

# TVB EUROPE

MAY 2026

In partnership with **tvtech** · **RADIOWORLD**

FUTURE

A photograph of three men sitting around a dark, reflective table in a studio. They are all smiling and looking towards each other. Each man has a professional microphone in front of him. The man on the left is bald and wearing a light-colored polo shirt. The man in the middle has short grey hair and glasses, wearing a blue t-shirt. The man on the right is wearing a black cap, glasses, and a black and white t-shirt. The background shows studio lighting equipment and a window with blinds.

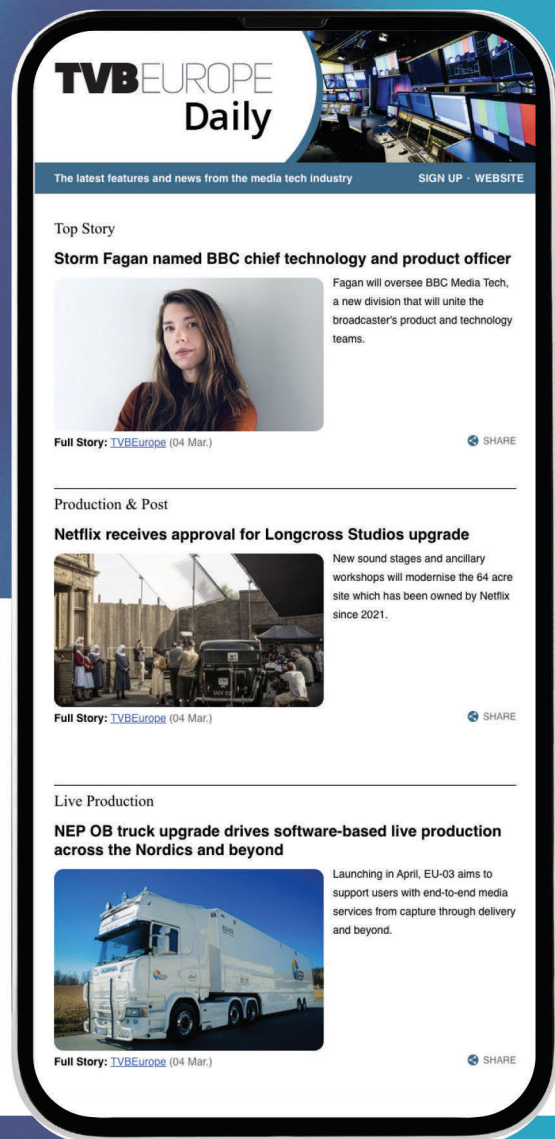
## *Eye-catching* **AUDIO**

*Why video is the new standard for podcasting*

# TVBEUROPE NEWSLETTERS

Keep up-to-date with  
all of our market  
leading news, features  
and analysis with our  
**daily newsletters**

**SUBSCRIBE  
NOW**



**TVBEUROPE.COM/SUBSCRIBE**



# VIDEO AND THE AUDIO STAR

**B**ack in the early 2000s, I was working at a well-known London radio station. At the same time, Apple iPods were everywhere and the powers that be decided a great way to promote our shows was to create podcasts. My job was to keep a list of the best bits of each day's show, and once we went off air, create a 10-20 minute podcast which would be uploaded to Apple Music.

Fast forward a few years, and I found myself in front of the microphone. I would join a bunch of film fans each week to record a 'pubcast' where we'd head to a pub and discuss our thoughts on the week's releases while using a dictaphone. At the same time, I was also recording a weekly showbiz news podcast with a former radio friend using Skype.

My point is, podcasts have always been a simple way to connect with an audience. Back then, you didn't need hugely expensive pieces of equipment to get an audio-only recording out to listeners.

Podcasts have evolved again in recent years to include video. The difference now is that with video, there's an opportunity to make the visuals sophisticated. There are reasonably priced cameras, microphones, virtual sets and professional studios that can help creatives produce visual podcasts that will engage audiences.

I firmly believe that visual podcasts are here to stay. We are already seeing interest from major broadcasters and streamers. In the UK, one of the most-watched shows on BBC One at the start of the year was *The Traitors: Uncloaked*, a visual podcast spin-off from the main series. There are also rumours of a new visual podcast taking the place of *Strictly Come Dancing* companion show, *It Takes Two*. And with Netflix signing up *The Rest is Football* for the World Cup this summer, it feels like this is the time when visual podcasts are really going to enter the mainstream. I even read an article in one of the Hollywood trades earlier this year suggesting visual podcasts could take the place of daytime talk shows in the United States—after all, they're much cheaper to produce.

In this ebook, we take a look at how visual podcasts have been rising in popularity and the technology behind them, from cameras to microphones, lighting to visual effects. Because this growing phenomenon looks set to be the next big creative success. ■

**JENNY PRIESTLEY**  
**CONTENT DIRECTOR, TVBEUROPE**

## Contents

- 04** Dual-format dominance
- 10** Seen, not just heard
- 12** The next evolution of visual podcasting
- 14** Inside the visual podcast studio
- 18** Bright ideas for visual podcast lighting
- 20** Don't forget the sound!

# TVBEUROPE

[www.tvbeurope.com](http://www.tvbeurope.com)

### FOLLOW US

**X.com:** TVBEUROPE / **Facebook:** TVBEUROPE1 / **Bluesky:** TVBEUROPE

### CONTENT

**Content Director:** Jenny Priestley  
[jenny.priestley@futurenet.com](mailto:jenny.priestley@futurenet.com)

**Senior Content Writer:** Matthew Corrigan  
[matthew.corrigan@futurenet.com](mailto:matthew.corrigan@futurenet.com)

**Graphic Designers:** Cliff Newman, Steve Mumby

**Production Manager:** Nicole Schilling

**Contributors:** Bruce Aleksander, Paul McLane

### ADVERTISING SALES

**Publisher TVBEurope/TV Tech, B2B Tech:**  
Joseph Palombo [joseph.palombo@futurenet.com](mailto:joseph.palombo@futurenet.com)

**Account Director:** Hayley Brailey-Woolfson  
[hayley.braileywoolfson@futurenet.com](mailto:hayley.braileywoolfson@futurenet.com)

### SUBSCRIBER CUSTOMER SERVICE

To subscribe, change your address, or check on your current account status, go to [www.tvbeurope.com/subscribe](http://www.tvbeurope.com/subscribe)

### ARCHIVES

Digital editions of the magazine are available to view on [ISSUU.com](http://ISSUU.com). Recent back issues of the printed edition may be available please contact [customerservice@futurenet.com](mailto:customerservice@futurenet.com) for more information.

