Vizrt creates leading-edge content production tools for the digital media industry. Their latest hit is a completely new workflow solution between Vizrt Multi Platform Suite and Escenic Content Studio. **François Laborie**, Vizrt's Executive VP Marketing explains it's all a simple matter of cross-publishing

FROM TV TO WEB, EASILY

The major news is not so much in the technology itself but in the workflow it enables. Basically it is always the same story of template graphics giving more tools to the journalists to get the story faster on air yet with more content around the story - maps, better or more footage, graphics or more branding. It's a very logical continuation towards the web and online department – we say that we should not limit all the content that has been created for live and for recorded TV to the broadcast newsroom, but we should allow all this content to be re-used and repurposed on the web.

We have actually implemented the workflow that a lot of our competitors are only talking about. We acquired Escenic last summer and our R&D department did a lot of work in the past months. So what we have now is the ActiveX, the little integration we have with the newsroom systems in the TV scenario, and we have exactly the same type of integration towards the web. So a journalist can access all the graphics or any template graphics that have been created by his creative department, and publish them with an article online. So we are talking about maps, polls, about all type of statistics, graphs.

Also headlines – in the finance section of your web site you may want to have headlines that include graphs of the current stock values. All of this is now possible - we can generate images that can be one-time produced or refreshed every time you reload the page.

So a graphic created for an HD TV broadcast will format correctly for the web?
There are a few scenarios there. Either you re-use exactly the same format and that will be put in a 16:9 format on the web if it's a full-screen graphic; when you drag and drop it into

your article then it will appear in a skyscraper format, but if you have to click a link to see the graphic, then it's published as a 16:9 format.

So you can have different variants of the same graphic depending on the medium you target, and depending on the position it will have on the page – part of a cover story or in line with the article. And depending on the workflow, it can be automated or manual.

And in terms of ease of use?

Typically, a journalist creates a new story in Escenic, and he will say 'now I want to create a new graphic that goes with my story' and then that opens up our ActiveX which is exactly the same ActiveX that the journalists in the newsroom are using, and then he is able to browse all the existing graphics. It can also browse the image database, and the video database in the same way.
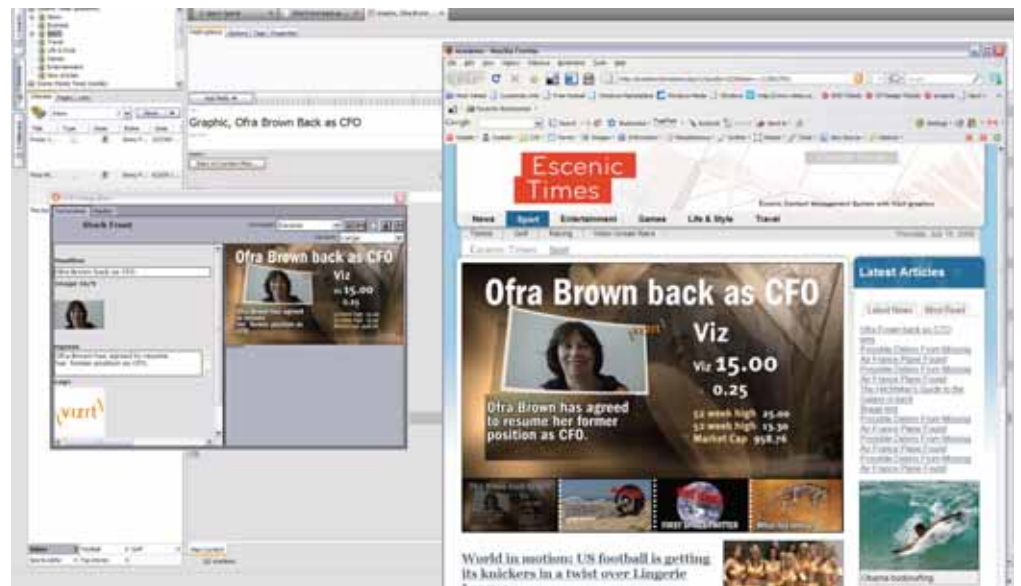
What about repurposing for mobile?

It's a simple matter of cross-publishing. You take your article and drag and drop into the mobile publication and then, if the templates have been done properly, the content will be formatted adequately to fit in a mobile phone, meaning the video will be re-transcoded to a mobile-friendly or actually to a lot of different formats, the behaviour of the text will also depend on the mobile phone that you have, and the graphics which are generated as images will of course be available as well on the mobile.

Your Viz MPS server can be hosted on a cloud or in a data centre?

When we talk about this type of workflow then it's hundreds of thousands of graphics every day. But for big events, like an election or soccer world cup, you will want to have a little bit more than just images on your web site and that's where the MPS has a big role to play because you want to have more interactivity, personalised content, mix of video and live graphics.

And there you will need to have

access to a lot of bandwidth, to a lot of hosting power, and that's where it became extremely relevant for us to offer this type of flexible solution. So we have currently a version of the MPS that is running on a cloud, and this can be scaled, this can be load-balanced, this can be replicated so that means that we can truly offer a service that would match the needs for special events.

Do you see the trend for newspapers to create web sites with video happening worldwide?

We are seeing a shift towards more media and content rich web sites but right now there is a skill barrier and also a workflow barrier as to how do I create more video content on my web site without only syndicating content from external sources. We know that our desk top editing solutions in some of the news TV stations are used for 60-70% of the content put on air, and craft editing is the remaining 30%. So it would allow the journalist to create much more content without having to run to this special craft editing department.

Where do you see this leading?

If we talk only broadcast markets, I think it's a must for all broadcasters. Having a global strategy across platforms is becoming vital. In the current situation where investments are more difficult to make the

> **Having a global strategy across platforms is a must for all broadcasters**

streamlined workflow approach is definitely a winner. If we talk beyond the broadcast industry, we see a lot of the sport industry being more and more interested in producing their own content and also having a longer relationship with their fans - building a fan base and building communities around their brand name.

How do you see the next 12-24 months?

We know that there are going to be far less projects, we are confident in our brand, and we will hear about the projects that are coming up – we will have to take them on a case-by-case basis.

We are well positioned to be part of the next phase of investment, no matter whether the situation improves or not.

Going towards digital assets is something that has to happen, having an online strategy has to happen, keeping the brand strong and consistent is something that has to be, so it is for us – we are part of the next evolution for the industry. Escenic is a big brand in the online and the newspaper industry. Not only the people who broadcast will know Vizrt but also the online, the interactive departments will know the Escenic brand and therefore we hopefully can reach them too.

François Laborie, thank you. ■