Sweden’s Viaplay produces with Lawo AoIP Infrastructure

Swedish streaming service Viaplay has significantly expanded and rebuilt its studios in Warsaw, Poland in an ambitious modernization project which includes Lawo mc²36 and diamond mixing consoles, and RAVENNA / AES67-native IP infrastructure products.

The Viaplay media and entertainment company, headquartered in Stockholm, offers transmissions of diverse programs such as sports, comedy shows and movies. After inking a new contract with production companies Ekstraklasa Live Park and the ATM Group, and with their recent expansion of services beyond the Nordic region into the Baltics, the Netherlands, and Poland, Viaplay undertook a major technical upgrade to ensure the reliability of service demanded by simultaneous transmission of many separate sporting events.

LP Systems, Lawo’s partner in Poland, were appointed to implement the audio portion of Viaplay’s studio update. “The project is designed as a fully IP-based infrastructure”, says Artur Jóźwik, Sales and Support Engineer. The project’s scope included two new studios with separate control rooms for audio and video, as well as twelve sports commentator booths with six separate small audio control rooms. The massive technical upgrade was performed during June and July 2022, to be ready in advance of fall sporting event coverage.

For the main audio control rooms, two Lawo mc²36 all-in-one production consoles where chosen. Compact yet flexible and powered by Lawo A__UHD core technology, mc²36 consoles can be sized from 16 to 48 faders and feature intuitive guided workflows, and the A__UHD cores each provide 256 DSP channels, 48kHz and 96kHz operation, and 864 channels of I/O capacity. IP-native with support for all relevant standards, they also feature redundant power supplies and ST2022-7 ‘hitless merge’ network link redundancy demanded by live broadcast operations.

diamond broadcast desks were installed in each of the six audio control rooms. The newest Lawo broadcast console, diamond’s flexible concept scales from 2 to 60 physical faders and features an innovative Virtual Extension touchscreen control and information option. The diamonds are powered by three Power Core engines equipped with MAX licenses; these IP-native devices featured built-in RAVENNA and MADI interfaces plus expansion slots for analog, digital and DANTE interface cards, plus 96 DSP channels and 80 summing busses.

“All microphone inputs, sums, AUX lines and other signals are transmitted as RAVENNA / AES67 streams; only the speaker connections remained analogue,” says LP Systems’ Jóźwik. “It’s a very flexible solution that enables Viaplay to combine any studio with any control room at any time. Everything works together seamlessly, without any additional routing needed.”

More flexibility is provided by Lawo VisTool software, which allows creation of customizable, context-sensitive mixing tools for multi-touch displays. All of Viaplay’s diamond consoles are equipped with dedicated all-in-one PCs running VisTool, which power their Virtual Extension touchscreens. This enables operators to instantly visualize EQ curves, compression settings, DSP functions, routing setups, and even integrate control of third party software and devices.

All IP-native Lawo devices are connected and managed within the network by the HOME management platform for IP-based media infrastructures, using web interfaces with standard browsers. The RAVENNA / AES67 audio network is underpinned by Artel Quarra switches, which are configured to provide a fully redundant networking environment. Integration with video systems is done using DirectOut Prodigy.MP processors in mirror mode for full system redundancy. These devices convert RAVENNA signals to MADI and vice versa, and help facilitate final DSP processing.

“Working closely with ATM Group’s engineers, we achieved all of Viaplay’s goals and desired system functionalities,” says Bartosz Stawiarski-Lietzau, Sales and Support Engineer of LP Systems. “Along with the VisTool controls in the audio control rooms, an additional VisTool computer is installed in the Master Control Room for quick access by the engineer. All of the Power Core units and diamond surfaces can be monitored, diagnosed and controlled there, with audio streams monitored using Lawo RƎLAY AoIP Stream Monitor software.”

The ability to tailor Lawo solutions to their specific needs was extremely important

to Viaplay, notes Stawiarski-Lietzau. “Like all complex broadcast operations, Viaplay has highly refined operational requirements. To meet these requirements, we needed to adjust the functions of mixing surface keys, customize control screens and match system functionality to workflow expectations. Lawo, with their intense focus on flexible, customizable solutions, made it easy for us to meet - and exceed - customer expectations.”

Pictured persons (left to right) - The LP Systems Team:
Bartosz Stawiarski-Lietzau, Robert Chądzyński, Artur Jóźwik

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