



For Immediate Release

aQ continues to demonstrate fast-paced, customer-driven feature expansion in its aVS product range

Canadian, Italian and UK broadcasters benefit from aQ's rapid and responsive development approach, resulting in improved workflows and third-party integrations

Thames Valley, UK. 8th April 2018 – aQ Broadcast Limited, which provides an integrated range of newsroom, scripting, automation and media management software alongside video server and production hardware, has announced a range of developments for recent customer projects which reinforce the flexibility of its video server range.

aQ extended its customer base over the last six months, not only across four continents but also in a range of environments. Projects in North America, Europe, Africa and Australasia involved a mix of applications, including studio playout, live production, transmission playout, feed recording and encoding/streaming, for customers including broadcasters, facilities companies and a government department. In each case, aQ provided a tailored solution, by configuration or with specific development, to meet the precise project requirements.

A broadcaster in Italy required flexible record and playback functionality with an intuitive and easy-to-use control interface, as different operators would be using the system at different times. There were specific requirements to be able to exchange content with an existing Networked Attached Storage (NAS) unit and to playback content from USB drives. aQ added new custom User Interface (UI) plugins to allow clips to be dragged-and-dropped to / from the third-party storage, and also to be able to play content directly from a locally-connected USB device, without having to transfer files beforehand.

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An Alberta-based Canadian broadcaster wanted a flexible solution for feed recording and studio playback, supporting both its own playlist and sequence playback handling and also direct integration via MOS to a NRCS to be added in the future. A particular feature – to emit black instead of a freeze during playlist playout – was added at the customer's request. Integration with legacy systems was also critical, so aQ added playback support for GXF files and metadata exchange with Adobe Premiere.

An Australian broadcaster needed a recording system for incoming feeds, with a particular focus on automatic operation and fault management. aQ extended the record scheduling capabilities and added extensive input, source and schedule monitoring and alerting, including, for instance, the ability to send a warning email in the event that an incoming video signal is lost.

Neil Hutchins, aQ Broadcast CEO, commented "it has always been extremely important to us that we provide features and functions that meet the precise requirements for each unique environment. Our philosophy of fast and responsive customer-focussed development means that our products should always exceed expectations for a project."

New development work has also been carried out for existing operations, including significant updates for a group of fifteen UK broadcast channels. This includes the ability to conform a new single clip from individual elements of a transmission schedule (including sub-events such as graphics, transitions, etc.) and then upload it to a social media platform, and also functionality to allow a portion of the schedule to be previewed from a remote location. A mechanism to collect and display traffic, travel and weather data automatically has been added, and handling of Electronic Programme Guide (EPG) data has been extended, including the introduction of email delivery alerts. Support for Wide Area Network (WAN) operations has been extended, with improvements to the automatic transfer of content and the introduction of a new 'Base Station' server, in addition to the existing 'Network Gateway', to provide even greater flexibility in distributed operations. A third level of preview quality has been added, allowing any internal or external video source to be checked in low, medium and high quality from any location across the network.

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New features and functions have been added for other existing customers, including a US-based shopping channel and a Canadian broadcaster. These include dip-to-black transitions in both transmission and sequence playout, the ability to conform a new clip from a sequence list, extended clip conform handling to produce a single file from multiple sources (e.g. video background alpha key plus fill or video plus captions), improved handling for h.264, MPEG-TS and MPEG-PS and new user rights handling (e.g. to prevent unauthorised deletion of media).

Neil Hutchins added, “It is important that we don’t just focus on new customers – we must also ensure that existing systems evolve to meet changing demands within their own environments.”

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About aQ Broadcast:

aQ Broadcast Limited was established in 2013 after a management buyout of the workflow division of Autocue and is now the only British company to design, develop, manufacture and support an integrated range of scripting, newsroom, automation and media management software alongside video server and production hardware. aQ Broadcast is headquartered in the Thames Valley, UK, with offices across the UK, in Charlotte NC, USA and in Auckland, New Zealand.

aQ Broadcast will be exhibiting at NAB 2018 – South Lower hall, SL5025a, as part of the UK pavilion

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