Arkona BLADE//runner 2.8



Arkona technologies GmbH, a German-based provider of IP core infrastructure solutions for professional broadcast, announces the recent release of version 2.8 for its flagship BLADE//runner suite, which delivers ultra-low latency audio/video routing, compression and processing tools in live production environments. The new release continues arkona’s commitment to delivering agile, high-performance control across software-defined broadcast infrastructures, and will introduce several important enhancements that increase efficiency, interoperability, and creative flexibility. Chief amongst these changes is the introduction of a new licensing fee structure, designed to make user access simpler, easier and more cost effective.

Arkona’s BLADE//runner platform delivers a complete, software-defined ecosystem for real-time broadcast infrastructure, combining routing, processing, and conversion within a single, scalable framework. Built on powerful FPGA hardware such as the AT300, BLADE//runner enables broadcasters to perform demanding tasks like colour correction, HDR/SDR conversion, audio processing, and JPEG-XS compression with ultra-low latency and high channel density. Its modular architecture allows users to dynamically deploy and reconfigure processing APPs on demand, bridging SDI and IP domains with seamless interoperability through open standards such as ST 2110 and NMOS. By collapsing traditionally separate hardware functions into a unified, software-defined platform, BLADE//runner gives broadcasters, live production companies, and OB providers the flexibility to scale and adapt workflows in real time whether managing hybrid infrastructures or migrating fully to IP. The result is greater efficiency, reduced rack space and power use, and a future-proof production environment that responds instantly to changing operational needs.

One of the most significant changes occurring under the 2.8 update is a restructuring of the underpinning licensing model, now overhauled to give users simple, comprehensive and flexible access to the functionality they need, when they need it, in a more cost-effective manner. Previously, users would purchase

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licenses for each of the various APP functions available on BLADE//runner. Now, with version 2.8, arkona simplifies access by offering a ‘buffet’ of functionality which users can access without unnecessary impediment or administrative barriers. Access is offered on two tiers: CORE and MAX. The former facilitates access to arkona’s primary applications; AVP, IPA, and JPEG-XS, allowing users the freedom to reconfigure their AT300 blades in accordance with their own workflow and need, while the MAX license unlocks advanced functionality such as DSPs and effect delays, colour correction and format conversion, video mixing and keying, and loudness metering across all applications. While JPEG-XS licensing stays as it was, the CORE and MAX licenses make it easier, cheaper, and more adaptable for broadcasters to access the full performance potential of arkona’s BLADE//runner ecosystem.

As well as a fundamental overhaul of the licensing structure, version 2.8 also significantly expands BLADE//runner’s capabilities while making it easier and more intuitive to use. A reorganized RTP memory subsystem makes previously underused audio packet memory available to video receivers, thus raising the latency differential ceiling for UHD-heavy uncompressed video workflows. As a side effect of this change, microburst absorption capabilities have improved, allowing the system to better handle bursty transmitters.

A new local loopback feature lets the system automatically forward locally generated media traffic from its transmitters to its receivers, which enables users to build non-blocking distributed routing matrices regardless of the network’s support for Multicast loopback. Audio DSP improvements are another major focus of the 2.8 update, including but not limited to the introduction of reverb effects, a gain-sharing auto-mixer, and considerably extended GPI support. A full list of changes including a range of bug fixes, performance improvements and user interface enhancements is provided alongside the software download.

Speaking on the release, Erling Hedkvist, Sales & Business Development for arkona technologies, said: “Most important to our 2.8 update is our change to the licensing structure, which serves to reinforce a key arkona concept: the idea of flexibility at the CORE. But across the board our advancements serve to improve the capacity, functionality and usability of BLADE//runner – cementing us as a key player within the broadcast market”. He continued: “And that’s crucial, because arkona products are ones that the market is already intimately familiar with - even if they don’t yet realise it. We’ve been the driving force behind some of the most advanced live production architectures of the past decade, operating quietly on an OEM basis. Now, under our own name and with full operational control, we are able to shape the user experience and product development roadmap directly, while still supporting our legacy systems”.

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