



White Paper

Managing Change in a Complex Broadcast Environment

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How does strategic change management maximize benefits whilst removing risk?

Executive Summary

Iconic American basketball player, Michael Jordan, once said, 'I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed.'

Unfortunately, the broadcast industry is not similar to sport in this respect. Unlike Michael Jordan's career, the route to success does not come through trial and error when managing change in a live broadcast environment. At best you will only get one shot.

For any broadcaster, its media assets are amongst the most valuable resources it possesses. The way a broadcaster manages and distributes its media assets can have a significant impact on its performance and long-term profitability.

In today's multi-channel, multi-platform environment there exist many opportunities to create significant new revenue streams. Furthermore, through broadcast technology suppliers, such as Snell, there are new and radically different approaches to the classic playout automation and media management challenge.

However, the change process, which sees a broadcaster adopt these new technologies, systems and workflow patterns involves much more than the installation of new hardware. Consultation, planning and system design are critical parts of the change management process. Perhaps most important is the human interface – making sure that a broadcaster's staff have the knowledge and confidence to operate the new system.

At Snell, we have invested significant resources in each and every one of these areas. As a result, we can help customers manage the change process so that the transition is easy; risk is minimized and staff skillsets are appropriate to the challenge.

Throughout this paper we explore the process of upgrading an automation and/or media management system. We identify some common mistakes; we explain how to make sure that you don't make them; and we illustrate how customers can monetize their investment.

Introduction

The post digital revolution era brings with it a new reality. The channel explosion that we have experienced in the last decade has brought about a new mantra – More for Less – and this appears set to remain with us.

Pressure on the business of playout is becoming ever greater: minimize capital and operational expenditure, whilst increasing speed of new service or platform rollout.

For this reason, the successful implementation of a new future-proof automation and media management system whilst maximizing your return on investment has never been so crucial.

An incorrectly managed implementation can leave you with a system that will never realize its full potential without significant further investment. Furthermore, staff can find their productivity decreased – a critical factor which increases stress and de-motivates even the most committed staff member.

Worse still, a poor implementation can impact on customer satisfaction. Inevitably, this can prove to be incredibly costly further down the line.

In the adoption of new automation and media management systems the potential gains are tremendous – in terms of operating efficiency, baseline performance and profitability. The process needs to be approached strategically. The planning phase is critical and requires a great deal of skill and insight.

The strategy should encompass the needs of your entire business operation. Care is required in this type of implementation, particularly when replacing a system that is as central as an automation or media management system.

Defining the Challenge

While your upgrade strategy will encompass all the elements of a business plan, the strategic implementation should consider all aspects of the migration from old to new automation and media management system.



The success of the change process depends on your ability to envisage the process and the ability to identify possible problems that could be encountered. There are a multitude of points you will need to consider and overcome in order to ensure smooth changeover, and to ensure your business the benefits it desires.

- Choosing the appropriate key equipment and system providers
- What current system inputs can not change such as:
 - Schedules.
 - Content and metadata delivery, importation and retention.
 - External triggers such as SCTE 35, cue tones or MOS protocol.
- What existing system components need to be migrated over to the new implementation. Equally, which existing system components are impractical.
- Which system workflows and operational practices need to stay in place, and which have room for improvement in order to minimize process waste.
- How to empower operational staff, enabling them to transfer from one system to another with a minimum of stress for them and your business.
- What requirement is there for inherent flexibility within the system – what happens if during the implementation a new customer requirement necessitates a change to the planned design.
- How to ensure a Go-Live transition from old to new system without down-time.
- How to best support the new system and in-house staff during the critical early period on the new system after transition.
- How to respond to support requests during the phase immediately after transition from old to new system.

High-Level Solution

Change management has been a key issue within the IT sector for many decades: it has been the focus of many white papers, management texts and even PhD theses. Within the broadcast industry, common practise is to utilize project management or IT change management processes such as ITIL for the implementation of system changes.

Whilst these template-based protocols offer a good starting point, they should not be used in isolation when looking at broader technology and personnel issues. Best practise from these philosophies should be adopted, utilizing project management techniques to identify key dependencies, and both broadcast and IT system design expertise required to achieve the technical goals. This takes place in an environment where minimizing the total cost of ownership is key, as well as careful change management practices where people are concerned.

Solution Details

Planning

The secret of success is in the planning process – its depth and its ability to identify and focus on the key success drivers. It is imperative that your organization implements the system architecture that best works for your business and operational needs. To facilitate this Snell employs a Systems Architecture team to work closely with your organization. Its task is to capture requirements and workflows for input into the total system design.

A key factor in this planning process is that these Snell consultants have a good working knowledge of all broadcast equipment, not just limited to Snell. With this knowledge, they are able to provide input into common interfacing practices and can identify any problems that can be encountered along the way, whilst also being equipped to provide solutions.

The Right Equipment for the Job

Specifying the right tools for the job is achieved via Architecture Workshops, where key elements are broken down into manageable bite-sized chunks.

System inputs are analyzed and their impact on overall system operation is assessed. This includes the entire range of internal and external factors from scheduling through to MOS protocols.

The next stage is intended to develop an understanding of the system outputs. It focuses on the necessary and predefined outputs from the system, including presentation style, EPG data, interactive content, platform specific information, system monitoring and business management data.

Current and desired system workflow and operational practices are analyzed with a view to preserving where required or optimizing as appropriate.

It is typical, even in the simplest system to require some form of interfacing between various manufacturers' equipment.

Whilst reviewing all of the above, robustness of interface and design future-proofing is taken into consideration in the overall system design package.

At the end of this key process, we have a good understanding of what kind of operational change is required and how to support your operation through the change process. It also helps to make sure that any investment made has the minimum total cost of ownership and is future-proofed for the longest operational life.

