

# BCE CASE STUDY

## About Broadcasting Center Europe

Broadcasting Center Europe (BCE) is a major European player in the media world. The Luxembourg-based company was founded in January 2000 as a result of the merging of different technical entities of the RTL Group, rated Europe's No. 1 in TV, radio, and content with stakes in 32 television and 31 radio channels in 11 countries. As a full-service media company, BCE offers support to all projects concerning content production and distribution.

BCE's highly qualified staff of 200 people serves about 400 clients in various sectors, including not only television channels and radio stations, but also a broad range of clients such as film distributors, producers, advertising companies, telecommunications operators, and public services.

**“ We chose Front Porch Digital products because they are innovative, best-of-breed content storage management solutions that accommodate our advanced requirements now and will grow to meet our future needs. We had complete confidence in the Front Porch Digital team's expertise and its ability to integrate the company's archive solution seamlessly with our third-party video systems, automation, and robotics systems. ”**

**– Gusty Feinen, Manager of special projects for BCE**



## The Challenge

In 2000 BCE concluded it was time to upgrade its existing library management system-based playout system, which relied primarily on videotapes barcoded to provide basic information such as cassette identification, content title, and duration. In its place the company committed to creating an advanced digital playout facility with a high degree of flexibility and much more efficient and less labor-intensive media-handling operations.

## The Solution

After establishing the necessary workflow of content with an appropriate guaranteed bandwidth, BCE assessed potential content storage management providers that could meet its

stringent requirements. After BCE examined the strengths and weaknesses of all its options, Front Porch Digital emerged as the clear choice. The company's DIVArchive solution had unique functionalities and, most important, was the only content storage management solution proven to meet the performance and reliability standards that BCE's business demands.

Working closely with the Front Porch Digital delivery team, BCE developed a totally digital archive solution for TV operations that was able to fully replace the process of handling videotapes manually for all of its customers' broadcasts.

Front Porch Digital's DIVArchive was deployed to serve as software middleware that links digital media storage devices, video servers, and digital media workflow applications to enable streamlined storage of and access to BCE's media assets.

Everything BCE broadcasts is committed to the archive. BCE's ingest operation is continuous, with six encoders running in parallel. BCE can encode one week's output from a channel overnight, and there are 12 channels to encode. Some of the channels encode faster than others — particularly those that feature more reruns and little or no news and other live content. This allows BCE to archive all 12 channels over the period of a week.

The archive currently stores the equivalent of 210,000 hours of material at an encoding bit rate of 10 Mb/s.

## Advantages and Benefits

The DIVArchive installation represents the development of an archive storage and management solution removed from the restrictions of dedicated "silos" of storage for individual workflows, such as news production or playout. The new installation creates a unified content storage management infrastructure capable of efficiently serving multiple workflow requirements and providing the potential to develop new working methods and business opportunities.

With DIVArchive, BCE is able to establish sets of automatic content-replication and rules-based operations that allow, for example, automatic replication of certain types of content for disaster recovery.

Because BCE's operations are continually expanding and always seeing new and different archive requests arise, the company also chose to introduce the "DIVArchive file-system" option on

the same archive to achieve a multi-user and multi-application configuration. BCE is upgrading its system continually to be current with the latest available release, and the company has never once suffered from any problems or instability of the digital archive system.

As BCE's capacity needs increase, the digital archive system can scale smoothly without any limitation. While the collection of material is growing continually, the physical space required to house the digital archive is about one-tenth the volume needed for the original material.

