schnee von morgen webTV GmbH

Innovative content provider uses the Adobe® Flash® Platform to pioneer the delivery of rich video content to web-enabled TVs

Bringing television to the web

Just a few years ago, the business model of schnee von morgen webTV would have been unthinkable. Commissioned by Alexander Kluge, the former “TV Man” Nikolai Longolius developed a 24-hour web TV format. Interviews and documentaries are streamed around the clock on dctp.tv, coupled with synchronized links to background information, all funded by traditional commercial breaks.

“I believe the Internet has what it takes to be a viable, lean-back medium. It all comes down to the quality of content,” says Longolius, general manager of schnee von morgen. According to the judges of the Lead Award, who awarded the coveted prize to dctp.tv in March 2010, the quality is there already.

The new system runs so well that Longolius is continuing to expand its use in other areas. Recently, Handelsblatt Online, a leading German online newspaper, chose a video player from schnee von morgen for its content delivery system.

Longolius estimates the schnee von morgen solution reduces costs associated with computer hardware, software, and maintenance by as much as 80% by relying on an Amazon Cloud Service for both the transcoding and delivery of video streams that leverage the Adobe Flash Platform. “If a new codec is announced tomorrow, we can quickly bring 1,000 computers online to transcode our existing materials in a few hours,” he says.

A leader in content delivery

Longolius and his company chose the Adobe Flash Platform because of its flexibility, functionality, and cross-platform performance. Already installed on 98% of the world’s Internet-connected computers, the Adobe Flash Player—part of the Adobe Flash Platform—has been established as the leader in video and rich content delivery worldwide. For an advertising-funded business model such as dctp.tv, reaching a wide audience is essential to the company’s success. The Adobe Flash Platform provides an open and easily accessible playback environment that enables users to view rich content without downloading additional software or hardware.

For Longolius and his team, the value of the Adobe solution is clear. “The Adobe Flash Platform is the undisputed leader, both in terms of availability, as well as the quality of the development environment. For us, as professional providers with high quality standards, there is no alternative,” he says.

Today Longolius prefers the Adobe Flash Platform to other solutions. Longolius believes that the future of web TV will depend on delivering content seamlessly to the large flat screen TVs in living rooms around the world. And, like with standard PCs and laptops, Adobe solutions will lead the way.

“Adobe Flash technology is clearly the standard when it comes to the appearance on desktop PCs and laptops,” says Longolius. “With Adobe Flash Player 10.1, it could evolve to become the standard on smartphones and other platforms as well.”
schnee von morgen uses the Adobe Flash Platform to deliver high-quality live and on-demand video content, such as movies and documentaries, to web-enabled televisions.

“The Adobe Flash Platform is the undisputed leader, both in terms of availability, as well as the quality of the development environment. For us, as professional providers with high quality standards, there is no alternative.”

Nikolai Longolius
General manager, schnee von morgen

Innovative video workflow

schnee von morgen uses the Adobe Flash Platform for its front end and developed the first versions of the dctp.tv application with Adobe Flex Builder. Today, Adobe Flash Builder is used in a number of front-end interfaces. The most extensive work is the transcoding of the video materials which are delivered by dctp.tv.

Instead of undertaking this process on his own, Longolius leases computers from Amazon Web Services. Because the computers are rarely needed, and only in concentrated spurts, schnee von morgen saves on idle time costs. When a new video codec comes into play, it is stored on the Amazon computers and available for use in all future instances. The computer use per hour cost 12 cents.

Longolius calls the system “Elastic Cloud” because it is capable of quickly reacting to both changing qualitative and quantitative demands. The Amazon solution logs the completed encoded files directly into the file management system IVMS and enables editors to provide any additional information necessary.

From there, video content is delivered via Adobe Flash Media Server, which leverages multi-bitrate streaming video to automatically optimize content to match a user’s connection speed and provide an outstanding viewing experience, regardless of the device or connection speed. Adobe Flash Media Server provides instant access to the company’s extensive archive of video content, enabling users to select and view the content they want on demand, with little effort.

Longolius expects that advertising-funded online television will secure a place in the media mix moving forward, with Adobe solutions providing innovative ways to deliver high-quality content more efficiently, more cost effectively, and to a wider audience.