



NTM launches fourth channel using Vector MultiPlay

BROADCAST PERFORMANCE FOR AN ULTRA-IT ENVIRONMENT.

OVERVIEW

NTM is a Swedish media group that owns a number of newspapers, free circulars, web magazines, radio stations and since 2006, television stations. In 2010 its total annual turnover reached 176 M€ and it had 1200 employees.

Teknomedia is a production company that is wholly owned by the NTM group and has been in operation since 1998.

CHALLENGE

The NTM Group's board decided to branch into local television in 2005 and entrusted Teknomedia with implementing the project. The Group's goal was to attract viewers with relevant, local content, minimizing overheads with high levels of automation as well as the centralization of control and broadcast from their Norrköping facility.



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Erik Tilleby, General Manager of Teknomedia

Teknomedia developed the 24/7 NTM concept “TV when you have time” to fit modern media consumption habits, providing high-quality news, information, feature programmes, weather and advertising in 20-minute cycles, without programme repetition, 24 hours per day.

The solution required a robust and reliable playout automation system which could also handle all channel branding – graphics, transitions and effects. And since there were to be no technicians in Linköping or Uppsala, it needed to be capable of being controlled remotely from Norrköping. The playout system also required open architecture, enabling it to easily interface with existing in-house asset management software.

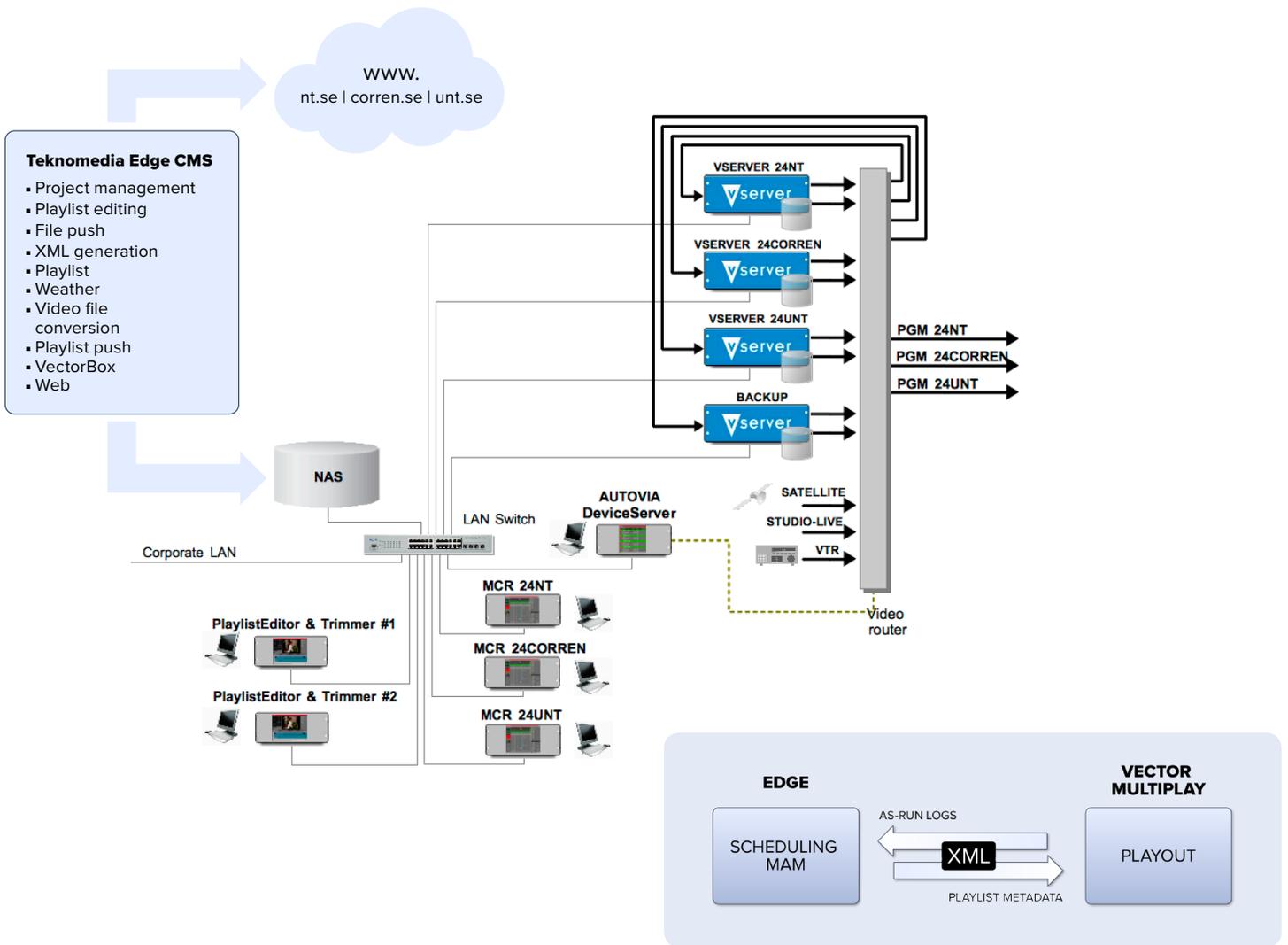
SOLUTION

Based on the above requirements and after a thorough research of the available solutions on the market, Teknomedia selected VectorBox as the all-in-one automated solution for the 2006 launch of their first local channel, NT24 in Norrköping. Vectorbox handled playout, graphics, tickers and transitions, avoiding the need for external mixers, graphics or logo generators. If successful, NTM and Teknomedia planned to roll out additional channels using the same model in other regions of Sweden.

“VectorBox was selected for its open, IT-based architecture, proven stability and flexibility and the ease with which the system could be administered,” said Erik Tilleby, General Manager of Teknomedia. “Price and the on-going development of the product were also factors.”

VectorBox enables NTM stations to air single or multiple-layer superimposed graphics which update dynamically and are linked to text and image sources via XML. Tickers are also updated in real-time with a continuous feed of XML and RSS data from both in-house and third-party sources.

One of the most critical factors in NTM's selection of VectorBox was its open architecture, enabling integration via XML with Teknomedia's in-house content management system “Edge.” Teknomedia developed Edge to manage NTM content across all NTM's distribution channels (newspapers, radio, Web). When the group branched into television, Teknomedia expanded Edge scheduling & as-



