

# Televisa Enhances News Control Room Efficiency, Reduces Errors With Viz Mosart

The Mexican broadcaster saved money and improved its on-air production with the help of automation.

Like many broadcasters around the world, Mexico City-based Televisa has embarked on a campaign to leverage technology to find new workflow efficiencies and has accomplished its goal in the news production control room with the assistance of Viz Mosart automation.

"The main issue we needed to address was the cost of people in the control room," says Elias Rodriguez, Televisa General Director of Technology. "We were using 20 people."

Labor costs are a major consideration for the Mexican multimedia and broadcasting powerhouse. Televisa is the second largest broadcaster in Latin America and the Spanish-speaking world. Rodriguez's area alone employs some 1,400 people. So, when there's the

chance to introduce technology that achieves new efficiencies and offers an opportunity to reassign staff to more productive tasks, the broadcaster takes it seriously.

In the case of the production control room, Viz Mosart automation made it possible for Televisa to continue producing its daily news with a total of eight people, enabling the broadcaster to reassign up to 60% of those formerly working in the control room to new assignments.

Holding onto what Rodriguez describes as "the best people" for the switchover to an automated control room, Televisa also quickly began achieving a far higher level of production accuracy and quality, he adds. "With this technology,

it is possible for an operator to control seven or eight devices with a single finger, and it is impossible to have an error," he says.

## International Experience

Rodriguez credits his extensive experience in remote production for introducing to him to the concept of control room automation and seeing its benefits firsthand. "Many, many years ago—some 20 to 25—my responsibilities in television took me around the world," he says.

"I've been in eight working groups internationally and at the same number of Olympic Games. I've worked in many, many control rooms—in Germany, South Africa, Japan, Australia and Korea."

It was during a stint in Europe about 20 years ago that he first encountered control room automation. "We would have the opportunity to take out our broadcast friends from those countries and ask them about their experience using different products, including control room automation systems," he says.

At that time in Mexico, however, the salaries of the technical directors and other control room equipment operators were not burdensome to Televisa, says Rodriguez.

Still, Rodriguez was quite aware of the automation technology he had seen abroad, and by 2010 began looking for ways to embrace more



**Elias Rodriguez**  
Televisa General  
Director of  
Technology



Viz Mosart control room automation has enabled Televisa to reassign 60% of its control room staff to other roles.

# 5 Key Takeaways

Viz Mosart control room automation made it possible for Mexico's Televisa to realize new workflow efficiencies and reassign many control room personnel.

Automating tasks formerly executed by control room personnel improved the accuracy and quality of the broadcaster's newscasts.

Viz Mosart and other Vizrt streaming solutions are saving Televisa \$100,000 annually on repurposing content for digital and social media.

Televisa has found Viz Mosart to be dependable, powering its 24/7 Foro TV news channel.

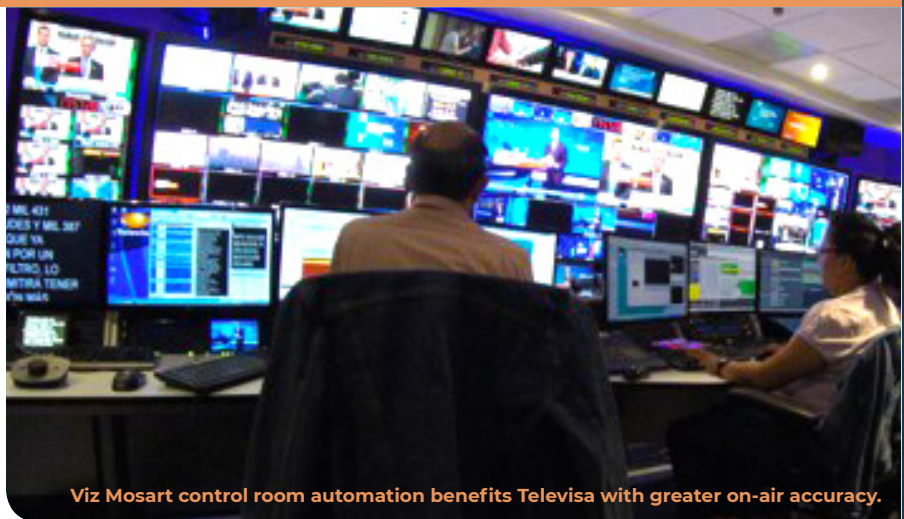
The broadcaster looks to recreate this efficiency one day in its sports production.

efficient workflows. What developed was a balancing act in which the cost of control room automation technology was regularly weighed against the savings Televisa would realize with its deployment and the new revenue it could generate by reassigning control room staff to more productive tasks, he recalls.

