was a radical approach designed to promote a true relationship over traditional transactional negotiations where high expectations and optimism at the beginning slide to post-implementation disappointment and mutual recriminations.

Rights Management

Rights management system, business analysis and specification

The client

An international, market-leading sports and entertainment rights distribution company.

The brief

Our client's business is expanding rapidly through acquisition growth, and they required better mechanisms and management information to track international media rights.

What we delivered

We advised the sales and IT departments on how they could enhance their in-house rights management system to streamline processes and present sales people with an accurate view of content availability; based on owned rights and clearance issues.

Detailed proposals were submitted for system enhancements based on Agile User Stories. We also assisted the in-house IT department with the design of this functionality.

Technology & Service

Visionary technology and service offering development

The client

A blue-chip telecommunication company seeking to radically adapt its service offering to the media sector by securing early adopter market advantage.

The brief

This strategy was based upon the provision of a Digital Media Supply Chain environment that supported collaboration between multiple companies across the globe. The client defined a solution to include file-based, multi-platform, multi-format capabilities developed using Services Orientated Architecture (SOA) technologies.

What we delivered

We provided a team of technical and business experts to design and build a distributed content processing solution based on SOA principles.

The initial stage required the development of commercial requirement specifications. Once these requirements were agreed, the solution architects designed the abstraction / virtualisation layers that allow cross-vendor content processing servers to operate as an integrated farm. Three Media Associates then defined techniques to allow for the composition of generic Business Process Execution Language (BPEL) statements by end users to empower client companies to defined bespoke workflow processes.

After the initial design phase, the team worked closely with designers and architects from various software vendors to build a Proof-of-Concept platform. This involved holding design workshops to encourage rapid integration.

On completion of the Proof-of-Concept platform, we organised client workshops and brainstorming sessions to define, confirm and manage the project plans and development phases for the commercial roll-out of the solution.

Workflow Consultancy

File based workflow consultancy and business change management

The client

A major national commercial broadcaster.

The brief

The client wanted to move from a tape-based to a file-based operation and required assistance in designing new workflows across the business community.

What we delivered

Working to an agreed methodology, Three Media Associates executed an end-to-end operational audit. In addition to understanding current working practices, the engagement demanded influencing key stakeholders and evangelising the business benefits of file-based infrastructure to gain buy-in from the user community.

Once the audit was complete, we advised the senior business and operational management teams on the process changes required to move to a file-based operation. This included formulation of strategies for prioritising and implementing the work required to meet commercially driven milestones.