

The Museum Channel

CASE STUDY



OVERVIEW

The Museum Channel brings the world's greatest collection of fine art — more than 500,000 pieces — into viewers' homes. Partnering with many of the world's most prestigious museums, including the Ermitage, Louvre, Galleria degli Uffizi, Tretyakov Gallery, Musée d'Orsay, Galleria Borghese, British Museum and many others, the HD channel features famous works by well-known artists including Kandinsky, da Vinci, Rembrandt, Monet and Botticelli. Original programming delves into the secrets behind these works, offers kid-friendly perspectives on art, explores gallery collections and market trends, and provides updates on what's happening across the art world today.

France's Secom media group makes The Museum Channel available to subscribers on pay-TV platforms and on connected devices, and the visual quality and continuity of programming is critical to the success of this service. To ensure the consistency and reliability of playout, the group undertook an upgrade of its channel-in-a-box (CIAB) playout solution supporting international and Russian feeds of The Museum Channel, as well as a third channel, My Nature TV.

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Vincent Charley,
chief operating officer at The Museum Channel

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

CHALLENGE:

With The Museum Channel, France's Secom media group brings the world's greatest collection of fine art into viewers' homes. In migrating to a more stable playout solution for its international and Russian HD feeds of The Museum Channel, and the landscape channel My Nature TV, the group, with partner Pixagility, the innovative French multiservice digital platform provider, required an economical and effective branded playout solution that could deliver the highest levels of quality and reliability.

SOLUTION:

The Museum Channel and Pixagility chose Harmonic's Spectrum™ MediaDeck integrated media server running embedded Polaris™ Play channel-in-a-box automation software, under the control of a Chyro™ web-based traffic system. With this solution, the two companies were able to integrate traffic, playlist management, internal automation and media management to face the demand for media delivered across new channels and platforms.

APPLICATIONS:

- Cloud-based scheduling and monitoring integration
- File ingest
- Automated branded multichannel playout

THE SOLUTION

To establish flexible, efficient and cost-effective playout for The Museum Channel, the Secom media group deployed the Harmonic Spectrum™ MediaDeck integrated media server and ChannelPort integrated channel playout systems along with the Harmonic Polaris™ Play channel-in-a-box automation software.

The Harmonic-powered playout system replaces more costly discrete CIAB systems that required more power and space. The Museum Channel was attracted to the Harmonic solution because of its support for four channels of branded HD playout in just 1 RU, as well as the ease with which it integrates with the Chyro™ traffic system used by the broadcaster. The Polaris Play embedded automation solution built into the Harmonic MediaDeck server system makes it easy to manage media movement from start to finish, without the cost and complexity of a third-party media management system.

The Museum Channel workflow is built on a cloud-based scheduling system and a set of media management tools from Chyro. The Museum Channel uploads media to cloud storage, and Pixagility automatically moves this content to an intermediate server installed at its facility along with the MediaDeck server system used for playout. Using a Chyro traffic system in the cloud, staff at The Museum Channel simply build and save the desired channel playlist. This playlist is exported by Chyro into Polaris Play, which collects media for the MediaDeck server as needed for playout. Operators using the Chyro system can remotely monitor Polaris Play as it executes the schedule and make changes to it as needed – all via the web.

Rich graphics capabilities, including the keying of multilayer motion graphics, DVE, and dynamic text over recorded or live video, eliminate the need for external graphics devices and support powerful channel branding capabilities, including independent branding of simulcast channels. Harmonic also provided a series of graphics templates that helped to speed the graphics creation process while ensuring a consistent look and feel for each channel.

“We were confident that a Harmonic solution could best meet our requirements while providing other compelling benefits, such as space savings and simplicity of operation,” added Charley, citing the group’s success using the Spectrum MediaDeck system, installed in 2009, to support local TV news channel Grand Lille TV.

THE RESULT

Secom’s use of Harmonic infrastructure for The Museum Channel’s multichannel operations takes advantage of the many cost and operational efficiencies delivered by the Spectrum server system, Polaris Play automation software and its integration with the Chyro cloud-based traffic system. In addition to providing integrated playout, graphic branding and automation in a compact 1-RU chassis, the Harmonic infrastructure enables the broadcaster to operate multiple HD channels with greater reliability and at a significantly lower cost per channel than with its previous playout solution.

With this infrastructure, the group delivers an international feed of The Museum Channel with French, English and Russian audio tracks; a Russian feed of The Museum Channel with Cyrillic script and a Russian audio track; and My Nature TV, a landscape channel. All of these channels are delivered from a single MediaDeck server system, and there is room to add a fourth service in the future, should The Museum Channel choose to do so. The highly automated workflow and tight integration of Harmonic and Chyro technology make it easy for operators to oversee scheduling, ingest, branding and playout of these HD broadcasts with the sophistication and continuity that viewers expect of visually rich fine arts programming.