### LICENSING/REPRINTS/PERMISSIONS

TVBE is available for licensing. Contact the Licensing team to discuss partnership opportunities. Head of Print Licensing  
[Rachel.Shaw.licensing@futurenet.com](mailto:Rachel.Shaw.licensing@futurenet.com)

### MANAGEMENT

**SVP, MD, B2B** Amanda Darman-Allen

**VP, Market Lead** Carmel King

**MD, Content, Broadcast Tech** Paul McLane

**VP, Global Head of Sales, B2B** Dena Malouf

**Managing VP of Sales, B2B Tech** Adam Goldstein

**VP, Global Head of Strategy & Ops, B2B** Allison Markert

**VP, Product & Marketing, B2B** Andrew Buchholz

**Head of Production US & UK** Mark Constance

**Head of Design, B2B** Nicole Cobban

**ppa**

Future PLC is a member of the Periodical Publishers Association



**ipso. Regulated**

We are committed to only using magazine paper which is derived from responsibly managed, certified forestry and chlorine-free manufacture. The paper in this magazine was sourced and produced from sustainable managed forests, conforming to strict environmental and socioeconomic standards.

All contents © 2026 Future Publishing Limited or published under licence. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used, stored, transmitted or reproduced in any way without the prior written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 203885) is registered in England and Wales. Registered office: Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA. All information contained in this publication is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. You are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/services referred to in this publication. Apps and websites mentioned in this publication are not under our control. We are not responsible for their contents or any other changes or updates to them. This magazine is fully independent and not affiliated in any way with the companies mentioned herein.

If you submit material to us, you warrant that you own the material and/or have the necessary rights/permissions to supply the material and you automatically grant Future and its licensees a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in any/all issues and/or editions of publications, in any format published worldwide and on associated websites, social media channels and associated products. Any material you submit is sent at your own risk and although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents, subcontractors or licensees shall be liable for loss or damage. We assume all unsolicited material is for publication unless otherwise stated, and reserve the right to edit, amend, adapt all submissions.



Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR) [www.futureplc.com](http://www.futureplc.com)

Chief Executive Officer **Kevin Lyng**  
Non-Executive Chairman **Mark Brooker**  
Chief Financial Officer **Sharjeel Suleman**

Tel +44 (0)1225 442244



# LIVE VIDEO. YOUR WAY.

**P**roduction is changing fast. What used to be built around fixed locations, dedicated infrastructure, and single-purpose systems is now becoming more flexible, distributed, and connected. Broadcasters, production teams, corporate studios, educators, houses of worship, live event producers, and creators are all facing the same reality: live video needs to happen in more places, with fewer barriers, and with greater flexibility than ever before.

That shift brings huge opportunity, but it also brings complexity.

Today's teams are often working across multiple environments at once. A production might include cameras in a studio, contributors in another city, a remote producer working from home, an editor collaborating from a different country, and a live audience watching across digital platforms. At the same time, technical teams are being asked to support NDI, SDI, HDMI, SRT, cloud, remote production, and more.

The challenge is no longer simply capturing great video. The challenge is connecting everything together in a way that feels reliable, scalable, and practical.

That is where BirdDog is focused.

## FLEXIBILITY

At NAB 2026, BirdDog showcased a complete ecosystem designed to help teams build live video workflows their way. From NDI, SDI, HDMI, SRT, and Dante AV-H to cloud-ready and remote-enabled production, the company's approach is built around flexibility rather than forcing users into a single way of working.

At the heart of that ecosystem is BirdDog's expanding camera portfolio, including the award-winning XL Ultra, which received a Best of Show Award at NAB 2026. With its large 4/3" sensor, dual 4K60 pipelines, 20x optical zoom, advanced AI tracking, and high-end production connectivity, XL Ultra represents the next generation of PTZ camera for premium broadcast, live events, studios, XR, AV, and hybrid production environments.

But BirdDog's story is not just about cameras. It is about turning cameras and devices into true workflow endpoints.

With BirdDog Connect built directly into compatible cameras, users can send video, tally, and control over public internet



connections without the need for a computer at the camera location. This opens new possibilities for remote production, remote contribution, distributed teams, and live workflows that are no longer limited by geography.

BirdDog is also helping bridge the gap between production and post production. Its remote collaboration workflows for Adobe Premiere and Avid Media Composer allow editors, producers, and directors to review content together in real time from anywhere. Instead of waiting for files to upload, download, and comment on, creative teams can collaborate directly inside the production process.

This matters because the future of production will not be defined by one protocol, one room, one platform, or one type of user. It will be hybrid. It will

be IP-based and baseband. It will be local and remote. It will involve broadcast teams, AV teams, IT teams, creators, editors, producers, and operators working together across connected environments.

BirdDog's role is to make that future easier to build. By combining cameras, control, connectivity, remote collaboration, AV-over-IP, cloud workflows, and live production tools into one flexible ecosystem, BirdDog gives teams the freedom to design the workflow that fits the project, instead of adapting the project to fit the technology.

The result is simple: less friction, more flexibility, and more creative freedom. ■





# LIVE VIDEO YOUR WAY



**An Ecosystem for  
Infinite Workflows.**

NDI®. SDI. HDMI. SRT.  
Dante AV-H. Cloud-ready.  
Remote-enabled.



# DUAL-FORMAT DOMINANCE

Paul McLane reports on how video is driving new, diverse audiences to the podcast ecosystem

Visual podcasting is certainly not just the purview of video-first tech platforms like YouTube and Netflix. The big news in recent months is that video has come to Apple Podcasts. The [“transformative” update](#) uses HLS technology and lets users switch between watching and listening, flip to a horizontal display and download for offline viewing.

But video is also increasingly important for certain other major companies, long associated with audio. iHeartMedia bills itself as the world’s largest podcast publisher. CEO Bob Pittman once described

[podcasting as radio’s “birthright”](#) and has called it “the fastest-growing medium over the past 20 years”.

Now iHeart is one of the players jumping on the video express, which Pittman describes as “a wonderful expansion of the marketplace”. The company announced in December that it would support both audio and visual podcast distribution, within its app and web versions of iHeartRadio, at no cost to creators. The company also recently announced a [video partnership with Netflix](#) covering about 15 podcasts.

Over at SiriusXM, podcast revenue has been growing significantly.



