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USER REPORT

OmniBus Drives Andrita Media Center

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LOS ANGELES

The 106,000-square foot Andrita Media Center is a state-of-the-art West Coast facility for digital SD and HD network origination, satellite transmission, production, post-production and digital media services, including encoding, transcoding and VOD delivery.

Not long ago, Andrita undertook what can fairly be described as a “generational change” in the facility’s technical infrastructure. While we fully appreciated the challenges of such an infrastructure change, we were confident that the new infrastructure would revolutionize our business model.

HALE AND FAREWELL TO ‘BIG BOXES’

Previously, Andrita had operated with an architecture based on “big box” servers, with each originating up to 10 channels. Each of these channels was supported by the equipment necessary to meet its unique requirements, including dedicated external devices for logo generation, cue tones and graphics. For an independent facility which provides services to a wide range of domestic and international broadcasters, this model was both expensive due to the upfront capital commitment required to build the infrastructure in 10-channel blocks; and inflexible because of



The Broadcast Facilities operations center

the requirement to define and lock in the basic playout format (SD, HD, NTSC or PAL).

Clearly, our former “big box” video server architecture would limit our aggressive growth potential, so we migrated to a software-dominated network origination platform based on OmniBus iTX.

With the new model, our hardware costs have been materially reduced, we have experienced a significant reduction in the combined costs to originate a network and we have greatly increased our flexibility in managing and deploying our network origination assets. In addition, the iTX architecture is both scalable on a network-by-network basis and the iTX software application meets all requirements for multiple sophisticated automated graphics.

PUTTING THE NEW CONCEPT TO THE TEST

The first Andrita network launched on the iTX platform provided an extreme test for Andrita and OmniBus.

Game Show Network (GSN) is a graphically sophisticated general entertainment network supported by commercials, with multiple live segments each day including viewer interaction. On average, GSN places a daily load on the network of 5,000 separate events, 2,000 of which are graphics. All of these are generated by iTX and controlled by iTX automation. Andrita was able to meet GSN’s launch requirements with iTX software, running on HP DL365 servers with Isilon IQ6000 Clustered Network Attached Storage.

The proof of success for our “next gen-

erations" infrastructure was the completion of the GSN launch in less than 45 days from the initial agreement to the "live" switchover from the network's former facility. We had to create an entirely new origination infrastructure and specify it for an extremely complex application, with OmniBus providing round-the-clock development to deliver the functionality required. GSN successfully went live on

Andrita's new iTX origination platform on May 18, and Andrita went on to launch the European HD movie channel ShortsHD two weeks later using OmniBus iTX.

Andrita anticipates launching an additional 14 24/7 channels utilizing iTX in the next five months, and is also planning an iTX-based centralcasting facility, scalable to 200 stations, for local broadcast TV stations. This would not be possible without

the dynamic environment provided by iTX functionality.

Bill Tillson is president and chief operating officer of Broadcast Facilities, the parent company of Andrita Media Center. He may be contacted at bill@andrita.com.

For additional information, contact OmniBus at 303-237-4868 or visit www.omnibus.tv.