

A case study of

Globecast delivering broadcast-grade video over the public internet

In Brief

Globecast rolls out a global media transport network based on Net Insight's solutions. The first major client of Globecast's robust, flexible and cost-efficient internet delivery-as-a-service is Euronews.

The Context

Globecast helps customers to manage their content and make it available wherever required, by anyone required. Traditionally, broadcasters have relied on satellite technology for their international distribution, but as the media sector continues to evolve, Globecast has introduced complementary services to satisfy its customers' need for greater flexibility and cost efficiency.

For some years now, the additional choice has been to send and receive video content/services over a terrestrial network, meaning via a dedicated point-to-point fibre solution.

Globecast's ambitions have recently gone further than this. Listening to its customers and understanding shifts in the market, it decided to get ahead of the curve to help its customers reach new audiences with secure transport for point-to-point and point-to-multipoint over the public internet. Globecast made this strategic move in partnership with Net Insight.

The Solution

"The first criteria for us in looking for an IP solution was cost efficiency," explains Benoit Lenoble, International Terrestrial Solutions Product Manager at Globecast. "Our goal was to deliver a solution to our customers that offers the same quality and experience as our existing solutions using fibre and satellite, but at a much more flexible OPEX-based pricing model."

The second criteria for Globecast was flexibility. "To truly optimize all aspects of the chain, we knew we needed a service that was extremely simple to get up and running, even for people who are not that familiar with networking and broadcast equipment. With our solution called Globecast XN, or GCXN, I'm happy to say we have created an end-to-end service.

This is because we help the customer from architecture through to implementation across the globe, enabling them to distribute

THE COMPANY

Globecast helps customers to manage content and to deliver it wherever, however and whenever required. The company provides agile and seamless content acquisition, management and distribution services globally, constantly innovating and investing in new technologies to create customer-centric new services. It delivers any type of video service including: TV Everywhere OTT, satellite, cable and video-on-demand, using CDNs and cloud-enabled media solutions.



to all their affiliates. On top of that, Globecast brings its support expertise to every project we take on," says Lenoble. Another critical aspect of this for Globecast was that the solution had to perform to an exceptional standard.

"While it has been clear for us for a few years that the move to IP is here to stay, we still have clients who are concerned about IP's ability to truly deliver the same quality of service and security as traditional solutions. Internet transport, which is in fact taking this one step further by leveraging unmanaged connectivity, is clearly no exception.

Therefore, proving we could deliver a carrier-grade solution using this type of equipment was a number one priority for us. After extensive market research, we decided to work with Net Insight. Having been one of their customers for many years, we knew their technology would be the ideal fit for what we were trying to do. One year later, our decision has been fully validated."

The solution builds from Globecast's existing extensive Nimbra-based media network, which spans 350 Nimbra MSR nodes worldwide. Fully integrated onto this network are 65 Nimbra Video Appliances (VA). These units combine the advantages of an integrated MPEG encoder/decoder, together with an integrated video transport solution and the same powerful management and provision tools Globecast is already using for their Nimbra MSR network



“Our service is incredibly reliable for distributing content over the public internet, helping our customers cut down on the costs associated with using fibre or satellite.”

The Net Insight VA series brings a unique set of advantages, like tools that quickly help to understand when and where in the network an issue occurs. This powerful combination provides both the operational simplicity of managing all their network resources in one place, as well as a reduction in network complexity – both minimizing potential sources of errors and maximizing service availability.

The Nimbra VA offers Globecast’s customers the ability to leverage internet transport and still maintain the same strict broadcast quality standards they have become accustomed to using satellite or dedicated fibre infrastructures.

Globecast XN (GCXN)

The solution is being marketed by Globecast as a standalone service branded as Globecast XN, or GCXN. GCXN is devised as an easily configurable IP-based solution that provides cost-effective services with a range of functionality including MPEG encoding/decoding accessible through a wide variety of input/output formats such as ASI, SD/HD/3G-SDI and IP unicast/multicast.

Due to the self-healing nature of the internet, the key is always to protect last mile access. GCXN can be provisioned in any number of redundancy schemes providing port, node and path redundancy. A comprehensive network management system for end-to-end management is part of the solution.

The Results

“The transport service lets customers create and distribute content wherever they are located, faster and more cost-effectively than using traditional fibre or satellite solutions,” says Lenoble. “Our solution has been designed from the ground up to ensure a broadcast-grade video service.

For us, carrier grade really means something, and we would never use the Globecast brand on a solution if we didn’t believe it fulfilled our strict quality requirements.”

GCXN is seamlessly integrated with Globecast’s managed fibre footprint, Globecast Backbone Network (GCBN). GCBN can transport and deliver content in many formats: ASI, IP, Ethernet, SDI, HD-SDI, J2K. The service is designed for reliable transport at all times: redundant paths and ring architectures ensure flawless worldwide delivery for broadcast content.

This unified and unique terrestrial solution is designed for secure real-time, point-to-point and point-to-multipoint video services. It’s a reliable and resilient network built on best-of-breed, real-time video transport and state-of-the-art engineering for video services.

With the ability to set-up a point-to-multipoint, reaching more than 50 sites, Globecast is now able to offer customers an additional or alternative main distribution, disaster recovery and monitoring service.

“With confidence I can say that the turnkey solution we have in place with Net Insight works,” says Lenoble. “Provided you have the right solution, the debate about whether IP is a suitable transport mechanism for premium value content should not even exist. It works and there really isn’t anything more one can add.”

Euronews

Euronews, the most-watched international news channel in Europe, had embarked on a forward-thinking strategy of its own to empower its multi-cultural audience.

The NEXT strategic plan was designed to end the multiplex (one video signal in several languages) system that has been at the core of Euronews’ offer since 1993. It was replaced by the launch of 12 distinct premium cross-platform editions so that Euronews could deliver more tailored content.

Globecast has a long-term and highly valued relationship with Euronews and understood that it was seeking a cost-effective and robust delivery solution, in particular for eight of the new tailor-made channels available in English, French, Italian, German, Turkish, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

To deliver broadcast-grade video content over the public internet for Euronews, with lowered costs and increased flexibility, Globecast is supplying an end-to-end transport solution using its GCXN and GCBN connectivity.

Content is transported from Euronews’ media facility in Lyon to a facility in Paris. From there, the channels are being delivered via the GCXN service to 60 affiliate operators worldwide.

Francois Schmitt, Chief Operating Officer at Euronews explains, “Our over-arching goal with the NEXT project is to reach a more multicultural audience and deliver universally appealing content. We already had six channels over satellite, and we knew that adding more channels this way would be expensive.

After liaising closely with Globecast, it was very clear that their GCXN system would be the ideal technology for us. With it, we’re able to increase our channel count and reach a more diverse audience without increasing our costs.”

On the logistics side, Globecast organized the deployment of new box on the premises end users located at multiple locations over the world. To speed time to deployment Net Insight provided a solution that would enable straightforward plug and play: delivering a pre-configured solution directly to Euronews’ affiliates.

“Our GCXN service is incredibly reliable for distributing content over the public internet, helping our customers cut down on the costs associated with using fibre or satellite,” says Globecast CTO Sylvain Merle. “With GCXN, we offer 99.9% guaranteed reliability