The Bobby Bones show is part of iHeartMedia's Netflix deal



Image: Netflix/Gary Jones Photography

The stars of *The Rest is Football* will be seen on Netflix during this summer's FIFA World Cup

Netflix began a concerted expansion into video podcasting last autumn. For the 2026 FIFA World Cup, it also secured a deal with the popular sports podcast *The Rest Is Football*, hosted by Gary Lineker, Alan Shearer and Micah Richards. The deal "aligns with Netflix's push to make more big moves into the video podcasting space to compete with market leader YouTube," the *Hollywood Reporter* noted.

UK multiplatform company Global has launched Global Studios, a "one-stop shop for audio-visual storytelling" that includes production facilities, distribution and access to Global's media network. The company expressed excitement about "the fast-growing, video-first podcast world."

Shortly after that, Global [acquired a majority stake](#) in *The Overlap*, a group that's building a multi-format sports media network. It said *The Overlap* has been one of the world's most popular football and sports destinations since 2021, with 38 million monthly views on YouTube and 2.2 billion views across all platforms last year.

Meanwhile, major audio player Spotify recently opened a second facility in Los Angeles, one focused mostly on visual podcasters. "Just down the street from Roc Nation, SiriusXM and Sony Music, Spotify is joining Hollywood's Sycamore media district with a brand-new podcast studio facility," the [Los Angeles Times reported](#).

"When Spotify moved into its campus in the Arts District in 2021, podcasting was primarily an audio experience, and the downtown LA studios reflected that," the newspaper wrote. "But as the listening format began to evolve into a visual one, Roman Wasenmüller, Spotify's vice president of podcast and video, said the company needed to revamp and expand its facilities to meet the growing demand."

The site includes rooms with multi-camera video capabilities and production support. Access is available by invitation to creators in the Spotify Partner Program.

Spotify has also taken notable steps to help nourish video more generally, [releasing a Distribution API](#) that enables creators and publishers to release and monetise videos on Spotify directly from host platforms like Acast, Audioboom and Libsyn.

CEO Jennifer Witz tied that growth to changes in format and distribution, particularly its expansion into video and social channels, according to [Inside Radio](#). On an earnings call, Witz said video is finding "strong traction".

"As a launch partner for Apple's new video podcasting experience, we are helping shape the next evolution of the medium by unlocking dynamic video ad insertion and expanding access to a significantly larger advertising market," Witz said. (SiriusXM is also now the exclusive US advertising rep for YouTube's audio inventory).

Image: YouTube



**My Favorite Murder, with hosts Karen Kilgariff and Georgia Hardstark, is among the iHeartMedia podcasts now available to watch on Netflix**

An example of what that means for creators comes from Libsyn, which said Spotify's investment in native video "signals a broader shift toward multi-format consumption".

Libsyn has [made video podcasting available](#) to all of its creators, "enabling them to publish, distribute and monetise both audio and video content from a single destination." It said this integration allows its creators to publish video podcasts to Spotify, as they already can on YouTube, and with Apple Podcasts pending. ([Not everyone thinks the Spotify arrangement is a good deal for creators](#)).

And in May, Spotify announced that it will support Apple Podcasts' HLS video technology, enabling its hosted creators to distribute video podcasts on both Spotify and Apple Podcasts without changing their setups.

**REDEFINITION**

Given all of the above, headlines like [Apple Takes on YouTube and Spotify With New Video Podcasting Push](#) might lead you to think the medium is migrating entirely to visuals.

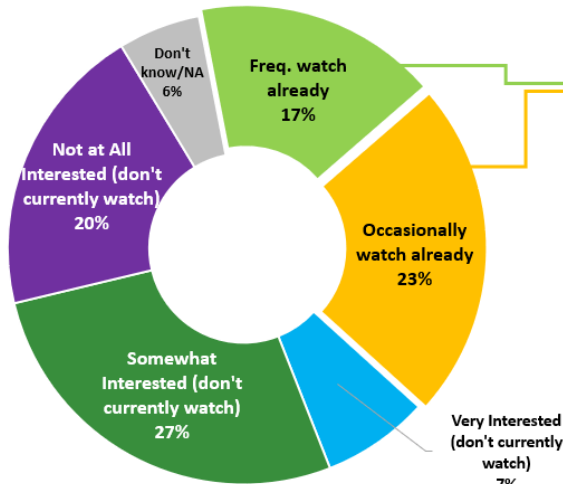
According to Triton Digital's US Podcast Report, listening is still the dominant method to consume podcasting.

"Video isn't replacing podcast audio. It's expanding the tent," said Megan Lazovick, vice president of Edison Research at SSRS, which publishes a report called [The Infinite Dial](#). "Whatever your feelings on video podcasts, the data is clear: This is a dual-format medium now." The company estimates that among Americans aged 12+, more than half have both listened to and watched a podcast.

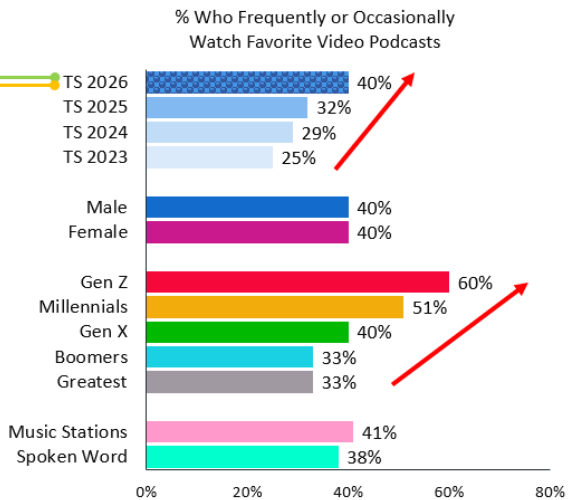
It also found that video discovery tends to boost audio listening. Many respondents said they began listening to a podcast after discovering its visual version. But consumers new to podcasting are [more likely](#) to actively watch than are longtime users, at least in the United States.

The firm believes this next wave of podcast consumers is reshaping the medium. It said video is "redefining" podcasting, literally changing the definition of the word as distribution methods evolve (podcasting is also disrupting what's on TV in American households). Edison found that

## Consumption of Video Versions of Favorite Podcasts Continues Its Ascent, Now Stands at Four in Ten Weekly Podcast Users



"How interested are you in watching video versions of your favorite podcasts you listen to now?"

