

IN BRIEF

SONY TO HOST POWER OF IMAGES

Sony Professional Solutions & Middle East will showcase several new products in the Middle East this month including the SRW-9000 HDCAM SR camcorder; the PMW-EX1R; the PMW-350 shoulder-mounted solid state camcorder; the MVS-6000 multi-format video; the BRS-200 HD-DS video switcher; the Sonaps news production system and the ELC newsroom automation system. Sony will also hold special sessions titled "Beyond codec in the tapeless workflow", "3D technology" and "HD live production workflow" at the event, which will be held from December 16-17 in Dubai.

THOMSON REOPENS GV SALE TALKS

Thomson is holding "active discussions with a number of buyers" to sell Grassvalley, according to a source close to the deal. The Thomson Group is also looking to sell its PRN digital signage unit as it looks to focus on services for content creators including its set top box business and the Technicolour film processing business.

VITAL STATS

500 comedy episodes are aired across the MENA region every month - IPSOS

RADIO TUNISIA STREAMLINES WORKFLOW WITH NETIA

Radio Tunisienne Chaîne Internationale (RTCI) has installed NETIA's Radio-Assist digital audio software to streamline its broadcast workflow, from acquisition through playout, for its international radio programming. The end-to-end solution enables RTCI staff to record, edit, or prepare playlists from within a single application.

Marouane Gallah, technical director of RTCI commented that Radio-Assist "is a comprehensive broadcast system that provides all the functionality we need in a smart, highly automated workflow that speeds time-to-air."

"The software suite ensures efficient handling and management of content, simplifying our access to media, and providing staff the flexibility in creating radio programming and distribution to multiple platforms," he said.

RTCI uses a Radio-Assist system built on two servers and equipped with NETIA's DBShare to ensure the security and integrity of its stored media. DBShare ensures the stability of database contents, synchronising all databases automatically, and thus providing automatic, transparent redundancy and automatic database restoration, in the event of any incident.

The broadcaster also fitted out two on-air studios with NETIA's Air-DDO broadcast module and added a third station to support automatic playout of night-time programming.

The Air-DDO graphical user interface displays the broadcast channel along with help and prepa-



Radio-Assist enables RTCI staff to undertake all their work from a single application.

ration tools for cueing, on-air monitoring, playlist modification, recording, and production. Directly linked to the scheduling workstations, Air-DDO keeps track of the latest changes made to the playlist in real-time and automatically displays the refreshed playlist data.

The project includes two production workstations dedicated to acquisition and editing.

Three additional workstations support music scheduling, advertising scheduling, and recording of phone inserts while a fourth enables journalists to call in and trigger recording using a security code.

RTCI has also installed Radio-Assist workstations for logging, streaming, and internet broadcasting using NETIA's Air-Push and dispatcher.

MTV AND TWOFOUR54 COME TOGETHER FOR COMEDY

MTV Networks International (MTVNI) and twofour54 have confirmed a new deal to establish an Arab comedy content production studio under the Comedy Central brand. Based within twofour54's content production precinct, Comedy Central Studios Arabia will produce local comedy programming, Arabised versions of existing Comedy Central staples and dubbed versions of existing Western content.

The organisation will also use the production, post production and broadcast facilities at twofour54 intaj.

Twofour54 CEO Tony Orsten said the new initiative would provide Arab comedians and comedy producers with an unprecedented opportunity.

"From individual stand-up talent right through to major comic productions, Comedy Central Studios Arabia will provide an opportunity for Arabic comics and comedy programming talent that simply never existed before," he said.

IMAGINATION AND PARTNERS ARE STREET DANCING

Imagination Abu Dhabi and partners Hyde Park Entertainment Group and Singapore's Media Development Authority (MDA), joined forces with songwriter/producer Dave Stewart to produce *Street Dancing*, a story set in the world of a cutting-edge dance competition in Singapore and New York. Music for the film will be provided by Stewart along with Oscar-winning composer A.R. Rahman.

Ashok Amritraj, chairman of Hyde Park Entertainment Group commented that this "pop-cross-cultural project is an organic match for continuing our partnerships between Hollywood, the Middle East and Asia, and gives us the ability to explore the exciting new distribution format of mobile technology." Imagination Abu Dhabi CEO Edward Borgerding added that the project is ideal "to commence our partnership with Hyde Park and the MDA".