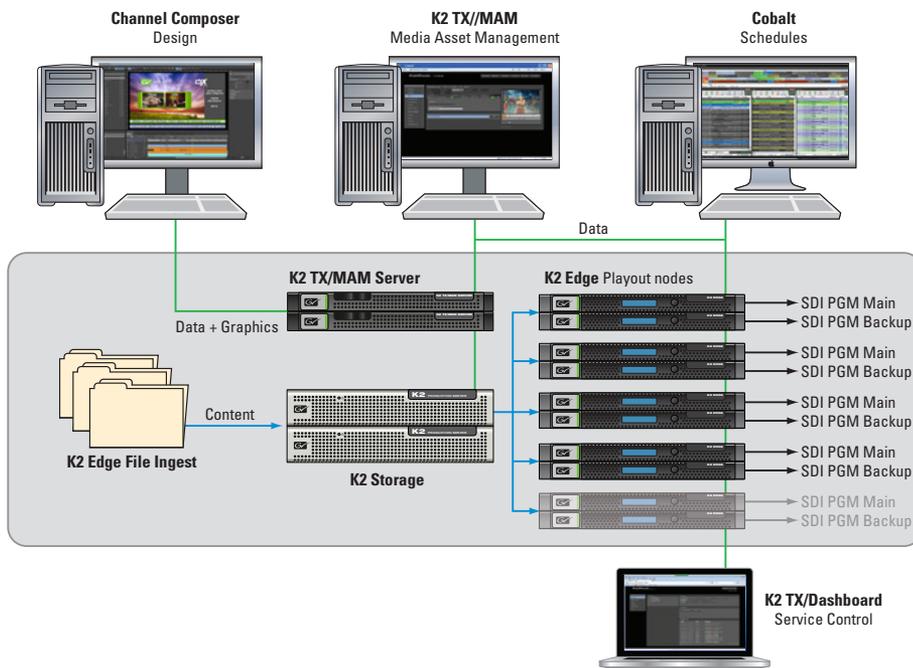


SMART PLAYOUT CENTER

SOLUTIONS BRIEF



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Up until now, the choice for playout implementations has been mostly either standard PCs with cards, or complex collections of many devices from different providers. Grass Valley® considered the challenges and complexities of media playout and realized that broadcasters and other multichannel service providers deserved a simpler and more cost-effective solution, something that provided advanced level performance and capabilities that would help them stay competitive. The Smart Playout Center™ integrated playout system offers a better alternative for well-managed, consolidated delivery of on-air content. Smart Playout Center is simply a smarter way of doing business.

OVERVIEW

Smart Playout Center is a sophisticated and integrated playout solution. Perfect for cable and satellite originators, and medium to large central broadcasters, Smart Playout Center combines advanced playout capabilities in a distributed architecture with centralized asset management and advanced graphics management. It makes better use of existing infrastructure and blends into existing workflows to deliver a reliable and high-quality solution.

All Smart Playout Center software and hardware components are designed to seamlessly work together to enable streamlined, efficient operation. It features a file-based implementation over standard networking for the ingest, transfer, and efficient management of media files as well as secondary media such as subtitles, voiceovers, and branding.

Smart Playout Center uniquely fits the needs of broadcasters requiring a high level of automated playout requirements, including thematic channels like music, cartoons, or movies. It is highly beneficial when the requirements include additional functionality with graphics, other media, and metadata. Some typical applications include multi-channel playout facilities, separate disaster recovery installations, lower cost secondary channels, and remote channel implementations.

Smart Playout Center includes the ability for sophisticated graphics looks and layouts. There is an offline channel branding design software tool, permitting creative artists to build the channel look rather than being dependent on technical considerations. This obviates the need for traditional legacy graphics devices and operators. This graphics implementation offers unparalleled integration with playout management and media asset management.

A robust and proven distributed playout system—based on optimized IT architecture and infrastructure—Smart Playout Center uses an overall purpose-built architecture. It provides modular scalability to support multi-channel high-resiliency playout, and offers a redundant architecture for high availability.

BENEFITS

The fundamental approach to Smart Playout Center is to offer powerful systemization that combines playout nodes, playlist management, media asset management, and graphics management in a single cohesive implementation with numerous advantages:

- Greater functionality
- Less equipment
- Less power required
- Reduced heat generation
- Shorter project deployment
- Lower cost of ownership
- A single supplier who is in control
- Professional implementation services

TRENDS

Content is increasingly being acquired, managed, modified, transferred, and played out as digital files. By working digitally, production processes can occur in parallel thus producing additional efficiencies. It is also more conducive to utilize software tools to manage various workflows.

Across the broadcast spectrum, there is a trending need to cost-effectively deliver content in various formats for use on multiple platforms, including nonlinear formats such as mobile devices and Internet-connected television. Further, additional distribution channels are showing only nominal incremental revenues, so a unified approach to acquiring, managing, packaging, and delivering content is needed to achieve desired return on investment.

Competitive responsiveness is not a new trend, but one that is shifting with a more-connected industry. Broadcasters now need to be able to integrate secondary media (graphics, audio, captions, etc.) along with metadata to reuse and repurpose their content for emerging revenue streams. It is also necessary to have an environment that provides the means to scale, upgrade, and add capabilities and services. For any playout solution, it is essential to integrate with systems such as traffic, asset management, and archive.

CHALLENGES

Channels – The demand for more channels, typically serving niche markets, translates to limited or no revenue growth. Therefore, costs to launch and operate these channels must be closely managed. Well integrated systems that automate processes and deliver workflow efficiencies can provide a valuable solution.

Distribution – While growth is being seen in over-the-top (OTT), online, and connected television, short-term revenues are limited. Additionally, alternative content delivery methods can be offered from other media aggregators and distributors, increasing competition. For broadcasters to expand their reach, media aggregation and distribution must be done in a cost-effective manner that simultaneously manages linear channels and nonlinear distribution.

Technology – On-going changes present a unique challenge. More file-based processes and multiformat delivery increase the need for playout solutions that streamline workflows. The demand to lower both capital and operational expenditures means solutions are needed that improve agility, reduce risk, and increase reliability.

IMPACT

- Capital costs can be reduced by having a smaller number of system components, easy integration with facility infrastructure, and APIs to facilitate customization of deployments.
- Efficiency and productivity is increased by enabling workflows that use automated processes including additional value-add services using various secondary media types.
- With incrementally small costs to add capabilities, revenues over time increase through cost effective system expansion to increase count, capacity, and services with a scalable architecture.
- Operational risks are reduced by utilizing purpose built devices and optimized applications that incorporate redundancy so that incidents of no content or incorrect content are not a concern.
- Cost of ownership is reduced by using Grass Valley support services which are based on extensive expertise and result in lower support costs over the lifetime of the system.
- The operational costs to create and deliver sophisticated on-air looks are lowered by the use of common graphic elements, tools, and designs laid out in templates and packages, that are automated with the integrated asset management and playlist management systems.

ABOUT GRASS VALLEY

For more than 50 years, the Grass Valley name has been synonymous with innovation, leadership, and performance. Our full range of solutions and services is unmatched in the industry, leveraging the economies of scale of the IT industry with our proprietary core knowledge of media processing and storage. Grass Valley customers include most of the world's leading broadcasters, teleproduction facilities, and service providers, as well as independent video professionals who rely on our products to cover the world's most high-profile live events, as well as to

benefit from efficiencies in day-to-day operations. When you're watching news, sports, or entertainment programming—whether on a TV, the web, or a mobile device—you're watching Grass Valley at work in today's connected world.

For information about Grass Valley solutions and services, please visit: www.grassvalley.com.

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