"With a diverse portfolio of projects, Silver Spoon has become an industry leader due to its unrivalled commitment to constantly innovating and expanding the boundaries of real-time production, which has seen it highly sought-after for real-time content for all screens," says Dan Pack, MD, Silver Spoon.

In July this year, the company was acquired by AE Live, a global provider of data and broadcast solutions.

"I feel that, together with AE Live and [its creative team] Ignite, and our shared vision for high-end immersive graphics and animation, our common focus on engaging and informing viewers, and the global reach and experience across the group, we have something really special and unique," says Pack. "I am ecstatic about what this means for our business, our clients and our people — we will be stronger, better, faster."

"For me, it's always about growth: growing our work and client base in the US and internationally, growing our understanding of the industry, growing our capabilities and, most importantly, growing and expanding our talent's skills and professional experience," Pack continues. "As a part of AE Live, we have the opportunity to do all of that faster with more efficiency and support than we would have on our own. We're in a time of fervent innovation and adoption of new techniques, especially virtual and real-time, and it's direly important to me that we are on the front lines. With their experience running graphics on thousands of live broadcasts with sports ranging from basketball and football to kabaddi and cricket, we instantly gain a wealth of knowledge and resources that we can apply to our own R&D and innovation efforts.

"We've already started collaborating with AE and Ignite on several projects. It has been unbelievably exciting to see what happens when you combine AE's experience, their knowledge of data acquisition and visualisation, and Ignite's branding and visual prowess with our team's penchant for innovation in AR and XR and capability in Unreal."

Singular.live

MIKE WARD
HEAD OF MARKETING

"Singular worked with partners Reality Check Solutions and QTV to provide a full matchday graphics solution for several SPFL clubs and Championship side Ipswich," says Mike Ward, head of marketing, Singular. live. "The solution includes live data integration from StatsPerform (Opta) enabling a high-quality, bespoke matchday production for each of the clubs by the team at QTV. Following the success of the first season, this is a continuation of the service that we provided for the previous season with new enhanced data visualisations and upgraded designs."

Ward says expanding Singular's partner network to support more enterprise customers has been fundamental to its ability to "fit into any live production workflow".

"That has allowed us to work with a wider range of clients," Ward adds. "At the same time, we've been able to showcase the fact that Singular is much more than 'just' a graphics platform. As a vertically integrated technology stack for graphic overlays, partners and clients can integrate Singular into their own technology stacks to take much greater advantage of the many additional features and functionality of Singular, including localisation, personalisation and interactivity."

Ward says Singular is currently engaged in projects under NDA, with some major launches scheduled in early 2024. "Our industry is moving now towards a point of actively engaging with cloud production technologies after a period of trial and testing," he says. "We're seeing this in the growth in uptake through both sign-ups and platform activity in our analytics. It's also evident through our wide partner network who are increasingly expanding their knowledge of Singular and their use of our platform."

"We're seeing traction in FAST channels where the scalability of our cloud platform makes localisation a highly attractive use case," he continues, adding that flexibility and increased sustainability are also seen as key drivers.

"Over the past few years, we've seen a real drive towards collaboration, driven in part by new entrants to our industry being extremely focused on their core offering. Singular, for example, is 100% focused on graphics — it's only one part of any production, so our partner network is so important."

"The other key aspect of platforms like Singular is that they have APIs which, in theory, makes it easier to integrate with other platforms," he continues. "Obviously not all APIs are built the same, but this growing integration of partners providing best-of-breed services will continue to erode the traditional scenario of single vendors trying to create a walled garden providing all services to a varying level of quality."

"As economic pressures mount for broadcasters and live producers all over the globe, the cost savings delivered through Singular will add further weight to the accelerating transition to our platform from traditional systems," Ward adds.

slomo.tv

IGOR VITIORETS
CTO

"Our company is confidently expanding its presence in football with VAR," says Igor Vitiorets, CTO at slomo. tv. "Together with the Tajikistan Football Federation we are implementing VAR in the national championship. In addition to supplying the VAR equipment, slomo.tv specialists carried out intensive training on how to work with the system for VARs/AVARs/ROs."
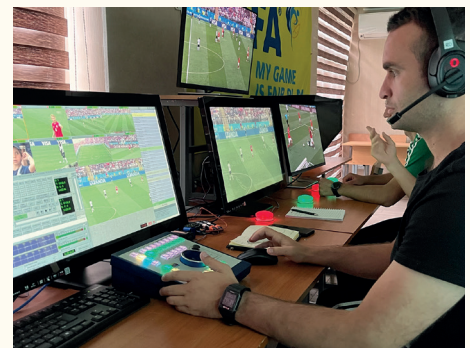
"After the official implementation of FIFA Quality-certified videoReferee VAR equipment,

the Georgian Football Federation has expanded its VAR van fleet by two more vehicles, equipping them with a full VAR set produced by slomo.tv," continues Vitiorets. "Since spectators and TV viewers want to follow the VAR reviews, all videoReferee systems provide broadcasters with the video output of the referee's interface. Last year, we added RRA-MIDO — a venue information graphics function — to our VAR servers. The videoReferee outputs VAR graphics to broadcasters and to the arena screens to keep the spectators informed of the VAR team's actions."

