



## TV3 chooses sQ for News

Leading Malaysian commercial broadcaster speeds throughput and slashes costs



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Founded in 1984, TV3 is Malaysia's first private free to air commercial TV station, funded solely by its advertising revenues. It has by any standards been a commercial success; at its inception, TV3 was broadcasting a single channel with a total staff of 85. Today, it has grown into a four channel operation that includes 8TV, channel 9 and NTV7, with over 1000 staff at TV3 alone.

News and on-air promotions have always played an important role in TV3's output and audience appeal – that's why one of its very early purchases in 1984 was an original Quantel Paintbox. Since then, the station has also never been shy of adopting new technologies – purchasing the revolutionary Quantel Henry digital editing and Hal dynamic graphics systems in the early 1990s very shortly after their introduction by Quantel. In 1994 TV3 became a very early adopter of server technology when it installed one of the very first Quantel Clipbox video servers to play out commercials.

In 2005, TV3 made the decision to transition its news production from its existing linear tape-based operation to an integrated server-based system. The decision was driven by two major considerations: the tape based system was becoming expensive to maintain, while server based systems appeared to have matured to provide not only superior reliability

and lower running costs, but also would enable TV3 to get its news to air faster and looking better.

TV3's engineers had in fact been observing the emergence of server based systems over several years, and had also kept in close touch with users of a variety of different manufacturers' systems, so they were already well aware of the potential benefits available. The final choice in favour of the Quantel sQ integrated news system was influenced by its streamlined workflow and greater speed to air, bolstered by favourable feedback from other Quantel sQ users around the world, and the reassurance from TV3's long and successful relationship with Quantel and its local distributor Dagang Teknik over the years.

TV3's sQ news system is centred on two sQ servers with a total of 110 hours each of IMX 30 broadcast quality and 1.5 Mbit/s browse storage; the system

Front cover – TV3 News Anchor  
Norliza Mohd. Zain.

Right: Cutting a news story on  
one of TV3's nine sQ Edit desktop  
editors.

Far Right: One of TV3's journalists  
checks through the stories on her  
desktop in the newsroom with sQ  
View and iNews.



Right: The ingest area where satellite and local feeds are brought into the Quantel sQ system via Omnibus automation.



has a total of 12 dynamically switchable i/o ports. Currently TV3 ingests three satellite feeds (Reuters, APTN and SNTV) and two incoming lines to cater for local needs. Interestingly, some of the SNTV material originates on a Quantel sQ integrated production system at mediahouse in London!

The two sQ servers are configured to give fully redundant backup to each other – an enormous benefit of Quantel’s unique ‘no copy’ architecture. The system supports 30 sQ View applications for journalist browsing and shot selection, nine sQ Edit workstations for desktop editing and 3 sQ Edit Plus workstations for heavy duty craft editing. Two QPaintbox desktop graphics applications complete the Quantel line-up.

The system is interfaced with TV3’s Avid iNews newsroom via the OmniBus’ MOS gateway, and ingest and playout are controlled by OmniBus’

Columbus automation. TV3 has also invested in an advanced archive system, based around a DIVA asset management system and Spectra Logic Library using SAIT-1 digital tape drives.

The new system has been readily embraced by TV3’s production staff; they treat it very much as just another tool of the trade, and the system has already proved itself in helping them complete their stories more quickly. With three half hour bulletins a day to create for TV3 (morning, afternoon and late night) as well as its flagship one hour news broadcast in primetime and regular short bulletins, speed to air is proving to be a major benefit. The newsroom also produces a half hour of Mandarin and English news daily for 8TV.

TV3’s journalists use their sQ View desktop applications for viewing and shot selection, leaving the final editing to be completed by craft editors on

Right: TV3’s flagship 8pm news ‘Buletin Utama’ on air.



Far Right: The two sQ servers sit at the heart of TV3’s central apparatus room.



Right: Datuk Kamarulzaman, TV3 Director of News and Current Affairs. "Our speed to air has been greatly increased," he reports.



sQ Cut and sQ Edit Plus workstations. Because of the sQ no-copy architecture, it is a simple matter for the journalists and craft editors to pick up the selected material for refining into finished packages.

TV3 Director of News and Current Affairs, Datuk Kamarulzaman, is clear on the benefits that the sQ system have brought to TV3. "Firstly, our speed to air has been greatly increased, and this naturally leads to a higher quality viewing experience for our audience. The system's ability to make all ingested material instantly available to multiple users is a tremendous step forward – it massively increases our editing efficiency. We are also realising substantial savings on running costs compared with

our previous tape-based system – around 50%. Finally, the system's scalability is also important to us as we continue to grow and expand. We are planning to add a further 100 hours' storage in 2006 to cater for more ingest feeds, and the system will accommodate this without redundancy."

And what of Quantel? "Quantel's support has been good, with technical assistance from Hong Kong and the factory in the UK," Datuk Kamarulzaman reports. "We have taken advantage of Quantel's QCare comprehensive support package, and features such as a weekly remote system 'health check' help to ensure continuous reliability and stability."