

## **S4M implements real-time broadcast management system for CanWest MediaWorks**

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Canadian Broadcaster CanWest MediaWorks and German systems and consulting company S4M – Solutions for Media have successfully concluded the largest phase of a common major project. In conjunction with CanWest MediaWorks, S4M has designed and implemented a highly integrated broadcast management solution and on August 27, 2007 all conventional stations for CanWest MediaWorks' Global Television and E! Networks have gone "live." The integrated solution has eliminated the need for 3 distinct and separate software systems along with 8 separate databases.

"CanWest is the first conventional broadcaster in Canada to completely move all stations to an integrated and customer-focused business management system", said Brett Manlove, SVP of Broadcast Sales and Marketing, CanWest MediaWorks. "Not only will the system allow us to deliver client service excellence, it will also enable us to capitalize on asset synergies and create new business opportunities."

A brief retrospect: In 2004, CanWest MediaWorks, one of Canada's leading media companies, commissioned arvato systems and S4M to introduce a new broadcast management system for its conventional television networks. The objective and vision was to design a solution that would support all daily operational business processes of the different television stations – ranging from program contracts, license management, program scheduling, seamlessly through the proposal and airtime adsales management system direct to inventory management, copy, logs, reconciliation, invoicing and ultimately complete seamless reporting through to the CRTC regulators. The system had to meet the requirements of North American broadcasters in general and specifically the needs of Canadian TV companies in particular. The outcome is a fully integrated and highly customized system based upon the S4M products S4Rights, S4Schedule and S4AdSales that ultimately positions CanWest as a 'leading edge' broadcaster able to meet the future needs and requirements in a highly competitive environment.

Going live was carried out stepwise: S4Rights und S4Schedule went live in 2005 and has allowed CanWest to automate the management of their acquisitions as well as schedule their networks in a complex and highly dynamic environment.

Andrew Janik, Vice-President Program Operations at CanWest: "Since the conversion of our manual tracking ledgers for Program Financials and Program Inventory to the S4M system, S4M Rights and S4Schedule has allowed our Programming team to be very efficient and proactive not just in the scheduling of programs through multiple channels quickly through simultaneous insertions and replacements but to also speed up the month-end Accounting cycle from approximately 3 days to literally 2 to 3 hours. Contracts can be linked and literally allocated between Channels sharing in costs and telecasts. This is a very powerful tool.

Through the use of the S4M system we can now automatically monitor our use of Canadian Content, inventory positions in telecasts and Financials in real time.

Again, this has reduced the amount of time required for our Programming team to make Scheduling decisions by always having current up-to-date Program Inventory information literally at their 'finger tips'.

It is now a tangible and realistic goal in this integrated environment with Sales that we will be able to do Margin analyses by program in real-time."

With the implementation of the airtime sales system S4AdSales the new broadcast management system is now virtually complete. It is currently being used by about 300 concurrent users.

The high integration of the system offers crucial benefits. Christian Schneider, Senior Manager Sales & Traffic at S4M: "The so-called spot optimization engine constitutes the core of the system. It makes sure that the available inventory is fully exploited at all times, all the while complying with legal guidelines and the customer's specifications." Thus, commercials can be accurately placed according to the respective target groups, and TV companies benefit from efficient planning and selling of airtime. "The S4M system allows changing complex proposals into confirmed contracts within minutes", illustrates

Schneider.

The large-scale project was a great challenge in terms of technology, specialist skills and organization. Dr. Siamak Tadjiky, Head of Development at S4M: “On the one hand, going live step by step has repeatedly motivated all colleagues. That way, the whole team stayed disciplined and targeted during the whole course of the perennial project. On the other hand, working on a live-system is a special challenge.” Such a task, says Tadjiky, necessitates a highly specialized and a highly motivated team with above-average commitment on both sides. “And that’s the case with CanWest and S4M.” For instance, the 50-head-strong international team succeeded in always keeping the system up-to-date with the latest changes in order categories and rules of competition.

At present, two comparable installations of S4M systems are under way: at TV New Zealand and TVA Canada, the largest Network in Francophone Canada. In both cases, going live is scheduled for 2008. Meanwhile, the cooperation with CanWest also proceeds: As a result of the acquisition of Alliance Atlantics, a further 20 specialty stations will use the new Broadcast Management System.

The next moves are already outlined: Cologne based S4M plans to further broaden its presence on the North American market and in Asia. The S4M Broadcast Management System is highly configurable and can be adapted to the specific requirements of different markets.

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S4M – Solutions for Media GmbH

The Cologne based company S4M – Solutions for Media, a subsidiary of arvato systems and RTL Television, develops and distributes software solutions specialized on the broadcast- and newmedia industry. Today, S4M systems are used in 30 countries around the world. Whether commercial air time sales or video content management; whether program planning, rights licensing, ratings evaluation or production planning: S4M has got the solution. Furthermore, the S4M portfolio includes professional consulting services to pass along combined knowledge of media and IT to customers.

[You can find this press release here](#)