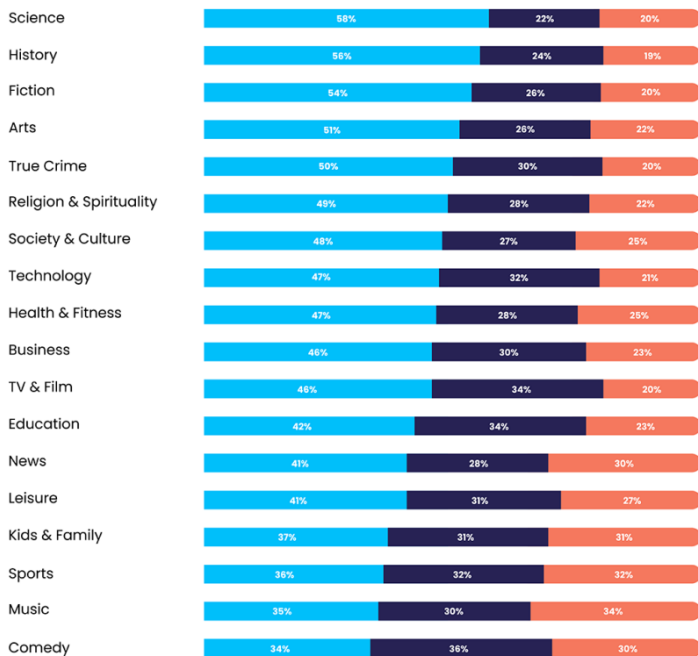


Among weekly podcast listeners

[jacobsmedia.com](#) | [@fnjacobs](#) | [#TS2026](#)



Media consultant Fred Jacobs has found that frequent podcast consumers increasingly want visual versions of that content. He surveys core radio listeners for his annual Techsurvey report



Podcast Listen Only

Podcast Listen and Watch

Podcast Watch Only

**Triton Digital's 2025 US Podcast Report found that certain show genres behave differently in video. Some are "watch-forward," others "listen-forward"**

## STOREFRONT WINDOW

Thus in the podcasting ecosystem, the focus now among many thought leaders, at least based on news reports and expert commentaries, is not whether to add video but how to optimise and distribute it across platforms. And, as tech platforms work to lower the barriers to entry, creators are using AI more widely to generate their content. Tools like [dynamic ad insertion](#) are becoming more prevalent. And short-form clips are a growing part of the strategy.

Radio industry consultant Fred Jacobs of Jacobs Media has called visuals "an ultra-dominant add-on, even to a core audio medium like podcasting". But he challenges the wisdom that increasing numbers of fans would prefer to watch rather than listen.

Jacobs [questioned](#) whether programmes are better, more accessible and popular with the addition of visuals, noting that *The Guardian* last winter published a story under the headline [How Podcasts' Rush to Video Is Turning Them Into Dreadful Listens](#).

Jacobs believes a lack of research has kept the medium from growing even more than it has. In a [blog post](#), he wrote that every podcast is different. "Some are going to be great fits for video, while others will not be well-suited for visual versions." He urges creators to find out what their podcast listeners actually want: "Podcasters need to care enough to ask the question, and prepare to possibly get feedback they aren't excited about receiving. [...] While there are podcasters who have impressive instincts for giving the audience what they want, many don't have a clue about the desire for video, much less other issues impacting a podcast (show notes, episode length, promoting ahead where possible)."

For those who proceed, Jacobs offered a reminder: "Video is more challenging, time-consuming and expensive to produce. Visual podcasts need to look great, have great sets and still respect the folks who would rather listen while they're cutting the grass, walking the dog, etc."

Talent should be trained to ensure their content isn't so visual that it's incomprehensible via audio, he added. And if a podcast lands on both platforms, creators should have a proper plan for promotion, marketing and measurement in both.

A concluding thought comes from multimedia journalist John Wordock of WTOP in Washington, DC. Speaking during the recent NAB Show, he said that every broadcaster, whether television or radio, whether small market or large market, needs to create a strategy for video podcasts on YouTube. "Think of YouTube as a storefront window for your podcast," he added. ■

*Randy Stine contributed to this article.*

since 2021, the share of US podcast consumers who use Smart TVs most often for podcasts has increased from 1 per cent to 9 per cent, surpassing podcast consumption via smart speakers)

## TWO LANES

Sharon Taylor is chief revenue officer of Triton Digital, an audio services provider. Its research in the US reinforces the notion that the market is supporting both. Triton found that 13 per cent of the podcast audience are "listen-only," 7 per cent are "watch-only" and fully 80 per cent of monthly consumers do both.

Also, the audience is not only growing but becoming more diverse. Video is bringing younger, more male viewers, while audio continues to over-index with women and higher-income listeners.

"Video isn't just adding 'more of the same audience'. It's adding incremental audience segments," Taylor [wrote on her blog](#). She argues that creators and brands should build "two-lane" strategies that serve both formats.

With YouTube continuing to pull in newer podcast audiences and with its content choices largely dictated by its algorithm, said Taylor, "[w]e need an entry point for true podcast listeners to watch podcasts, to see what their behaviour is. It's why I'm excited about Apple's video announcement and pending updates to their app, because we're suddenly putting video in front of the most tenured podcast audience in the world, an audience that is ears first but will now be able to be eyes on also."

Triton's report also looked at how various genres behave differently in video. Some are "watch-forward," others "listen-forward". People often listen to science, history and fiction. They often watch music and sports, while comedy tends to bridge both behaviours.

# SEEN, NOT JUST HEARD

By Hiroaki Nishimura, head of imaging solutions  
business development, Sony Europe

Podcasting is entering a new phase, defined as much by visual storytelling as by audio. Audiences increasingly expect visual polish that mirrors broadcast standards, whether from independent creators or corporate studios. This is reshaping technical expectations and placing new demands on technology, from cameras and microphones to workflows and infrastructure.

For creators, the move to video introduces practical challenges. File sizes balloon with multi-camera, high-resolution recording, putting pressure on storage and raising the risk of bottlenecks or data loss. Maintaining consistent audio and visual quality also gets harder—poor lighting, uneven sound or inconsistent framing can quickly undermine a production, especially when content is distributed across multiple platforms.

Expectations around production values are rising in parallel. Multi-camera setups, dynamic graphics and seamless transitions are becoming standard rather than exceptional, yet stitching them together often requires a patchwork of tools or specialist expertise, causing friction for creators whose focus should be content, not technical execution.

Platform fragmentation compounds the issue. Each channel brings its own codecs, aspect ratios and quality thresholds, and meeting these while also producing short-form content for social discovery can strain budgets and workflows. For smaller teams and corporate users, scaling without losing control of quality or costs remains a key concern.

