

ROHDE & SCHWARZ UPGRADES R&S®CLIPSTER FOR HIGH PRODUCTIVITY MASTERING AT EUROTAPE MEDIA



At a glance

EUROTAPE Nordkurier TV and Studio GmbH & Co. KG provides mastering and related services on behalf of all major broadcasters in Germany. Its work ranges from digitization and restoration to dubbing, transcoding and delivery.

To support daily workflows securely and seamlessly, EUROTAPE uses a combination of R&S®CLIPSTER to generate the deliverable masters and R&S®SpycerNode SC performance storage to store and manage all media. Wanting to speed up productivity and further enhance workflows, EUROTAPE upgraded to the newest version: R&S®CLIPSTER 6 Mk 2.

Summary

- **Customer:** EUROTAPE Nordkurier TV and Studio GmbH & Co. KG, Berlin, Germany
- **Task:** Central storage for multi-format content and high quality deliverables
- **Challenge:** High throughput, tight timelines and complex workflows
- **Solution:** R&S®SpycerNode SC central storage and R&S®CLIPSTER mastering
- **Key benefits:** Capability to convert to multiple formats, including very high resolution film scans; access from multiple third-party specialist software packages; integrated workflow from ingest to delivery and simple, automated creation of multiple deliverables; faster processing times

Case Study | Version 01.00

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The customer

EUROTAPE started out in Berlin over 40 years ago as a VHS replication facility. Over time it added the ability to manufacture CD, SACD, Blu-ray, DVD and vinyl, and it still provides those services to specialist record labels.

As a natural evolution of preparing masters for duplication, it developed comprehensive functionality to prepare and deliver broadcast masters for leading channels in Germany, such as ProSieben and Sky. Originally this was to tape and now of course, all broadcast deliverables are created as digital files.

The mastering service includes film scanning and digital restoration, titling and graphics, as well as localization, voice dubbing and creating subtitles and production of accessibility components.

The challenge

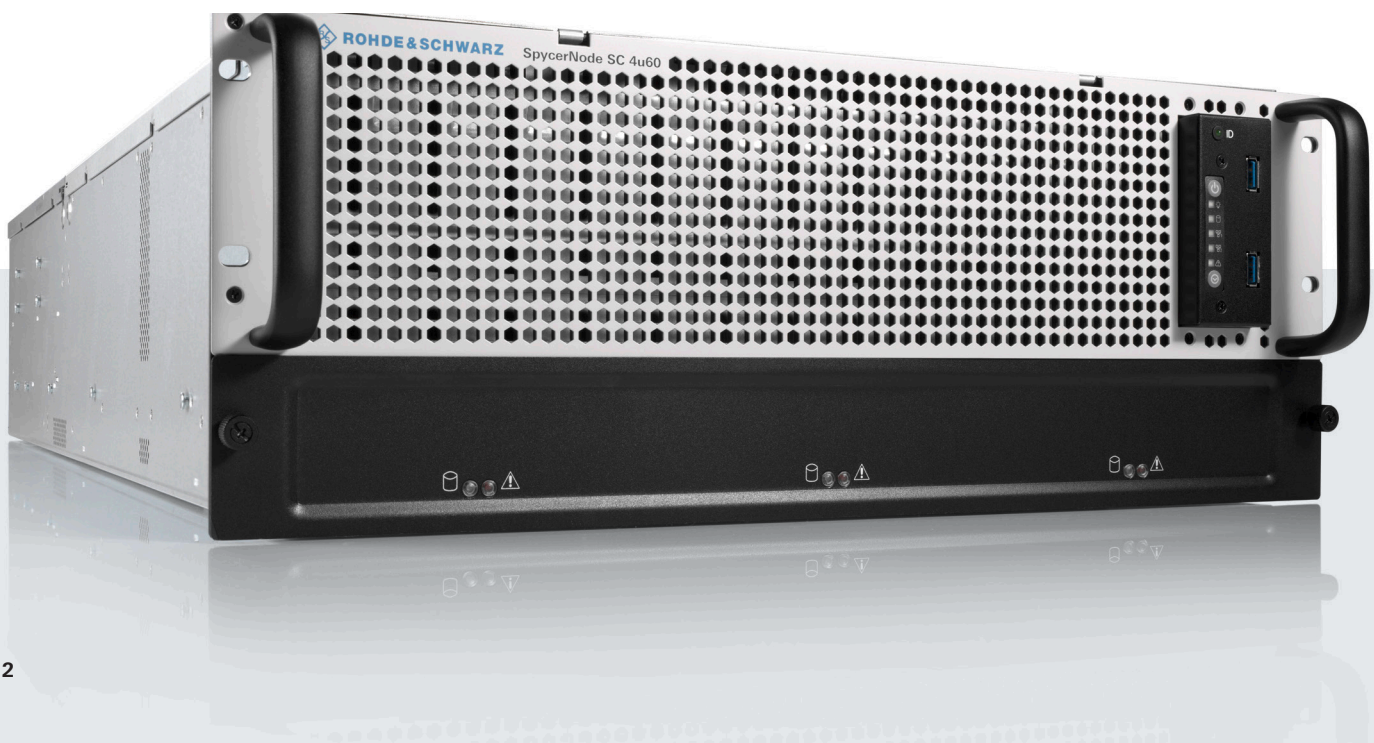
Whether the material is destined for physical media distribution or delivered to a broadcaster, EUROTAPE's first challenge is to ingest and manage a large amount of material. Content arrives in various formats, at resolutions of 4K Ultra HD and beyond.