set management functionality to include the automatic generation of playlists and insertion of content into graphics templates.

Following the success of NT24, NTM expanded into other regions using the same model, launching 24 Corren in Linköping in 2008 and 24Norrbottnen in Luleå in 2008. Vector 3 technology was deployed for playout and channel branding in both sites.

In October 2010, Teknomedia launched new channel 24UNT, broadcast from NTM's central Norrköping facility, and at the same time centralised broadcast of 24Corren in Norrköping. 24Norrbottnen continued to have its own local Vectorbox playout system with two stand-alone units in Luleå.

With the move to a multichannel operation in Norrköping, NTM upgraded from VectorBox to Vector Multiplay, enabling shared redundancy. Videoservers & playlists are constantly monitored by MultiPlay's watchdog application, Autovia, which also provides

automated alerts and triggers remedial actions and failover where required. In Vector MultiPlay installations, all video assets & playlists are stored in a central NAS, allowing any server to play out any channel at any moment.

The Vector Multiplay upgrade and new channel launch were managed by local system integrator JMG Support AB and went according to schedule as did all previous installations.

BENEFITS

Vector 3 solutions, VectorBox and Vector MultiPlay, provide NTM with a complete solution for playout as well as graphics, transitions and tickers, avoiding the need for external mixers, graphics or logo generators and enabling both investment and staffing to be minimized. In operation at NTM since 2006, Vector 3 playout systems have proven stable, robust and reliable, and the ideal solution to automate NTM's innovative 24/7 local TV concept.

The open architecture of Vector 3's solutions and its native XML support enabled them to be easily integrated with the in-house scheduling and asset management software, Edge without the need for an API. Erik Tilleby commented "what I think is unusual about Vector 3 playout solutions is that the entire architecture is open and can be controlled directly through XML-formatted resource files. What we experienced when we integrated with VectorBox was how easily we were able to steer the system and get it to do what we wanted."

Thanks to the scalability of the solution, NTM have been able to easily roll out three additional channels in four years, without affecting existing channel broadcasts. And while broadcasts are currently in SD due to HD distribution limitations for local TV in Sweden, the solution is HD-ready. The 2010 upgrade to Vector Multiplay also enables dynamic redundancy management, maximising flexibility and further reducing costs.