## ECOSYSTEMS THAT EMPOWER CREATORS

Content creators are looking to adopt integrated ecosystems that combine capture, control, collaboration and delivery. The latest cinematic cameras are finding a natural home in corporate podcast studios across Europe. Large sensors, 4K capture and refined colour science produce the depth, tonal richness and shallow focus audiences associate with high-end film and television. Consistent colour across a camera family means multi-camera shoots match seamlessly without lengthy grading, while reliable autofocus, strong



**Podshop, a full-service podcast production and marketing agency in London, has transformed its video podcast content with cinematic, 4K multi-cam shoots worthy of a high-end TV show**

low-light performance and unobtrusive form factors keep teams confident across long recording sessions and varied conditions, even in compact studios or office environments.

The growing sophistication of software is what supercharges efficiency. Sony's SDK toolkit allows production teams to automate workflows, defining preset configurations for lighting, camera positioning and audio profiles. Tablet-based monitoring apps add another dimension of flexibility, letting operators adjust framing, exposure and focus across multiple cameras in real time without interrupting recording.

With security concerns growing, cloud-based asset management handles large files and brings distributed teams together, with editing, review and graphics in one shared environment.

Audio, meanwhile, remains the cornerstone of podcasting. Professional-grade microphones with integrated preamps and built-in noise reduction deliver crystal clear, balanced sound without complex external chains, while precise monitoring keeps levels and tone consistent across long sessions.

## A NEW ERA FOR PODCASTING

Podcasting has been redefined. It's no longer an audio format with optional visuals, but a medium that demands the same craft as professional video production. For corporate users, that creates new opportunities to engage audiences. For independent creators, it raises the bar, with the tools to match now more accessible than ever.

Looking ahead, it is clear in the industry that the line between professional and amateur production will increasingly be drawn by workflow efficiency as much as creative vision, and those investing in adaptable, intuitive and AI-driven integrated systems will stand out.

The reward is content that looks as good as it sounds, where compelling, cinematic visuals and broadcast-quality audio combine to deliver the production values audiences now expect from any premium platform. The right toolkit lets technology fade into the background, leaving creators free to focus on what truly matters—storytelling that connects with audiences and keeps them coming back. ■

# SONY

"We chose Sony's FR7s for their broadcast-quality images and seamless remote control without the need for a dedicated DoP."

Daniel Jones, Vaudeville CEO

## Broadcast meets podcast

**Captivate your audience with cinematic visuals**

Elevate and streamline your next podcast with Sony's professional video production technology.

Precision autofocus, flexible automated workflows and full remote control. Sony's broadcast DNA reimaged for podcast production.



Cinema Line



pro.sony



FX2



FX30



FX3



FX6



FR7

# THE NEXT EVOLUTION OF VISUAL PODCASTING

By **Miguel Churruca**, marketing and communications director, Brainstorm

Podcasting has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past decade. What began as a largely audio-first, informal medium has steadily matured into a sophisticated visual format. Today's leading podcasts are no longer just conversations captured on microphones; they are carefully produced shows, complete with multi-camera setups, professional lighting, and thoughtfully designed studio environments. In many cases, the visual quality of these productions now approaches the standards audiences have long associated with traditional television.

This shift has been driven by changing audience expectations and platform dynamics. With the rise of video-first distribution channels, audiences increasingly engage with podcasts as visual experiences. As a result, creators have invested in production values—upgrading cameras, refining lighting techniques, and designing sets that reinforce brand identity. The result is a new category: the 'visual podcast', which blends the intimacy of conversational content with the polish of broadcast production.

However, as production quality converges with traditional broadcasting, the question becomes: what's the next step? To continue evolving, visual podcasting must look beyond physical production and toward tools that expand creative possibilities. This is where virtual production technologies enter the equation.

Virtual production, long established in broadcast TV and live events, offers a pathway to elevate visual podcasts beyond the constraints of physical studios. By integrating virtual sets, real-time graphics, and augmented reality elements, podcast creators can significantly enhance storytelling without the need for large-scale physical infrastructure.

While many podcasts have invested in aesthetically pleasing physical environments, these spaces are inherently static. Virtual sets, by contrast, provide flexibility and scalability. A single production can transition between environments—a newsroom, a conference stage, or an abstract thematic space—without requiring physical reconfiguration. This not only reduces logistical complexity but also allows the visual context to adapt dynamically to the content being discussed.

Equally important is the use of real-time graphics. In traditional broadcasting, graphics play a crucial role in clarifying information,



**Ikan, the PoE lighting equipment manufacturer, produces live podcasts at trade shows. The above example at NAB was powered by Brainstorm virtual technology**

presenting data, and reinforcing narratives. Visual podcasts can benefit from the same approach, introducing charts, timelines, or contextual overlays in real time. This is particularly valuable for podcasts covering complex topics such as finance, technology, or science, where visual aids can significantly improve audience comprehension.

Augmented reality (AR) further extends these capabilities by embedding live graphical elements directly into the physical or virtual space, creating a more immersive experience. For example, a

discussion about market trends could feature three-dimensional data visualisations that hosts can reference spatially, or a sports podcast could integrate virtual replays and analysis tools within the set itself. These techniques not only enhance clarity but also make the content more engaging and memorable.

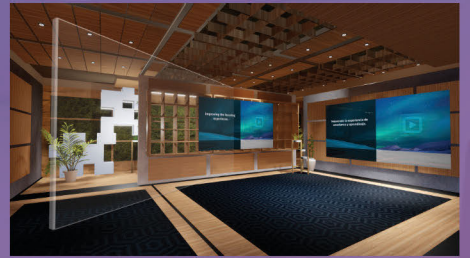
At its core, podcasting remains a storytelling medium. The success of any podcast—regardless of production quality—depends on its ability to communicate ideas effectively and connect with its audience. Virtual production technologies should therefore be viewed not as aesthetic enhancements, but as storytelling tools. They can reinforce narrative structure, provide context, and guide audience attention in ways that purely physical setups cannot.

There are already clear examples from the broadcast industry demonstrating how virtual technology can enhance storytelling. These capabilities have been widely adopted in news, sports, and entertainment, where they have proven effective in both improving audience understanding and increasing production efficiency.

By combining real-time graphics, virtual sets, and augmented reality into a unified workflow, content creators can produce visually rich narratives without sacrificing the immediacy of live production.