The company also has the capability to scan and preserve film using an ARRISCAN with a wet gate. Specialists work to extract maximum detail and resolution from the film, then use digital tools for further restoration to create the perfect archive copy.

Whatever the source, the ingested material must then be made available to multiple workstations for further post processing. This includes a third-party grading suite for color correction, as well as edit and graphics workstations.

R&S® SpycerNode SC

- ▶ Purpose built storage for media environments
- ▶ Up to 22 Gbyte/s bandwidth per node
- ▶ Unified ethernet file and block storage
- ▶ Massive scalability
- ▶ Balanced out for redundancy and performance



Material from overseas may need to be dubbed into the German language. Berlin, the home of EUROTAPÉ, is the center for dubbing in Germany, and the company has studios for audio performances. This is often a critical part of the workflow: it is not uncommon for dubbing sessions to be finished just hours before a program is to be broadcast, so speed is a critical requirement. EUROTAPÉ also has a department specializing in subtitles.

Because the material comes from a range of sources, format conversion and transcoding are another critical part of the process. The company needs to track original material, initiate work orders for conversion when required, and ensure quality control checks are completed before delivery. With HDR and SDR color spaces now in routine use, color conversion is particularly important.

With its large volume of valuable content in multiple formats, EUROTAPÉ requires a central storage system which not only stores the material but also makes it available to all the workstations without cumbersome network transfers. Tight timelines demand that complex workflows be completed with minimal delay.

The solution

In 2016, when EUROTAPÉ became involved in DCP deliverables, the company searched the market for advanced technology solutions and identified the R&S®CLIPSTER as the right platform on which to base its digitization, restoration and deliverables workflow.

"We were newbies to DCP at the time, and it was important to find a solution that made the process simple and direct," said Ralf Jesse, Studio Manager at EUROTAPÉ. "We attended IBC in Amsterdam, and there we met the Rohde&Schwarz team."

"We found out very quickly that R&S®CLIPSTER was the solution we should use, given its reputation as the master of mastering. After several years, we are still satisfied and continue to use it today," adds Mathias Jentzen, CEO of EUROTAPÉ.

R&S®CLIPSTER

- ▶ Fast and reliable IMF and DCP mastering
- ▶ 4K uncompressed playback up to 120 fps
- ▶ HDR color-processing pipeline
- ▶ Input any file type and video signal
- ▶ Mix and match codecs alongside uncompressed frame sequences



"It saves time, and it makes our workflows very simple. That is really the biggest benefit of this new installation."

Mathias Jentzen, CEO of EUROTape

In 2023, EUROTape upgraded to R&S®CLIPSTER 6 Mk 2. "It's more powerful and speeds up the mastering process," Jesse said. "It also gives us the ability to work in resolutions above 4K. That is important, because we scan at up to 6K and we do not need to downscale. The same goes for HDR, which is now seamless."

Having brought R&S®CLIPSTER into the facility, the company recognized that their workflows could be transformed by having a single point of storage and access for the entire content pool. Having formed a strong relationship with Rohde&Schwarz, EUROTape discovered the potential for highly scalable, shared media storage and evaluated the R&S®SpycerNode SC.

"This is really the key to transforming the way we work," Jesse said. "All our workstations – the film scanner, the grading, the retouch, the editing and all the rest – are all on the R&S®SpycerNode SC. It means we do not have the hassle of duplicating data. From the scanner all the way to

the R&S®CLIPSTER for deliverables, we never have to think about transferring data."

Speed and security of workflows are critical for EUROTape. Although it is a small company with just over 20 employees, its reputation and capabilities mean it is in huge demand, and is extremely busy. By eliminating unnecessary data management and transfer tasks, staff are freed up for more productive work, enabling the team to take on more projects.

The EUROTape project framework and installation was assisted by systems integrator SHM Broadcast GmbH, and has been upgraded with the new R&S®CLIPSTER and R&S®SpycerNode SC with support from Rohde & Schwarz. The solution uses a 100 gigabit network, IBM Spectrum Scale and R&S®Spycer software. This provides simple but secure access control, so that all workstations can see the content they need.



“Our partnership with Rohde & Schwarz has spanned many years. Whether we want technical support or to talk through extensions to our capabilities, we know that the people at Rohde & Schwarz are there for us.”

