Neptune Lite Automation

Neptune Lite is an entry-level automation solution that has been designed to meet the needs of the small broadcast operation. It provides frame accurate, reliable and easy-to-use playout and ingest tools that can be used to run up to four television channels.

Neptune Lite is built using modern software technology and runs on the latest PC hardware platforms. It uses the industry standard Windows 2000 or XP operating systems and has a user-friendly Windows user interface.

The base package includes a Client and a Device Controller, which controls the broadcast devices via RS422 or network interfaces. The Client is multi-functional, providing an intuitive user interface from which operators can control transmission, ingest material, perform media management and monitor status using different panels. The Device Controller communicates to the Clients via Pebble Beach's powerful TCP/IP protocol.

Neptune Lite shares the same core technology of Neptune, Pebble Beach Systems' full-scale multi-channel automation solution. Therefore, small broadcasters can begin operations with an Neptune Lite system, which can be upgraded to Neptune whenever they need it without loosing any of their initial investment.

A separate housekeeper hosts the system database and generates logs. Neptune Lite can optionally work with Anchor Media Manager to enable intelligent direct media control and tracking across near line storage and stand alone data tape drives.

Ingest

Ingest Clients are used for preparing material for playout. Start and end points on tapes can be identified and are stored in the system database. Barcodes can also be printed and attached to tapes so that they can be easily identified later. Material can be copied from source devices into a number of destination devices, and to minimize operator workload, ingest jobs can be batched. Live recordings are also supported and these can be manually triggered or pre-scheduled. Dub lists can be loaded from traffic to avoid operators having to retype information.

Transmission

The transmission Client is the tool used to view, edit and control the on-air playlists. In addition to the classical playlist display, Pebble Beach Systems has developed Periscope, a timeline viewer. Instead of displaying playlists in the traditional way with the schedule running down the screen, the timeline displays multiple playlists across the screen in a pictorial fashion. This enables multiple channels to be viewed with ease on a single screen.

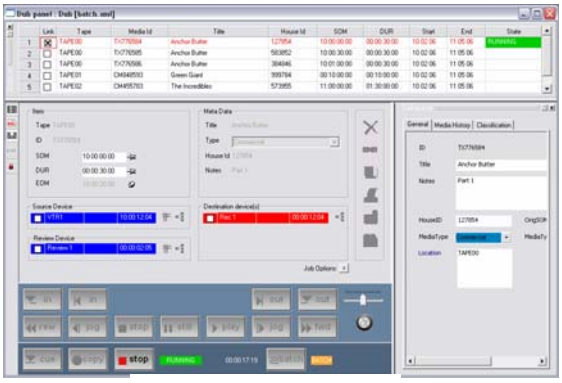
Neptune's powerful secondaries capabilities manage DVE moves, graphical elements, subtitling and GPIs. An intuitive user interface displays important information without cluttering playlists. It also supports Rules-Based secondaries, which greatly simplifies controlling and managing repetitive graphics and avoids the need to schedule these types of secondary one-by-one (e.g. "always turn logo off during commercial breaks" and to "turn it on again after the commercial break"). Many other rules can also be defined.

Fault tolerance

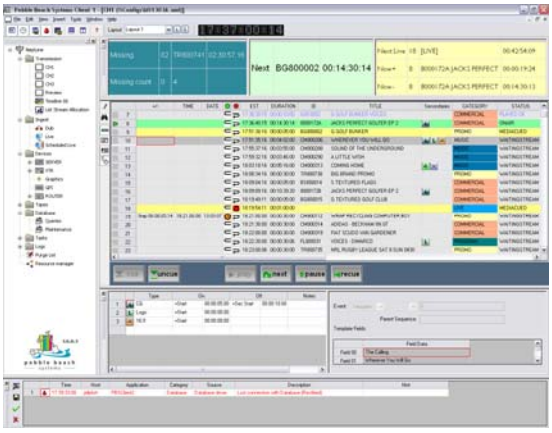
Neptune device controllers and servers are supplied with dual redundant PSU's and RAID1 system drives. The device controllers continue to function even when database servers, the network or client machines fail. A wide choice of control redundancy is available ranging from automatic Playlist synchronization or air protect to N+n and 2+1 where a single spare server decoder tracks the on-air decoders and can be used automatically as a substitute.

Summary of Features

- Highly reliable, proven in many installations
- Client-Server architecture.
- Controls up to 4 channels.
- Hosts up to 4 Clients.
- TCP/IP network protocol for internal data communications between the controller and the Clients.
- User friendly Graphical User Interface.
- XML external playlist translator and Traffic interface available
- Hardware control panels available for Ingest and Playout.
- Preparation, Preview and full Playlist options
- SQL server database. The database stores information about the stations assets, such as the ID, title, duration, and so on. The database also tracks the location of material.
- Powerful searching tools allow running sophisticated queries to locate media easily and quickly
- Optional direct control of near line storage and stand alone data tape drives without needing third-party middleware
- Virtually unlimited secondary events including rules-based secondaries
- Up to 8 configurable Timers per Playlist
- Security. Clients can be given different access privileges to suit a stations needs.
- Frame accurate. Is able to ingest into and play out frame accurately from devices that are also frame accurate.
- Highly configurable. Each system can be configured to deliver the work flow demanded.
- Fault tolerant configurations, such as Playlist Synchronisation, device mirroring , N+n
- User configurable Alarm and Alert messages
- Intelligent routing. Routing paths can be managed dynamically according to priority.
- Switcher monitoring. Routers and master control switchers are continuously monitored for manual control panel changes and in the case where an operator changes an on-air path in the router, perhaps by accident, an error is reported and an entry made in the as-run log.
- Easily expandable to Neptune to add direct data tape library control and browse workflows



Ingest



Playlist

For more information contact sales@pebble.tv or visit www.pebble.tv

Pebble Beach Systems pursues an intensive research and development program. Products are continuously enhanced and improved by adding new benefits and features. Specifications subject to change without notice.