Eventually, things had reached the tipping point where it unquestionably made financial sense to deploy Viz Mosart, reassign control room personnel and begin realizing savings, says Rodriguez.

"When we were comparing control room automation products, some broadcasters, especially in Europe, were using Viz Mosart with good results," he says. "Viz Mosart had a very user-friendly GUI for the operator. It was simple to integrate into our control room, and it was less expensive than the alternatives. We ultimately selected Viz Mosart, and it's proven to be the best product for that application."

From a workflow perspective, Viz Mosart was a good fit as well. Some 2,000 Televisa journalists write their scripts, edit and produce stories with Avid iNews. Media Object Server (MOS) protocol commands embedded in their scripts and added to newscast rundowns direct Viz Mosart in executing control over Televisa's video switcher, audio mixer, playout servers, graphics engine, lighting and other production technology. A Viz Mosart operator effortlessly navigates



Viz Mosart control room automation benefits Televisa with greater on-air accuracy.

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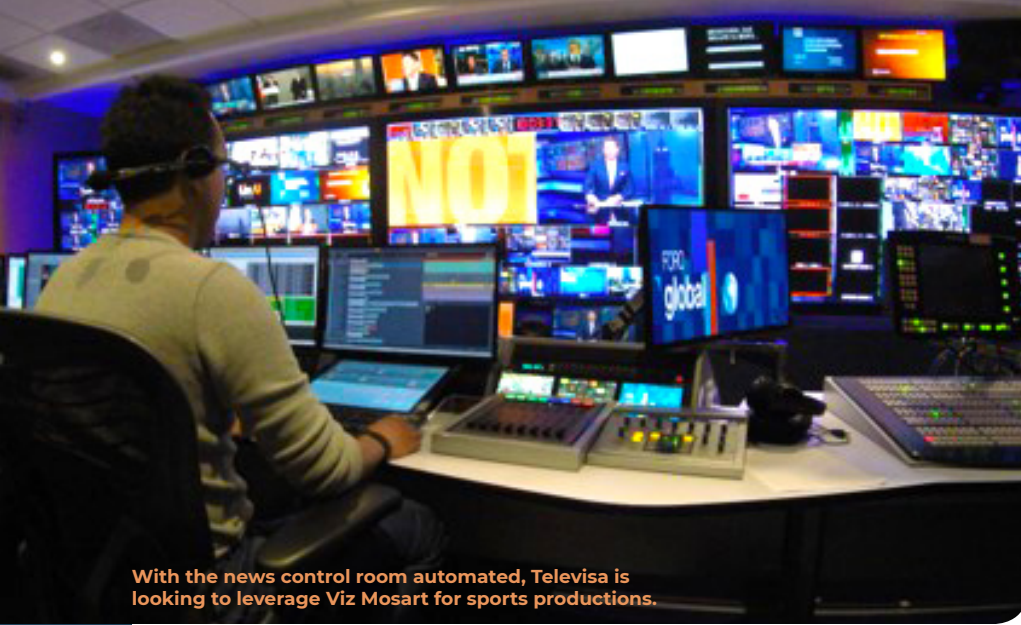
through these rundowns and hits the Take Next button or makes changes on the fly as required.

Viz Mosart not only brought clarity to the broadcaster's production workflow, it also boosted Televisa's production capacity making it possible to accommodate the demands of Foro TV, a 24/7 news channel, says Rodriguez.

Beyond Viz Mosart, Televisa has deployed several Vizrt solutions, not only for news production but

also for its entertainment and sports operations. Among the dozen or so Vizrt products used by the broadcaster are Viz Artist, Viz Weather, Viz Tracking Hub, Viz Libero, Viz Arena and Viz World.

