SanLih E-Television (SET)

CASE STUDY

The Challenge

Taiwan's nationwide cable TV network SanLih E-Television (SET) needed to transition its tape-based operations to a more streamlined file-based production and playout workflow. To do so, the network required a scalable media storage and server platform that would guarantee highly efficient file-based operations from start to finish.

Solution

SET began its transition to tapeless operations with an initial investment in Harmonic media server systems, but the network's studio production and ingest operations continued to rely on costly tape-based media and an inefficient linear workflow requiring time-consuming transfers of media among systems. Taking advantage of the scalability and flexibility of Harmonic systems, SET extended its infrastructure by adding a comprehensive range of file-based production systems including Spectrum media servers, Harmonic MediaGrid shared storage, Media Application Server (MAS) media management, and ProMedia Carbon transcoders.

"We expanded our Harmonic production infrastructure because we needed a complete and stable firstclass video server and centralized storage system that would enable a highly efficient tapeless workflow," said Chiang Lo-Hsien, manager, Broadcast Engineering Department, at SET. "The turnkey solution we've put in place meets this requirement, providing the capacity and bandwidth we need for HD media access and nonlinear editing by many users."

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Manager,
Broadcast Engineering Department, SET

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

CHALLENGE:
Taiwan's SET cable TV network needed to transition from tape-based operations to a scalable and streamlined file-based production workflow. Solution: Harmonic's comprehensive range of integrated Spectrum™ media servers, Harmonic MediaGrid™ shared storage, Media Application Server™ asset management, and ProMedia™ Carbon transcoders eased the transition to tapeless production for SET.

APPLICATIONS:
· Ingest and transcoding
· Centralized shared storage
· Editing with Apple® Final Cut Pro®

BENEFITS:
· Immediate, simultaneous access to stored media
· Greater automation of media processing and movement
· Easy, efficient management of file-based assets
· Increased production speed and capacity
· Realization of more cost-effective file-based operations
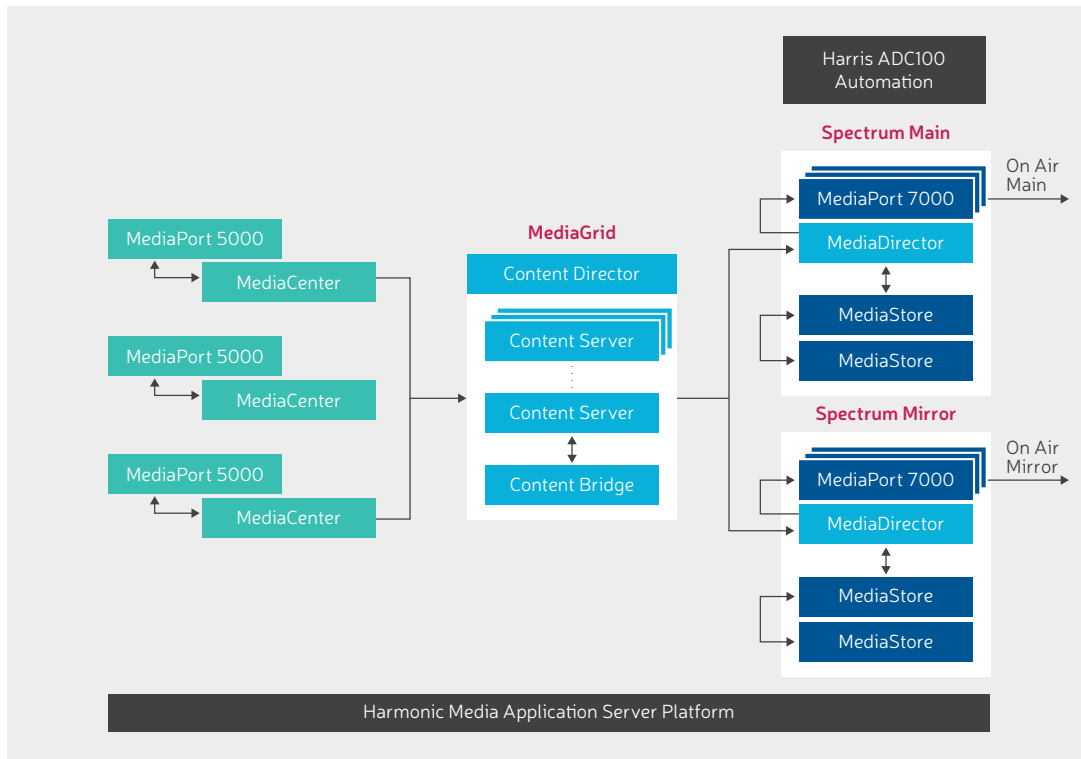
Workflow

From ingest through to playout of SET's seven broadcast channels, the Harmonic infrastructure ensures easy, efficient management of file-based assets. A Spectrum MediaCenter™ server with integrated storage is used by SET to facilitate ingest of media from tape. Digitized content is automatically moved by MAS and stored on the 432-TB MediaGrid system, which provides centralized shared storage for HD editing with 50 Apple® Final Cut Pro® nonlinear edit systems.

ProMedia Carbon nodes provide transcoding of edited content — SET's television dramas — from the post-production format (ProRes 422) to XDCAM HD (50 Mbps) prior to on-air playout via Spectrum video servers. The MAS media management system automates and simplifies the transfer, organization, and processing of files across the Harmonic systems and throughout SET's file-based production and playout workflow.

Because SET was able to keep the Harmonic systems up and running throughout the upgrade, they realized the benefits of a streamlined tapeless workflow without interrupting playout and other key operations.

Result

The successful installation of Harmonic media storage, server, and transcoding systems helped to make SET the first cable network in Taiwan running a completely tapeless, streamlined end-to-end workflow. Without relying on costly tapes and the extra manpower to operate them, SET has significantly reduced its capital and operating expenses. The systems' simple scalability will support additional expansion in accordance with the growth and evolution of the SET production and playout facility.