ITV Partners with M2A to create Live & Live Catch Up Solution

ITV, the UK's largest commercial broadcaster, delivers a wide variety of content on its family of free-to-air channels, through linear television broadcasting, as well as on-demand via the ITV Hub and other platforms globally. Home to marquee shows such as Love Island, I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here and the X Factor; ITV chose M2A CAPTURE to enable the accelerated delivery of live programmes to catch-up and on-demand platforms, including ITV Hub, and third party platforms such as Sky, Virgin and Amazon.

Primarily funded by television advertising revenue, ITV has the largest share of the UK television advertising market, with a share of broadcast (SOB) of 47.6% in 2017. It's channels attracted a total share of viewing (SOV) of 21.7% in 2017, the largest audience of any UK commercial broadcaster.

The Challenge

Changing audience habits have seen an inexorable shift towards non-linear viewing in recent years. The typical viewer now expects to be able to watch their favourite programme on-demand, as-and-when it suits them and for it to be accessible across of vast array of devices. Meeting the on-demand challenge is particularly acute for live linear programmes – how do you deliver a catch-up asset of a live programme, in a multiple of different formats, to an on-demand platform within minutes of transmission finishing?

The Solution

Realising the need for a simple workflow that would run in public cloud, receive high quality live streams, frame accurately trim live programmes and deliver platform ready assets along with the source material, ITV researched many technology solutions that could implement such a system.

Following a successful proof of concept, the UK broadcaster chose M2A CAPTURE to move its Late & Live workflow into the cloud, thus enabling its viewers to catch-up with programmes more quickly after the end of transmission.

M2A CAPTURE enables ITV to capture and deliver live content to both its own-operated and third party OTT platforms and provides ITV with the following benefits:

• Input source - 100Mbps AVCi stream, received from an AWS Elemental encoder

• All five ITV channels (ITV 1 / ITV 2 / ITV 3 / ITV 4 & ITVBe) are ingested by the M2A service, allowing ITV to deliver VoD assets within 10 minutes of confirmation by a Content Operator

• All channels have dual resilience and in addition to ITV's linear channels, M2A CAPTURE is configured to receive two 'Event' channels, in

readiness for the ad hoc ingest of off-schedule events, such as pay-per-view boxing.

• Each ITV channel is configured with a rolling 48 hour cache, which allows ITV operators to capture programmes broadcast within the previous 48 hours.

• Live programmes are edited manually by an ITV operator, via the Capture tool of the M2A Console. The Capture tool uses all the main functionalities of a non-linear editing tool, aiding accurate and efficient editing within a live context, enabling Operators to remove ad breaks from live TX'd content.

• M2A CAPTURE is accurate at a frame level

• Assets are delivered within 10 minutes of confirmation

To guarantee broadcast quality SLAs, M2A CAPTURE is supported 24/7 from our London MCR by skilled media operators.

Scalable & Cost Efficient

In the overall total of ITV's output, live programming represents a small percentage of the schedule. By using the power and scalability of the Cloud, M2A CAPTURE provides ITV with a cost and resource efficient solution for recording and capturing live content. M2A CAPTURE uses auto-scaling algorithms to provision resources only when required, thereby ensuring that running costs are restricted to the period only when the programme transmits.
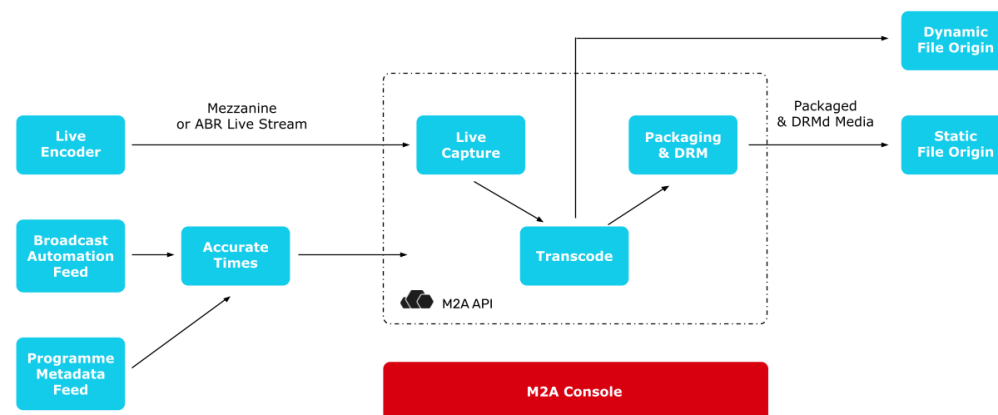
Benefits

M2A CAPTURE provides ITV with the following benefits:

• Multi-hour programmes are available as VOD assets within minutes of transmission end.

• Real-time transcoding to a multiple of platform ready formats and profiles.

• Frame accurate captures

• A simple to use web-based Console for editing, enabling ITV's Content Operations team to edit and log anywhere.

• Assets are delivered with logos & DOGS, and stitched-in idents & stings.

• The ingest of a high-quality 100mbps stream, to provide mezzanine & archive quality files.

• Deployed to multiple AWS availability zones, providing broadcast level redundancy and resilience.

• A 48-hour cache, to ensure that no live progamme is ever missed.

• Simple API integration into ITV's Look-Up service, for the population of asset and job metadata.

• Broadcast quality 24/7 365 support from M2A's London Operations team.

• Flexible Opex commercial models

Our Suppliers

Unified Streaming provides our live origin. Unified Origin is preferred for its scalability, reliability, flexibility and ease of use.

"After a successful proof of concept, ITV chose M2A Media to move its Late & Live workflow into the cloud. The ability to replace the original adverts in live programmes, combined with the need for seamless joins and accelerated encoding with fast turnaround made this platform a great fit for ITV's needs. Partnering with M2A Media to evolve the product features has resulted in a market-leading solution."

Andrew Burnett
Director of Online Technology & Operations at ITV