For basketball competitions, slomo.tv has developed and started production of a specialised mobile Instant Replay System (IRS). A total of 14 kits have already been sold.

"The IRS hardware in the mobile rack is installed next to the OB van or in a technical room, and the compact videoReferee box is placed in the arena creating a complete workplace for a replay operator," says Vitiorets. "Both units are connected via fibre cable, which allows the system modules to be installed up to 20km from each other. This provides the customer with a flexible solution that works with any OB truck and allows the IRS to be installed in any arena. The referee review can be easily set up in compliance with IRS technical regulations and is also convenient for referees."

"We also launched the Simple R 4K — a compact and affordable entry-level 4K replay and recording server," adds Vitiorets "This server is a great fit for sports broadcasters and video production companies of any level that work with UHD signals. By NAB 2024, we plan to launch another entry-level server for 4K, but with even greater functionality. Affordable VAR solutions for football and video-refereeing systems for other sports are also high on our priority list."

"This year we launched a timing and events control system for team sports, the match-controller Control-MC," he adds. "It's designed to integrate not only with display systems and data consumers in the arena, but also with various consumers of match-controller data working via internet or LAN. These include various record-keeping and statistics systems of the sports leagues and federations themselves, as well as third-party consumers. Control-MC is compatible with most common timing and events data transfer protocols for video-refereeing systems, scoreboards, information graphics systems and others."

Solid State Logic

BERNY CARPENTER
BROADCAST PRODUCT MANAGER

"At IBC this year we launched Tempest Control App, a software package which can be used to directly control our Tempest Engines," says Berny Carpenter, broadcast product manager, Solid State Logic. "This exciting addition to the System T range provides even greater flexibility, allowing us to scale systems up or down to meet the unique requirements of any broadcast audio production. Our flypack offering for remote production has become more compact, without losing any of the power harnessed in the Tempest Engine. With the IP-native distributed infrastructure of System T, and processing designed to natively handle audio, from mono through to the latest immersive formats, we are uniquely placed to be able to meet the audio production needs of broadcasters exploring and deploying all forms of production — whether on-site, remote or cloud based."

"It's been an exciting year for Solid State Logic with our cloud-based audio processing engine being used on a number of proof-of-concept events, both in Europe and the United States," Carpenter continues. "Developed within the Audiotonix group in partnership with our sister company Calrec, we are pushing the boundaries of what has previously been considered possible in terms of audio processing scale when it comes to cloud production.

"Working so closely with key clients on these proof-of-concept events has been invaluable to guiding our development. Together, we are defining the future of what is possible with cloud-based live audio production, augmenting our existing range of System T control surfaces and hardware processing engines. We are looking forward to continuing these close collaborations in the upcoming year."

Sony

NORBERT PAQUET
HEAD OF LIVE PRODUCTION SOLUTIONS

"Over the past 12 months we've seen some exciting examples of the possibilities for remote and distributed/decentralised production, underlining the roles played by IP and cloud in enabling flexible, resilient and cost-efficient new workflows," says Norbert Paquet, Sony Europe's head of live production solutions. "In particular we are continuing to successfully harness the IP expertise of Sony Group company Nevion, and the network technology's implications for dramatically rethinking sports production. Working with Nevion, for example, we've helped to create an all-IP remote/distributed production ecosystem in Norway for TV 2 and Telenor that allows the exchange of SDI and SMPTE ST2110 signals between the broadcaster, participating production companies and over 60 sporting venues.

"Another illustration of our work with Nevion is a highly robust IP contribution solution deployed by Viacom18 for live coverage of the 2023 Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket season. As digital rights owner for the IPL, Viacom18 connected 12 stadiums with three of their studio locations to produce regional feeds that have been enjoyed have by more than 24 million concurrent consumers on Viacom18's JioCinema OTT streaming platform. Nevion's Virtuoso software defined media node handled the transport of up to 16 HD and four UHD/4K signals from the stadiums — as well as return feeds — via a redundant wide-area network over distances up to 2,000km."

Recent product introductions include the MLS-X1 modular switcher/processor. "A core element of Sony's Networked Live environment, the MLS-X1 allows event producers to take full advantage of scalable production resources