Ralf Jesse, Studio Manager at EUROTape

Conclusion

EUROTape has won an admirable reputation in Germany for creating deliverables – originally physical media, and now mostly digital files for broadcast and online distribution.

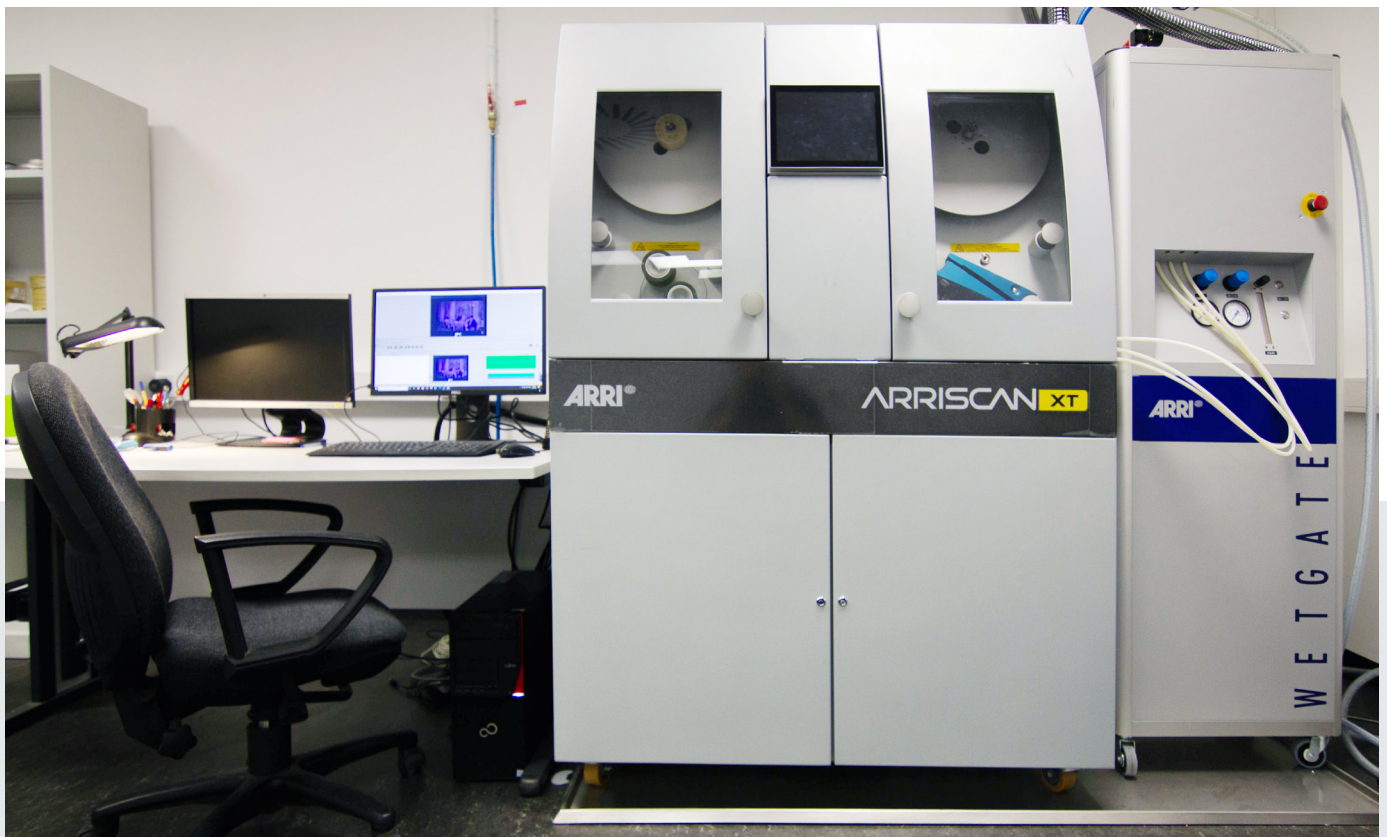
It receives media as files but also in archival formats, such as film. Germany historically holds the film industry in high regard, and there are still vast amounts of material in studio archives awaiting digitization and restoration from specialists like EUROTape.

To provide high levels of productivity and meet demanding timelines, the company needed a central solution that would provide common storage and content management. The solution would be required to work with the whole spectrum of formats and resolutions, including original scans at 6K resolution.

R&S®SpycerNode SC shared media storage provides the common platform. Workstations running software from several vendors are directly connected to R&S®SpycerNode SC, allowing editing, dubbing, subtitling, color grading, restoration and more, with minimal data transfers. This ensures the highest productivity with no downtime to move assets.

The final stage is creating the deliverables for the end client. This is a task for R&S®CLIPSTER, which is also connected to the shared storage. Simple instructions set up the destination parameters for each job.

“To be successful in a fast-paced industry with stringent requirements, it is paramount for us to have a trusted partner we can talk with about our challenges and know they will support us in quickly finding solutions,” said EUROTape’s Ralf Jesse.



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