CGI

Integrating OpenMedia at MDR

CGI's OpenMedia optimizes the broadcast departments across MDR's Regional Broadcasting Centre radio and television studios in Thuringa, a member of the German ARD Group.

CGI's OpenMedia was introduced for the first time at MDR in the Thuringia State Broadcasting Centre in Erfurt. Erfurt was the first to incorporate OpenMedia for improved news production at five MDR locations, including the Saxony-Anhalt State Broadcasting Centre in Magdeburg, the Saxony State Broadcasting Centre in Dresden, and the Program Management Offices in Halle and Leipzig.

News production across stations can offer the potential for synergy in terms of content creation. For example, news reports are first written by a central news editorial office in order to be subsequently used across the various play out station channels. CGI was tasked with developing a uniform data model that best supported the various requirements for joint planning news production.

The challenge

MDR wanted to improve its cross-media outplay content for its TV, radio and online editorial departments. All of these departments were working more closely together in recent years to send out stories, highlight breaking news, and connect content across teams. They needed an easy-to-use solution for exchanging content across editorial offices and locations that was straightforward and did not require multiple systems.

This type of strong editorial network structure required a large number of interfaces for a wide variety of other systems, including radio production systems. CGI implemented dira, which encompasses the entire production workflow required for media management in radio journalism, as well as a bi-directional MOS interface.

Another project goal was the gradual replacement of the existing newsroom system infrastructure and the overhaul of MDR's own system for documenting copyright and royalty information. All inventory data was to be consolidated, merged and transferred to OpenMedia. In addition, parallel operational ability needed to be available for locations and editorial offices that had not yet been converted to OpenMedia, which would enable constant data exchange between Erfurt and the legacy systems at the other four locations.

The solution

Throughout the entire project, CGI worked in close cooperation with MDR. A data model was developed which, on one hand, does justice to the cross-media approach and, on the other, combines the previous multiple methods into one, easy-to-use central system dubbed the "ReSy." The ReSy system combines editorial topic and broadcast planning with the requirements for documentation (recording of fee information, copyrights, material lists) and more.

An essential feature of the data model was the operation of two differing terms: work and publication. To do justice to the different terms and definitions in the television, radio and online world, the creation of an editorial contribution is initially based on a "work," which is published or becomes a "publication" in the respective play out path. A distinction is made between the so-called "first publication" (first broadcast) and its repeat publication. A work can be published several times, i.e., repeated. Both work and publication always have a unique work or publication ID within the system. All publications of the same work are linked to each other via the common work ID. The relationships thus created form the basis for the correct documentation of royalty and copyright information, improving the management and tracking of multiple use of content.

At the first station, the MDR Broadcasting Centre in Erfurt, OpenMedia was initiated as a contemporary editorial system with central crossmedia scheduling and topic planning. System-wide searches can now be used to research, not only external sources, but also content from the entire MDR. During the second stage of the project at the NewsCenter Thuringia, CGI created the possibility of central news planning, covering all workflow steps, including topic planning, editorial preparation, and central provision of internal news reports for the entire MDR network.

A specially developed interface was used both to migrate data from the legacy systems to OpenMedia and to create the possibility of permanent data exchange, which will continue to enable the exchange of content between the "new" and "old" world in the future. The data is exported from the respective system in the form of XML files, transformed into the respective target format, and then imported into the target system and made available to all users.

In addition to the classic interfaces (agency input, teleprompter, integration graphic system, CMS system, and subtitling), numerous integrations of specialized web applications also were added through OpenMedia's ExternalTools feature. This new tool enables web applications to communicate with OpenMedia via a client-side API. With the help of this API, OpenMedia content can be read, created or edited, among other things, taking into account user-specific authorizations. Due to its web-based user interface, account holders are able to continue producing content, anytime, anywhere, as long as they have access to the internet; an important benefit for agility and business continuity in rapidly changing circumstances.

Thanks to the implementation of OpenMedia and the specially created ReSy system at five of MDR's Broadcasting Centres across Germany, MDR was able to completely revolutionize its broadcast editorial content play out and management across all of its radio and television studios, bringing complete synchronicity to all departments.

About CGI

Insights you can act on

Founded in 1976, CGI is among the largest IT and business consulting services firms in the world. Operating in hundreds of locations across the globe, CGI delivers end-to-end services and solutions, including strategic IT and business consulting, systems integration, managed IT and business process services and intellectual property solutions. CGI's Media Solutions offer a wide range of professional news and content delivery solutions for innovative media companies across local, national and international markets. This includes the market-leading flagship newsroom and radio delivery software product families OpenMedia and dira, serving many key players in broadcast and delivery.

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