

user report

Monitoring UPC

By DANIEL ADAMS

As Europe's largest cable TV provider, UPC Broadband serves more than 14m RGUs in nine countries throughout the continent. Like cable providers everywhere, we face intense competition driven by the explosion in content and subsequent viewer demand for both linear and sophisticated on-demand and interactive services.

As such, we have placed a high premium on quality of service and quality of experience as the key to maintaining our leadership position and competitive advantage. An important element in this strategy is the Volicon Observer Remote Programme Monitor (RPM), which enables us to ensure a very high-quality viewing experience.

The Observer RPM automatically scans post-set-top-box (STB) content around the clock. This gives us proactive monitoring capabilities at the most important point in the delivery chain: the output that viewers actually see on their televisions. To date, the RPM has been deployed by our largest property, UPC Netherlands, with a central server running at our network operations centre in Amsterdam and RPM systems connected to STBs at remote hub sites in Helmond and Rotterdam. The RPM system proactively monitors UPC Netherlands' full line-up of 120 digital and analogue channels.

With the Observer RPM, we have a centralised view of video quality at each of our remote hub sites that provides A/V streaming of the actual broadcast from a customer's perspective – live or historical. The system automatically tests signal integrity, detecting video faults such as black screen, frozen or no video, and violations of audio thresholds.

The RPM system interfaces with our network management system to issue alerts based on SNMP traps, which enables our technicians to respond to errors immediately. Our NOC engineer is able to view alarms from all areas of the network via a unified interface, and then drill down to the problem by viewing a clip of the actual post-STB A/V.

Building on the success of the Observer RPM implementation in the Netherlands, we expect to expand the system further in our footprint and we are taking steps to implement monitoring and logging for our interactive offerings as well. The ability to provide interactive services that enable customers to decide when, where, and how to watch content is an integral part of UPC Broadband's strategy, and we are committed to investing in top-of-the-line technologies such as the Observer RPM to ensure that these services are delivered to our high quality standards.

To summarise, the Observer RPM has become an important component of our operation. Although we are the largest cable TV provider in Europe, we face significant competition that raises viewers' quality expectations while driving down prices.

Solutions such as the RPM, which provides cutting-edge monitoring functionality in a cost-effective and elegantly simple package, are giving us the control we need to proactively deliver the quality product our customers expect while driving down our customer support and troubleshooting costs.

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Post STB Monitoring and Logging Solutions

- QoE Monitoring of SD and HD
- 24/7 Recording at Full Frame Rate/Resolution
- On Demand and Interactive Service Scripting
- Signal Integrity Alerting
- Closed Caption Text Monitoring
- Transport Stream Analyzer Integration
- Live and Recorded Video Streaming
- Virtual Remote Control
- Program or Ad Verification
- Scheduled Recording

Know your Customer's Experience