Televisa has also deployed Vizrt streaming solutions along with Viz Mosart, which have delivered big savings and made it possible for the broadcaster to repurpose news content for various digital and social media platforms. "Every year, we paid almost \$100,000 for our digital content platform subscription. Sometimes, the producers didn't even use it because they didn't understand the product," says Rodriguez. "In the end, we cancelled that product and are happy using Vizrt's streaming solutions instead."



With the news control room automated, Televisa is looking to leverage Viz Mosart for sports productions.

**“VIZ MOSART HAS ALLOWED US TO ADDRESS OUR RISING COSTS IN THE CONTROL ROOM AND OVERALL IMPROVED THE QUALITY OF OUR NEWS PRODUCT...”**

**Elias Rodriguez, Televisa**

#### **Beyond News**

While news is important, it is only one of the products in Televisa's programming portfolio. The others are sports and its core business, which is drama and entertainment. Televisa's telenovelas and other dramas are exported to more than 80 countries around the world, says Rodriguez.

With so many shows and sporting events in production, Televisa is looking to recreate elsewhere in its operation some of the same efficiencies it unearthed in its news production control

room. First up, will be sports, says Rodriguez.

“Every few month in sports, we need new technology, but this technology [studio automation] has been very difficult to deploy,” he says. Just as there was an initial culture adjustment needed when automation entered the news control room, sports production will require its own shift.

“It's very difficult to introduce this technology because of the mindset of sports producers. But we are going to approach deploying automation. All of the managers, all of the financial

people want to reduce costs,” he says.

As Televisa in time increases its commitment to sports production, the urgency to realize production efficiencies will only grow, ultimately promoting acceptance of automation among sports producers, predicts Rodriguez.

Whether or not there will be a home for automation in the production of Televisa dramas and entertainment programming, is at the moment unclear, he adds.

Rodriguez eagerly awaits continued development of the Viz Mosart platform, some of which might hasten its acceptance among sports producers, he says. One area of interest is even greater integration with EVS instant replay and slow-motion servers.

Another, which could also prove to be useful in news production control, is artificial intelligence. “Using Viz Mosart is already very friendly for the operator, but the addition of AI could simplify things further and offer many other user benefits,” he says.

Regardless of what he hopes is down the road, Rodriguez is thoroughly happy with Vizrt and its Viz Mosart control room automation platform, he says.

“This is just my personal opinion, but Vizrt is one of the best companies, known around the world for its graphics and many other applications,” says Rodriguez. “Viz Mosart has allowed us to address our rising costs in the control room and overall improved the quality of the news product we put on air.”

## **A Quick Look under the Hood of Viz Mosart 4**

**By Vegard Elgesem, Senior Product Manager Automation and Switchers**

Vizrt unveiled a major version update for its Viz Mosart studio automation platform in April that offers operators improved usability and flexibility.

With Viz Mosart 4, users have an abundance of ways to customize their interface. NDI live video has been added to allow an operator to interact directly with the video itself. For instance, with a simple touch, source video from the Source Panel can be routed to a key box, making the interface interactive and giving users the ability to see sources in operation. The bottom line is a much more visual way for operators to

interact with a rundown.

The latest release also offers a new Favorites area in the Quick Access Panel, giving operators access to previously stored clips. Buttons can be expanded to see more of the clips stored there.

Another usability enhancement is the ability to browse the Media Sequencer Engine of Vizrt graphics directly, which enables operators to find and launch elements that were unplanned for, independent of the newsroom system.

The release offers new hierarchical organization and management of templates across large installations

and even for multiple locations. Users can create different hierarchies with parent and grandparent structures.

Viz Mosart's video wall control component has been renamed the Template Router to reflect its new functionality, which allows operators to visualize any source or destination and to forward content and sources to that specific device, whether it's a router, production switcher or IP destination.

While it's impossible to plumb the depth of Viz Mosart 4 in this limited space, it's clear the latest release delivers an unprecedented level of usability and flexibility to operators.

