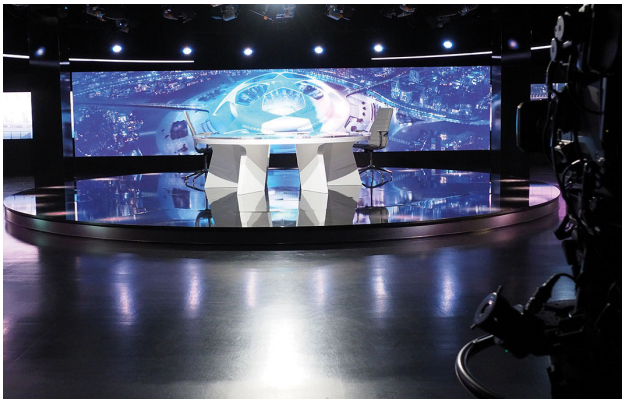
CASE STUDY

BLUE ENTERTAINMENT AG, VOLKETSWIL: **FAST, SECURE, TROUBLE-FREE**

Datwyler has installed a robust future-proof 100 gigabit fibre optic backbone in blue Entertainment's broadcasting and production centre.

blue Entertainment AG is a Swiss media company owned by Swisscom. From its broadcasting and production centre in Volketswil the Pay-TV provider broadcasts series and films, sport, music and news, which can be received via the Internet and digital television.

In the course of a modernisation project blue Entertainment recently upgraded the studio technology on its Volketswil site. This was accompanied by the purchase of new production servers and their connection via a 100 gigabit-capable fibre optic backbone.



On the recommendation of a partner, blue Entertainment entrusted the Datwyler specialists with the IT infrastructure. The contract included the entire implementation of the project: from consultancy and design through to acceptance and handover of the fibre optic backbone – including costing and cost control as well as the tendering procedure for the installations and the transceiver and switching technology.

The project commenced in spring 2021, i.e. in the middle of the Corona lockdown, with two half-day workshops. After eleven weeks of project planning and tendering as well as three months of installation by Datwyler partner Vision-Inside AG from Wetzikon, the new network went into trial operation in October and was handed over in November.

Conversion in live operation

The challenge was that live operation in the broadcasting and production centre had to be guaranteed during conversion. Because the new IT infrastructure was created parallel to the existing one, in some cases space was very tight in the racks, which are distributed over seven plant rooms. In this respect it was really helpful that Datwyler's high density solution provided maximum packing density.

Racks with space for expansion

Nine modular HD-DCS panels were installed in the racks, which provide up to 96 ports per rack unit. These are equipped with a total of 24 MTP-on-LCD plug-in modules (cassettes); one third of the space in the distribution panels is available as a reserve for future expansion. Datwyler also supplied around 70 HD-DCS fibre optic patch cables in various lengths. Horizontal cable ducts were installed above the racks so that the patch cables could be routed neatly and safely in the plant rooms.

For fast fibre optic connections between the racks the installer was able to use thin 24- and 48-fibre indoor cables. Datwyler supplied these in the requisite lengths and with preassembled MTP connectors. They lead in a star config-

uration from two plant rooms on the first and fourth floor into the five other technical rooms on the same floors via two riser zones.

All specifications met

This explains the origin of the path-redundant fibre optic backbone which today forms the backbone of the communications network in blue Entertainment's broadcasting and production centre. It is unrestrictedly 100G-capable, i.e. constitutes a high-performance data motorway for the company's video editing systems. As well as this it facilitates easy migration to 400G.

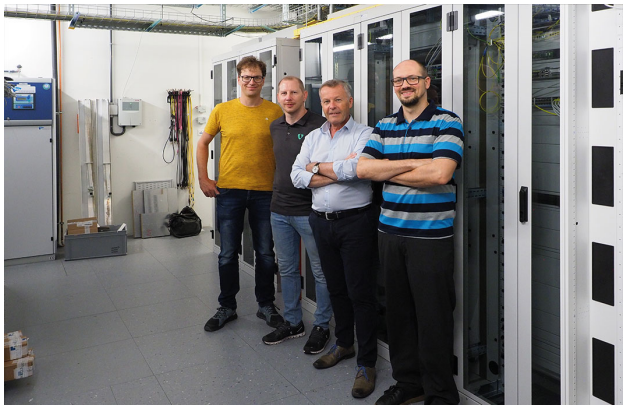
The challenging installation ran smoothly thanks to the good work of installation partner Vision-Inside. All the project specifications in respect of quality, cost and deadlines were met. After acceptance testing was completed the new backbone, including documentation, was handed over to the operator in flawless condition and on time.

During the project a large office area was also extended and converted into a newsroom. In order to integrate it with the communications network a 10-gigabit-capable copper solution from Datwyler was used, comprising type CU 7702 4P cables and KS-TC Plus modules and including 140 Category 6_A links.

Robust and scalable solution

Those responsible at blue Entertainment are very satisfied with the result. "We turned to Datwyler because the company has in-depth know-how in the field of network technology and because we promised ourselves high-quality professional implementation and support. This proved correct in every respect," said Daniel Meyer, Technical Head Broadcast/IT, taking stock.

The new fibre optic backbone is not only a high performance solution but also an extremely robust one. Since the startup all the links have been running faultlessly. This is very important in the broadcasting sector, because every bit error and every delayed data packet leads to unwanted video or audio distortion.



"The original use case changed over time. This solution, however, meant that we were able to cope with all new requirements in the best possible way," added System Engineer Lukas Minder. "We have ended up with a robust and, above all, scalable network backbone which will save us from capacity bottlenecks in future. If we had not implemented the solution in this form, I am sure that today we would already have had to install additional cables."

(November 2023)