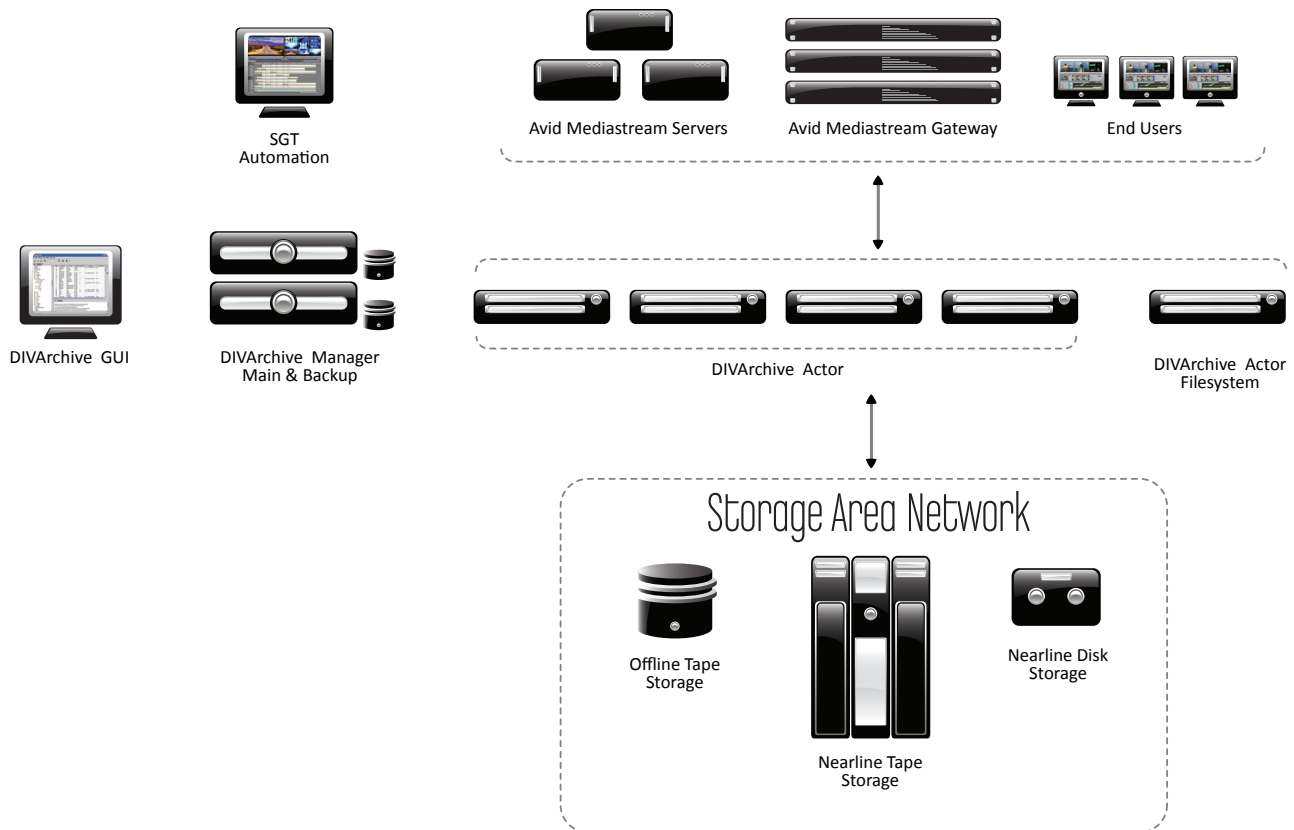
**Future Evolution**

BCE envisions widening its strategy to include provisions for the new Centre National de l'Audiovisuel (CNA) facility under creation at a site 20 kilometers away from BCE's headquarters. This project includes a shared infrastructure that would serve both BCE's

and CNA's distinct needs in recording all broadcast material in the national archive, content replication, disaster recovery, and business continuance in the event of problems at either site.

This expanded archive will be managed by Front Porch Digital's DIVAnet content sharing and disaster recovery system. DIVAnet allows site-to-site connectivity of multiple DIVArchive systems in a virtual distributed archive for automatic content distribution and content replication. This gives BCE the means to connect most of its TV channels, situated in different cities, to form a distributed and redundant content-archive system. Not only does such a solution offer the possibility of a full disaster-recovery capability, but it also serves as a state-of-the-art system facilitating fast and inexpensive content exchange across RTL channels.

# Broadcasting Center Europe Network Architecture



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