Your Key Asset - People

One of the most important aspects of any change management process is developing the means for staff members to make the migration to the new way of working in a way that makes them feel secure and supported. If your staff's hearts and minds are behind the change, there will most certainly be many benefits both for the project and all those involved.

Snell has worked on many of these projects, over many years and in many different countries. An important lesson that we have learned is the need to engage the people who are going to operate and maintain the system as early in the process as is practical.

Where possible identify potential ambassadors for the change process - people within your organization who embrace change and who will quickly pick up on the benefits of the new way of working, not just for themselves but also for their colleagues and the entire business, upon which they all ultimately rely.



It is good to involve these ambassadors in conversations and hands-on demonstrations with key suppliers and embed your suppliers in these teams wherever possible. At Snell, we are experienced at working with these staff members. These key individuals will be instrumental in re-assuring those less comfortable with change that there are major benefits for all those involved.

The additional benefit of this approach is that these people will become experts in their own right and ensure maximum benefit is leveraged from the new system.

Training

Knowledge of the new operating system is essential for all staff that will be working within the organization. The earlier this knowledge can be imparted, the easier it is to allay natural fears that are associated with any change process.

It is imperative to make sure that all of the staff who will use the system have the knowledge they need to both operate and maintain it. This can be accomplished in a simulated or classroom environment or even on a test and training facility if it exists. A key success factor is the involvement of the change ambassadors as part of the group to assist others in the process of learning. With their positive input, training targets can be met in significantly shorter time since they promote a progressive attitude to the learning process.

Implementation

Once you have created your change strategy and your staff are fully trained and motivated to contribute to the project's success, the physical change process can commence.

At Snell, we work with your team to identify key dependencies and associated risks & plan risk mitigation. This helps to define a clear project plan that all involved can work to.

In order to keep to this plan and review progress best practise dictates that regular project update meetings are held with an appointed Project Manager. Any timescale changes and impact from these can then input into any changes on the plan.

Understandably, things change as a project progresses. Any changes to deliverables and timescales are clearly tracked and appropriate documentation is amended to reflect such modifications. In doing so, it is simple to understand what impact these changes will have on overall functionality, cost or timescale for the entire project.

Once the system is complete, it is handed over in person and an agreed set of acceptance criteria are checked against. This process provides the confidence that the system will perform as specified and any final configuration 'tweaks' can be made at this stage.

The new playout automation and/or media management system will play a mission critical role within the broadcast operation. If part of the project planning phase identified that the new system will replace one that is already on air, there are several approaches that can be offered.

These include a temporary system incorporating a "channel in a box" solution such as Morpheus ICE from Snell. Such a system can be provided on a loan basis to get you through the delicate process of changeover. Alternatively, a full live changeover plan will be generated to ensure no loss on air, detailed to the device and interface level.

During the first days on go-live, Snell engineers can be assigned to help your staff through the migration and alleviate any concerns that they may have during this sensitive period. From there on in, your support agreement will provide total peace of mind 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with assistance provided directly by Snell service engineers.

Business Benefits

The implementation of new automation and media management systems is a major event in the life of any broadcaster. It is important that the change process progresses to a successful conclusion within the expected timescale.

Getting a system implementation right first time provides clear business advantages over a problematic install, requiring further investment to get it right (if that is even possible at that stage).

With an understanding of key workflows, ensuring user familiarity and providing appropriate training to all relevant staff will help achieve an elegant system, which is both easy to use and straightforward to maintain.

Appropriate prior planning prevents poor performance – good up front planning and a clear understanding of how to implement systems of this type will ensure a smooth rollout.

A recent example of where this has happened is Danmarks Radio, which purchased a four-channel Morpheus system – currently running DR-1 and DR-2.

"Snell reacted very positively and very quickly when our initial plans had to be altered at such a late stage," says Lars Sorner, Senior Project Manager, DR TES Technology Project. "The company analyzed and understood our situation accurately, and provided us with solutions that worked.

"We ordered Morpheus and then had it up and running within three weeks. There were some very impressive people from Snell who knew exactly what they were doing. We were and are very impressed" concludes Sorner.



Summary

With a value estimated at US\$25 billion (source: International Association of Broadcasting Manufacturers), the content creation, management and distribution industry offers major opportunities to shrewd investors and efficient operators.

Media consumption patterns are evolving rapidly: today passive terrestrial broadcasts compete with interactive television, IPTV and a plethora of mobile media consumption platforms. The current business and technology landscape is characterized by rapid and revolutionary change.

At a time of profound technological change fortune favors the brave. The biggest risk of all is for those that fail to make key strategic decisions: which technologies offer the most stable and versatile platform for your business and how to protect today's investments in the future.

However, it is not just a case of making the correct strategic decision in terms of technologies. The question of which supplier you select and the way in which you manage the inevitable change process within your business operations are critical.

Snell is a pioneer in the research and development of new broadcast technologies. For the last three decades, we have been at the forefront of technological development within the broadcast sector.

Alongside this research effort, we have invested heavily in resources that help our customers to take our technologies, systems and products and integrate them seamlessly within their core operations.

This marriage of technical excellence and commercial savvy helps ensure that our customers are amongst the most efficient, effective and profitable in the international broadcast industry.

Call to Action

Periods of significant change offer both opportunities and risks. Perhaps the biggest risk is associated with those organizations that choose to do nothing and fail to respond to a changing technology and business environment.

Snell has invested significantly in change management resources so that you don't need to replicate that investment. We have all of the human resources in place, ready to support your business operations at very short notice.

If you would like to discuss how Snell can help you with your own transformation, please contact your nearest Snell office or regional representative, visit snellgroup.com for more information.