The convergence of podcasting and broadcast technology suggests a clear trajectory in which audiences will come to expect not just high production quality, but also dynamic, visually supported storytelling. For creators, the implication is straightforward: the next competitive advantage lies not in incremental improvements to traditional production techniques, but in the adoption of tools that expand narrative possibilities. Virtual production offers precisely that—transforming the podcast from a recorded conversation into a fully realised visual experience. ■

# Amplify your story



Visual podcasts have reached broadcast-quality production—now it's time to go further.

With Brainstorm, creators can leverage virtual sets, real-time graphics, and augmented reality to transform conversations into immersive storytelling experiences, boosting engagement, flexibility, and narrative clarity in live podcasting.

Contact Brainstorm now and learn how InfinitySet and Edison can enhance your storytelling!

Since 1993, Brainstorm designs and develops 3D real-time graphics, virtual production and XR / AR solutions.

[www.brainstorm3d.com](http://www.brainstorm3d.com)  
[contact@brainstorm3d.com](mailto:contact@brainstorm3d.com)

"We didn't feel the need to spend lots of money because we're not creating art; it's a visual podcast"

**ROB CHANDLER**

# INSIDE THE **VISUAL** PODCAST STUDIO

Jenny Priestley visits The Dean Street Podcast Studio to meet founder Rob Chandler and hear about the studio's three tenets: audio first, focus on the face, and keep it simple



London's Soho has always played a central role in the UK's creative industries. Over the years, it has been home to studios, editing facilities, and production companies. But now, it is welcoming a new set of creatives, as London's podcasting community grows.

At the heart of that community is The Dean Street Podcast Studio. Located in a former ADR room in a building that used to be the home of post production company De Lane Lea, the studio offers visual podcasting facilities with customisable digital sets, AI-driven camera cutting, professional lighting and automation tools.

The studio is 10x10 metres across and stands 3 metres tall, but thanks to some trickery with a green screen, it can appear bigger. "I worked out a long time ago that vertical walls aren't great for lighting in a small space," explains founder Rob Chandler. "Leaning a wall backwards allows you to light from the ceiling. We decided to have a bit of a wing to extend the wall slightly. Because everyone is sitting in front of it, with the cameras two metres away and the green screen another two metres behind, it's a really controlled environment. The cameras are fixed, the speakers aren't going to move around and we don't need a green floor."

The studio includes three cameras, all 4K UHD Blackmagic Micro Studio Cameras with Lumix lenses sitting on SmallRig tripods. Each of the cameras has an SDI output, which is important for the rest of the podcasting process. Chandler describes them as "about twice the size of a GoPro".

Each of the camera feeds travels into a Blackmagic Ultimatte placed in a rack under the engineering desk in the corner of the studio.

Chandler originally set up the studio as a Proof of Concept, with the aim of seeing whether it could be done on a "bootstrap budget". "We didn't feel the need to spend lots of money because we're not creating art; it's a visual podcast," he adds. But he is already thinking about how it can evolve, with the idea of placing PTZ cameras on a slider to offer clients more automation. "We could even make it a proper virtual production and use complicated Unreal Engine sets. But podcasting is a very price-sensitive marketplace.

"One of the things I like about the podcast industry is that they turn up, record and then leave. They book for an hour, they'll turn up for an hour, and they'll leave. The worst that might happen is the conversation gets really, really interesting, and they run over."

### THE THREE TENETS

The Dean Street Podcast Studio has been built on three tenets: audio first, focus on the face and keep it simple. Chandler chose not to stray too far from what's been done before when deciding which microphones and mixing desks to include. The studio has three Rode PodMics and uses a Mackie DLZ Creator mixer. "Our approach is that video is secondary," he states. "We'll do video and that can be used for a multitude of things, whether it's social, or uploading to YouTube or Apple. But if something goes wrong, you've still got an audio podcast."

Other reasons for using the PodMics are aesthetics and price. "These are cost-effective microphones. If I were building the studio again,



Chandler sits in front of the studio's green screen

maybe I would try to find a microphone that is a little bit more directional, but at the moment, until someone says to me, 'this is rubbish, and I'm willing to pay an X amount more,' the mics are fine."

Once the video and audio have been recorded, post production is handled by DaVinci Resolve. The studio also has uMIX for live streaming, and recently hosted an influencer who was on air for over three hours.

Chandler is already using Unreal Engine for set design, although he admits they tend to be simplistic, as some podcasts tend to focus on the conversation rather than what's happening behind the speakers. "It's a very personal thing of having people in your ear while you're making tea, doing the housework, or watching on YouTube. Podcasts can be long format as well, and anything too complicated, I think, takes away from that format."

What he's found from creators who have used the studio so far is that they've been particularly excited by the ability to see the virtual set while sitting in front of a microphone. "The green screen disappears pretty quickly in their psyche. We have 10 backgrounds that people can choose from, or they can use their logo or a splash screen. If a producer is interested in spending a little bit more money, we can give them a background that is unique to their show, and then move the assets and speakers around.

"Conceptually, it's really hard for podcast producers and shows to work out what they need. We don't overcomplicate it with technology. If I am asked about the technology, I always question, why? Because if a producer is worried about the camera and its colour space and the shutter angle, do they really want to just shoot a podcast?"

### AN INDUSTRY RIPE FOR DISRUPTION

Chandler entered the media and entertainment industry five years ago after a career in Big Tech. At the time, he felt it was an area that was ripe for disruption, and he's seen that particularly play out in the visual podcast space. "Netflix announced a year ago that they were going to be doing podcasts, and they're not doing that because they love podcasting. They see it as a strategic play in order to be able to get peak 'stickiness' on their platform.

"Apple has just gone through a huge amount of development to be able to have video. Spotify accepted videos six months to a year ago. On YouTube, there is a podcast channel now that you can upload to. All of those platforms can see revenue from advertising within that, but it also keeps people on the platform. The visual podcast format will develop, and then you'll get that second wave of everyone else asking, if you're not doing video, how do you get found?"

He expects the industry to begin to mature and become more complex as advertisers see ROI, and that will lead to further development of show formats. "That's the exciting bit," he adds, "because I don't think the formats have been invented yet.

"There will be opportunities to really cost-effectively produce shows that previously had such risk attached to them. You could work on a format using a podcast studio that could then convert to broadcast or network distribution, because it's been proven. Just look at Goalhanger and what they've achieved over the last couple of years. Originally, *The Rest is Football* was just Gary Lineker on a webcam!" ■

# EBOOKS: Tools for Strategic Technology Decision-Making



Radio World's growing library of ebooks can assist you in maximizing your investment in an array of platforms and tools: licensed transmission, online streaming, mobile apps, multicasting, translators, podcasts, RDS, metadata and much more.

