

Since the creation of L'Équipe TV sports news channel 11 years ago, it has relied on the same operating system and model for its archiving operations. Until recently that system satisfied its requirements and supported the channel's development. But as it began to reflect on its current and future needs, it became evident that the substantial growth in media-handling workflows would require a more robust and sophisticated media asset management solution. **Benjamin Harquevaux**, communication manager at L'Équipe TV, reports.

Archiving solution for L'Équipe 24/24

L'Équipe 24/24 manages new media for L'Équipe TV, for the website L'Équipe.fr, and for the RTL-L'Équipe digital radio station. As the leading French sports news media company we have a collection of more than 10,000 videotapes, as well as still images and newspaper and magazine articles that document a variety of sporting events dating back to 1920. To address the expanding production

needs of our broadcast channel and L'Équipe Web and radio outlets, L'Équipe 24/24 chose to upgrade the media management system for all these business areas by implementing a powerful yet simple tool that not only enables archivists to enrich content with metadata, but also provides journalists with an intuitive and consistent interface for image, text, and video searches. The Netia Manreo Hypercast Warehouse system met these needs fully, and the solution was integrated into our facility with the assistance of Brussels-based systems integration and engineering firm STP, which carried out the study, design, architecture, and support required for the project.

The specific goal of this project was to establish an accurate, streamlined system for sharing content among the TV, radio, Web, and new media outlets that coexist within L'Équipe 24/24. For our broadcast operations, we earlier relied on a customised version of Lotus Notes specially

developed in 1998 to manage a collaborative database. We supplemented this with workflow tools for broadcast production - monitoring, selecting, and copying videos and tape, mixed with documentary references - through a MAM associated with our production system. However, as our workflow grew more dense and demanding, this aging solution was no longer adequate for our operations and failed to support the extensive search capabilities we knew to be critical in effective media handling. In upgrading our facility to meet the demands of today's multimedia and multiplatform environment, we also knew the importance of choosing a media asset management system that could interface smoothly with our production tools through an intuitive and ergonomic interface.

The flexibility and high interoperability of the Netia MAM platform have allowed us to establish an archiving and repurposing



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workflow tailored to the demands of multimedia operations. Manreo's open, scalable architecture enabled integration with other best-of-breed solutions to meet our specific functional and operational needs. Thus, with unique capabilities in capturing and enriching media, Manreo supports sophisticated archiving and repurposing workflows with a minimum of complexity.

The solution we have deployed integrates Netia's Manreo MAM system with the powerful Sinequa search engine to provide a smart system for identifying, locating, and retrieving media and information. Netia's workflow engine automates the workflow that supports the exchange of media between a Quantel editing platform and the Hypercast Warehouse archiving system. As a result, journalists and freelance staff across L'Équipe 24/24 can perform clip editing and archiving through a simple Web-based interface requiring negligible training time. Direct access to media from the desktop adds further convenience and efficiency to this workflow, especially when working remotely.

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About L'Équipe 24/24

L'Équipe 24/24 is a wholly owned subsidiary of L'Équipe in charge of developing and managing new media. L'Équipe 24/24 is the leading multimedia platform in France with a combined audience of more than 11 million people per month. L'Équipe 24/24 publishes L'Équipe TV sports news channel; the Web sites L'Équipe.fr, Francefootball.fr, L'Équipemag.fr, Velomagazine.fr, and L'Équipeauto.fr; the mobile and iPhone Web sites; applications L'Équipe.fr and France Football.fr; and the RTL-L'Équipe digital radio station. L'Équipe itself is a subsidiary of the AMAURY Group.

and storage applications to manage audio, video, and images in all file formats (MXF, XDCAM, MPEG-2, MPEG-4, WMV, etc.). Because Manreo supports the MXF file format and OpenCube MXF Toolkit, we are able to maximise the exchange of media and metadata between the software system and other third-party systems, not just for now, but as video formats and production workflows evolve.

Manreo also includes the Netia workflow engine, which makes it easy for users to configure and automate different workflows simply by defining one or several sequential actions. By automating all of the powerful archiving features found within Hypercast Warehouse, the workflow engine streamlines workflow, saves time, and prevents human error. Netia also worked with us and with STP to build and maintain documentary records from our traffic system, and to establish a dynamic model in which video located on a storage server can be made available to a production server for editing and broadcast.

As we bring video into our archives, Manreo Hypercast Warehouse automates the ingest of media and acquisition of associated metadata from editing, news, and automation systems. The Netia software system generates low-resolution proxy versions of media for efficient retrieval and browsing and also enables easy access to high-resolution media, not only reducing the potential for error, but also making it easy for our staff to add valuable metadata.

The Web-based interface of Netia's Manreo software system provides tools vital to the cataloging and indexing of media. The electronic equivalent of a catalogue card is created to provide a detailed description of video content, which in turn may be enriched with supplemental metadata. Built-in tools help staff to identify and address

management rights issues for each piece of media. Staff can segment video manually or rely on the software's shot-detection, image-recognition, and speech-to-text tools to automate this process.

The ability to enrich media more efficiently is complemented by our much greater capacity, with the combination of Hypercast Warehouse and Sinequa, to locate and view stored media. A broad range of customisable search options and tailored navigation interfaces leverage our expansive and growing metadata store to give editors and journalists flexibility in locating media. These capabilities have enabled us to optimise our production workflow and realise significant time savings - a very valuable achievement in improving productivity, the quality of broadcast content, and profitability in delivering timely sports news content via one or more platforms.

The adaptation of our staff to working the Manreo system has been remarkably straightforward, and the overall response of staff to the upgrade and software system has been positive. The Netia system is both simple and intuitive, and Netia provided archivists and journalists with extensive training, monitoring, and education to help ensure a smooth transition and enable us to see gains in flexibility, time, and efficiency in completing daily work.

Netia proved to be very responsive in meeting our needs, and the media asset management system we now have in place assimilates the many tasks involved in the rapid creation of sports news media for air or other distribution channels. As a highly interoperable, flexible, and scalable solution, Netia's Manreo allowed us to optimise and streamline the handling of a significant volume of media and data on an ongoing basis.

