

CiaB Forum

The case for boxes



This month's Forum takes on a different shape with **Philip Stevens** talking to a number of Channel in a Box vendors to discover how their solutions are being utilised to maximum effect

If anything has aroused comment among industry experts it has been the topic of Channel in a Box (CiaB). Definitions have varied as CiaB has come to mean different things to different people. But whatever designation is used, the technology has brought about changes in operational practices that have been far-reaching. However, there are still some doubts as to the appropriateness of the concept. How has your solution benefitted the industry? Is CiaB the end of the story, or is there a better solution?

PARTICIPANTS:

Don Ash, PlayBox Technology
Goce Zdravkoski, Stryme
James Gilbert, Pixel Power
Jan Weigner, Cinegy
Janis Krampans, Veset
Karl Mehring, Snell
Tom Gittins, Pebble Beach Systems

Pixel Power's French connection

TV5MONDE is a worldwide network of channels broadcast in French in more than 200 territories across the world. It has nine different channel feeds for various regions across the globe with eight being broadcast from Paris, covering all continents, and the ninth – TV5 Québec transmitting from Montreal.

"TV5MONDE formalised plans to launch new thematic channels, including a children's offering," reports James Gilbert, Pixel Power's CEO. "It uses a third party for its playout, but wanted to be able to launch these channels in-house. This project needed to be as cost-effective as possible, but also required sophisticated automated channel graphics. In addition, it needed a tightly integrated production and playout solution, allowing a faster time-to-air. This included the requirement for compatibility with its main channel graphics playout technology, Pixel Power's dedicated LogoVision 3D unit."

Content for the new channels is created collaboratively and updated in-house, matching the existing channel's branding quality. Any new technology also had to support material in both 4:3 and 16:9. In short, TV5MONDE required an economical yet rich playout and branding solution to create, move and schedule video and graphic assets across various channels.

Gilbert continues, "It was clear that a Channel



James Gilbert, Pixel Power

in a Box system would provide the cost efficiencies that TV5MONDE needed, but would it be able to handle the more advanced playout requirements?"

To answer the question, TV5MONDE turned to Pixel Power's integrated playout solution, ChannelMaster. "This is a highly scalable solution that frees broadcasters from the compromises of many existing Channel in a Box offerings," says Gilbert. "Alongside two dual redundant ChannelMaster 3D systems, the broadcaster also specified Gallium, a highly integrated and scalable scheduling, asset management and automation technology, that provides the intelligence to build a variety of playout solutions using Pixel Power output devices. Already-installed versions of automated