The ebooks are a huge hit with readers. They help engineers, GMs, operations managers and other top radio executives — radio's new breed of digital, cross-platform decision-makers — understand this new world and thrive in it.

**RADIOWORLD**

Visit [radioworld.com/ebooks](http://radioworld.com/ebooks)

「 FUTURE 」



# BRIGHT IDEAS FOR BETTER VISUAL PODCAST LIGHTING

Bruce Aleksander explains how to bring high-quality visuals to smaller-scale productions

**A**mong the unexpected things the pandemic left in its wake is a higher tolerance for bad lighting. For evidence of this, just check out any Zoom meeting. Faces in shadows framed by blown-out backgrounds look more like witness-protection videos than what we normally see on camera.

Every new technology unleashed on the public is bound to have some hiccups. Ever notice how many teleconference meetings start like a séance, trying to contact departed spirits? “George, can you hear us? We can see you, but can’t hear you.”

For a technology that was previously only in the hands of ‘experts’, people with zero training have managed better than expected. We’re experiencing a democratisation of telecommunications, enabled by plug-and-play components and readily accessible apps. Social media posts are today’s equivalent of pontificating from atop a soapbox in the park, but with a revenue stream. With these new tools, almost anyone can put together a video podcast.

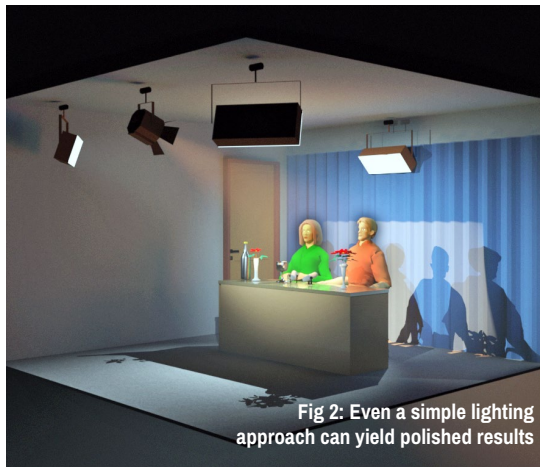
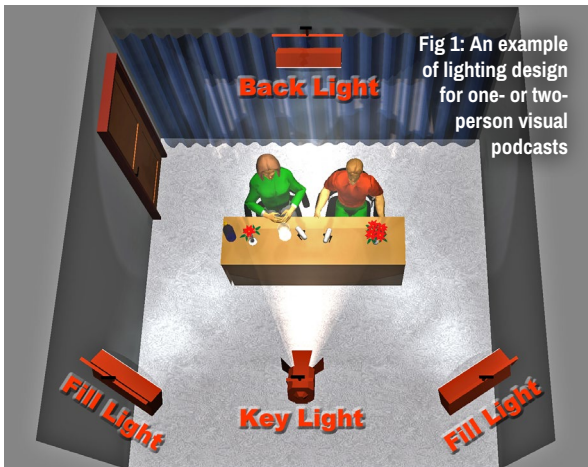
The low quality of most visual podcasts makes “close enough for TV” seem like the golden age of excellence. They’re cringe-worthy,

rather than binge-worthy. As good as entry-level gear has become, production values suffer from a lack of decent lighting.

Newer cameras can make pictures in almost no light, which may ironically be why the lighting falls short. It no longer has to be properly lit to be seen, so it often isn’t. These novice media moguls could considerably up their game with a bit more attention to how things look.



Substandard lighting doesn't necessarily impinge on a podcast's popularity



The goal of lighting isn't merely academic. Good lighting can help visual podcasters connect with their audience by making the hosts appear more relatable. We tend to connect more with people when we can actually see their eyes, let alone their faces.

Visual podcasting is a big deal, even if the podcasts often don't always look the part. The top-rated video podcasters have millions of viewers with audience demographics that companies want most. Product placement, compensated endorsements and lucrative sponsorship deals have made this a multibillion-dollar industry.

In this competitive media landscape vying for viewer attention, getting the lighting right provides an edge. Unfortunately, many video podcasts look like they're made in a cupboard—illuminated with all the lighting artistry of a bare bulb on a pull chain. Improving on this could be as simple as using a clip-on reflector work light pointed at the host.

One popular visual podcast, *The Joe Rogan Experience*, looks like the producers spent more money on its neon sign than on lighting the host. Then again, maybe that dimly lit back-alley aesthetic appeals to his audience. Are the deeply shaded eyes meant to suggest some unvarnished authenticity, or just poor lighting choices? Could Rogan spin conspiracy theories as convincingly if viewers could see the twinkle in his eyes?

### MOOD LIGHTING

Other successful visual podcasters have done a brilliant job of creating visual surroundings that support their show's themes. Alex Cooper's popular *Call Her Daddy* visual podcast creates a cozy environment for her guests. The right lighting and inviting scenic touches help create a beguiling space for the confessions and gossip that its guests seem to snuggle into. Her show's curated 'look' works by design.

When lighting a visual podcast, the questions are much the same as for any other show. The camera shots guide the lighting, so we need to know where the cameras are, who they're shooting, and where they're standing or sitting.

Beyond that comes the nuts and bolts of making it work. What types of lights need to go where, and how will they be mounted? Light stands and cables may clutter the floor, while ceiling mounts and

cable runs require some additional engineering. In short, it's like any other lighting project—but on a smaller scale.

Whatever the budget, the basic "three-point lighting" approach is a good place to start.

The illustrated example (two people and four lights) can be done in the corner of a basement, a small room, or a large cupboard.

The size and power of the light fixtures should be chosen to meet the required throw distance. Always adhere to 'best practices' for mounting the lights and running power. Remember that people will be under those lights, so use safety cables, sandbags and common sense.

The example illustrated in Fig 1 is typical for visual podcasting. A central camera covers two people chatting. Additional lights can be added to highlight items in the background. If the budget is tight, begin with the two soft lights in the front corners, adding the remaining lights as funding permits.

Remember that the larger the fixture aperture is, the softer the light will be, so the corner fill lights should have a relatively wide opening. They should fill softly without creating noticeable shadows. Let the work of making a modeling shadow fall to the Fresnel (or other 'hard' light) in the centre over the camera. Depending on the camera, an overall reading of 45 to 60 foot-candles should be perfect.

