

# TVB EUROPE

Intelligence for the media & entertainment industry

**JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2019**



LET'S GO  
**OUTSIDE**





# STAYING CONNECTED

**Thomas Bischofer**, head of production, Ruptly, explains why decentralised and reliable signal routing is key for the company's OB vehicles

**PICTURED ABOVE  
AND RIGHT:**  
Inside Ruptly's OB vans

**R**uptly is an award-winning global multimedia agency based in Berlin providing real-time and archival visual news content to media brands worldwide, with customers ranging from large broadcast networks to online content providers. From 360° videos of spacewalks to aerial drone views of news events, Ruptly is committed to pushing the boundaries of video journalism using the latest broadcast and newsgathering technologies.

To that end, we recently launched two all-new production vehicles. Designed and built by Qvest Media, the new OB van and DSNG vehicle offer state-of-the-art equipment optimised for high-quality 4K and UHD productions — including live coverage of events in news and sports, as well as cinematic-style documentaries. Riedel Communications' MediorNet real-time media network and Artist digital matrix intercom provide the

integrated, decentralised, and redundant signal routing and communications backbone for both vehicles.

## MEETING MOBILE BROADCASTING REQUIREMENTS

In 2018, we had a task to provide a single van that could combine both OB and DSNG capabilities to cover the





**LEFT:**  
Thomas Bischofer

FIFA World Cup in Russia. However, we realised that our strategy had to change to meet a key requirement: staying lightweight. This would allow us to use a standard driver's licence in the EU and to navigate Russia's roads without weight limitations, which restricts movement for vehicles over 3.5 tons.

Therefore, we opted for two smaller and lighter vans – one to handle OB and the other for satellite uplinking. This decision ensured more flexibility for a high-profile event.

We had other key criteria when evaluating technology solutions vendors. First and foremost, we wanted to be able to operate both vehicles together as a single production unit, which would require seamless networking and communications with the ability to route any signal to any location in either van. We also needed stageboxes that could extend that connectivity to any device outside the vans, including anywhere on the set.

Based on our long-term and successful partnership with Riedel, dating back to our company's founding in 2013, we knew the MediorNet/Artist solution could meet and exceed these requirements. We also had a strong recommendation from our design partner, Qvest Media, to go forward with Riedel.

As Norman Tettenborn, principal at Qvest Media, puts it: "This system required a particularly compact and efficient media and communications backbone. We knew these requirements could be met with Riedel Communications as MediorNet offers redundancy, scalability, and a decentralised topography, making it the ideal solution for modular system design for live broadcasting."

#### **A SOLID BACKBONE WITH MINIMUM WEIGHT**

The MediorNet network supporting the two new Ruptly vehicles consists of five MicroN high-density media distribution devices, all interconnected to form a decentralised routing matrix. Four of the MicroNs handle signal distribution and processing, and the fifth provides

virtual multiviewer capabilities. MediorNet distributes all audio and video signals in real time between connected nodes in the OB truck, the DSNG van, and an array of MediorNet Compact Pro stageboxes that can be placed wherever they are needed on location.

An Artist 32 digital matrix intercom mainframe enables robust and reliable crew communications for each vehicle. The Artist intercom supports four RSP-2318 SmartPanels and three Bolero wireless beltacks, with intercom signals distributed by MediorNet. Operators, administrators, and crew now profit from enhanced workflows as a result of the seamless integration and perfect interplay of panels and beltacks.

The decentralised routing approach of Riedel's MediorNet makes it ideal for the rigors of live broadcasting, and it delivers great cost savings for 4K and UHD productions. MediorNet not only reduces single points of failure, but also creates powerful operational efficiencies by allowing us to place physical I/Os closer to where they're needed.

Also, MediorNet's integrated processing capabilities include embedding/de-embedding and up/down conversion, which reduces the need for a bunch of single-purpose peripheral devices. Reducing the amount of equipment has resulted in significant weight savings, which means we have been able to meet our technical networking requirements without exceeding the 3.5-ton weight limit for each vehicle.

#### **PUTTING THE SYSTEM TO THE TEST**

Our two new vans had their baptism by fire during last year's international football tournament in Russia, and the performance of MediorNet was outstanding. Previously, we were only able to deploy two DSNG vehicles to do basic stand-up positions, but this time we were able to expand our coverage to three-camera shows, including live matches, using the new OB van. Our coverage in Russia was in HD, however the two new vehicles were already able to handle the most demanding 4K-UHD productions.

Versatility is truly a keyword here, since it's such a critical factor in the design of OB and DSNG vehicles. With the MediorNet installation on board our two new vehicles, Ruptly is a test case for how to achieve a high level of technical quality and agility with minimal space and with a competitive budget. We value our partnership with Riedel, and we know we can rely on the Riedel team to provide outstanding support and an extremely fast response when we need equipment or service. Best of all, we can count on MediorNet to deliver the perfect blend of high-quality output and reliability for even our most demanding live productions. ■

*'Operators, administrators, and crew now profit from enhanced workflows.'*

**THOMAS BISCHOFER**