HR uses ferncast aixtream

The German public broadcaster Hessische Rundfunk (Frankfurt) is providing a wide-ranging selection of different radio programs in various formats to the German audience. In 2020 they began to integrate aixtream into their workflows, starting first with its live radio streaming, which entirely restructured and modernized its encoding. 6 radio programs of HR, plus its regional variants and event programs, are now being encoded and handed over to the CDN provider using aixtream.

Then, in 2021, they were one of the first aixtream customers to request an expansion of aixtream with additional DVB, MPEG TS and RDS features. Working together with Ferncast they wanted to broaden their use of aixtream to include the creation of DVB multiplexes for all their programs. This new development was supposed to be used on the same systems that have already been used for their internet radio streaming.

HR was interested in this expansion for the following reasons:

- The option to perform all their internet streaming (Icecast and HLS) and DVB multiplexing on as few individual systems as possible to reduce costs, complexity of logistics and management as well as enabling an easy transfer of skills for the operating personnel. Especially for DVB most alternatives would require multiple encoder devices.
- The ability to reuse the same signal for as many outputs as possible to simplify the workflow and operation.
- The possibility of a straightforward and secure backup setup.
- They preferred collaboration with their trusted partner Ferncast instead of using another product for the update of their DVB muxing.

Ferncast then proceeded to implement multiple new options for DVB MPEG TS handling (incl. the handling of Ancillary Data, PIDs, UECP/RDS, etc.) according to HR’s wishes. Since this continuous integration has concluded, HR has been making all their radio programs available 24/7 as DVB mux using aixtream software. All their programs are available in multiple formats and quality levels, using a TS format fitting HR’s exact parameters. Ferncast also used the opportunity to implement an especially flexible and customizable DVB and MPEG TS workflow, which can be configured according to the needs of a large variety of different systems when it comes to the exact makeup of the mux and handling of programs. This also benefits customers who require broad compatibility and interoperability with solutions from other suppliers.

Recently, HR chose to expand the number of aixtream systems to ensure even greater inde-pendence, a higher level of reliability and the option for encoding additional content in fu-ture. To achieve this gain, HR is now preparing to move their DVB encoding to separate sys-tems within the same infrastructure.
After this positive experience, both Ferncast and HR are looking forward to more

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potential cooperations in the future to further expand the utility and value that users can gain from broad and comprehensive aixtream implementations.

Ferncast’s software solution aixtream is a scalable software, running as server or VM instal-lation. It is constantly being improved and new features are added.

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