As for which lights to buy, you can't go wrong with quality equipment backed by manufacturers that stand behind their products. Otherwise, "buy cheap, buy twice."

### HOMES ARE DIFFERENT

Lighting residential spaces for video presents different challenges than working in purpose-built studios; the bane of these impromptu spaces is the low ceiling and lack of hanging points. Getting lights secured where you need them always requires some creative mechanical engineering, or you can use stands. Use low-profile fixtures to reduce head bumps.

As for how to control the lights, most provide Bluetooth or other remote connectivity. For simplicity, it's best if the lights can be controlled by a single app. Because LED lights have internal dimming electronics designed for full line voltage, don't use external dimmers—they'll cause damage.

While lighting a 'black box' studio set calls for making a completely artificial space look more like a plausible environment, shooting in an ordinary room calls for adding some lighting 'magic' to keep the space from looking too prosaic. And because the goal is connecting with your audience, always make sure the host is well-lit and looking good. ■

# DON'T FORGET THE SOUND!

While video is key to visual podcasts, the sound is equally important. Here, we take a look at some of the microphones currently available to podcasters



## AIM AUDIO INSPIRE AND ESSENCE

Aim Audio has two products: the multipattern Inspire and cardioid Essence microphones. Assembled, tested and calibrated by hand in Berlin, Germany, the mics feature a patented switchable Transformer/Electronic output stage, all-metal housing, switchable FET and transformer-balanced output stages, a 1-inch

large-diaphragm true condenser capsule, integrated peak-level metering, backlit controls, and five individual PCBs, with a custom wound toroidal transformer intended to keep noise floor to a minimum. The cardioid Essence model offers users a -10 dB pad, 80 Hz low-cut switch and is powered by 48 V phantom power. The multipattern Inspire + Pack offers five switchable polar patterns, -10 and -20 dB pad options, 80 Hz low-cut or 110 Hz roll-off, and is housed in a custom-moulded hard case along with the company's custom Orbit shockmount and a Sentry pop filter.



## AKG C-SERIES

The AKG C-Series professional condenser microphones deliver pristine clarity and capture every nuance. Designed with musicians, podcasters, YouTubers, and streamers in mind, the C104, C114, and C151 models deliver AKG's signature detail and clarity. Each mic in the series

features a precision-engineered, transformerless FET circuit that delivers an ultra-low noise floor and expansive dynamic range. Sustainability is at the core of modern AKG C-Series industrial design as all of the mic bodies have been crafted from 100 per cent recycled PIR metal, and every aspect, from packaging to accessories, has been engineered for minimal environmental impact.

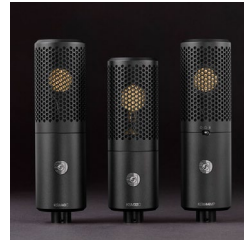


## LEWITT MTP 5 LIVE VOCAL MIC

The Lewitt MTP 5 live vocal mic uses a tailored dynamic capsule and is designed to deliver high-end response and help a vocal stand out in a mix without harsh sibilance.

Making use of an efficient cardioid polar pattern, Lewitt reports it has optimised the off-axis frequency response of the MTP 5 specifically to suppress high-frequency content from other loud stage instruments. To ensure MTP 5 will withstand mic drops and rough touring wear, the mesh, grille, and body are made from full-metal materials. The metal

ring that surrounds the grille is intended as a natural barrier for artists who tend to cup the mic. To minimise handling noise, the capsule is rubber-suspended, and the integrated windscreen is washable to keep the microphone hygienic as well.



## SHURE KSM CONDENSER LINE

At the 2026 NAMM Show, Shure introduced its new lineup of large-diaphragm condenser microphones during a special event at the renowned The Village studios in Los Angeles, showcasing the KSM32C, KSM40C and KSM44MP models and announcing

circuitry upgrades from previous models, numerous capsule options and a variety of accessories. Intended for vocals, instruments, drum overheads and ensemble work, the KSM32C sports a ¾-inch capsule designed to provide notable off-axis rejection; it also features the flattest voicing in the KSM line. The versatile KSM40C incorporates a 1-inch capsule, allowing it to capture more low-end, while its uniform cardioid polar pattern makes for low self-noise. The KSM44MP is a multi-pattern mic built around a dual-diaphragm design, with selectable cardioid, omnidirectional and bi-directional polar patterns, making it appropriate for vocals, piano, stereo techniques, distant miking and ensembles. A proprietary backplate design is employed to control diaphragm behaviour and eliminate sharp resonances.



## UNITED STUDIO TECHNOLOGIES UT VINTAGE87

Taking cues from the U 87, United Studio Technologies has launched its own take on the venerable mic with its UT Vintage87, a large-diaphragm condenser microphone.

It features United's custom K87-style dual-diaphragm capsule, the UT-K87. Precision-milled from brass, skinned with 6-micron Japanese PET film, and finished with a 24k gold-sputtered membrane, each capsule is assembled in a clean-room environment. Supporting the capsule is a large-core, custom-wound, US-made output transformer developed exclusively by United. The UT transformer uses all-nickel laminations and reportedly nearly four times the metal mass of typical 87-style mic transformers. Also found inside the mic are polystyrene, tantalum, multilayer ceramic, and WIMA film capacitors; tight-tolerance metal and carbon film resistors; and individually selected transistors throughout the circuit. ■

IP PRODUCTION • LIGHTHOUSE STATIONS • AI OR ML?

**tvtech**

www.tvtech.com | September 2024

BRAZIL AND ATSC 3.0 p.30

equipment guide audio & intercoms

**Are We There Yet?**  
The rocky path to peak streaming

ENCO Live Virtual Production Made easy. AR/VR/MR at NAB NY Booth

**CC** EN CAPTION

>> Pushing the boundaries of live captioning and translation. Meet enCaption Sierra

ENCO Schedule a demo at ENCO.com/encaption

IBC IN REVIEW • EXCLUSIVE AI SURVEY

**tvtech**

www.tvtech.com | October 2024

**CONTENT PROTECTION**  
Keeping the pirates out

10 YEARS OF DOUG LUNG • IMMERSIVE SOUND

**tvtech**

BEST IN MARKET AWARDS p.19

on will 25

**extended.**  
MADE EASY!

enoo.com

# FREE SUBSCRIPTION

For more than 40 years, **TV Tech** has been the professional video industry's most-trusted source for news analysis, trend reports, and the latest industry product and technology Information.

Claim your **FREE SUBSCRIPTION** today at [www.mytvtech.com](http://www.mytvtech.com)