

Viaplay's new multi-screen studio is on air with Hippotizer Boreal+ MK2



Finland – Nordic Entertainment Group's Viaplay streaming TV service has a brand new studio in Helsinki, complete with wraparound LED screen backdrops driven by Hippotizer Boreal+ MK2 Media Servers.

The broadcaster's built-for-purpose, state-of-the-art studio, designed and ordered by Viaplay and built in collaboration with NEP Finland, features a curved 2.6mm LED screen behind the presenter's table comprising 4416 x 960 pixels and standing large at 11.5 x 2.5m. It displays live feed, pre-made and branded content as the channels air sport, film and original drama.

Rigged to the right of that is a straight 2.6mm screen that is 1920 x 768 pixels or 5 x 2m and there are two further screens – a circle screen above the table is made from 2.9mm flexible LED panel that is 3612 x 172 pixels or 10.5 x 0.5m and another 98" Panasonic display. All of this is VideoMapped using the Hippotizer Boreal+ MK2.

Green Hippo's Finland distributor Amepa Oy was approached by Viaplay's broadcast studio partners NEP Finland and Sibelius Design to deliver the visual elements of the studio, which is located in the Helsinki district of Vallila.

Amepa's Johan West, who has championed the Hippotizer brand in Finland since 2003, suggested the Boreal+ MK2 as offering the right processing power, robustness and media management system for the job. "The most important thing for this installation was that the media server would have enough rendering power, as the client needed many mixes, sub-mixes and layers that would eat up a lot of computing power," says West. "That's the reason why I specified and installed a Boreal+ MK2 – I knew it can handle the task. We also required network capacity using HippoNet, MANet, ArtNet and NDI so all four network ports on the Boreal+ MK2 are in use."

West and his team installed the Boreal+ MK2 in the server room located approximately 40m away from the studio. A network was built consisting of HippoNet, MANet, ArtNet and NDI between the control room, server room and the studio, covering three studios in total. "I can control everything from wherever is needed," West continues. "Everything is programmed with short timelines and triggered via an external Zookeeper. The Hippotizer operating team create templates in Adobe After Effects, and we are currently using NDI for running content back and forth between the Boreal+ MK2 and after effects. Two HDSDI live feeds are also going through the Boreal+ MK2 and the placed within custom alpha masks onto the screens."

Viaplay carries a large amount of sports broadcasting, meaning that there are a large amount of logos, pictures, backgrounds and live feeds to process for events such as F1, NHL, skiing and Premier League Football.

"The video data driven to the LED walls is two 3840 x 2160 @50hz feeds over fibre to the main studio, and all the LED wall processors are in the studio behind the curved LED wall," West explains. "I managed to fit all LED into one UHD output of the Hippotizer and those sections are then mapped using the VideoMapper in the Boreal+ MK2, with the second output running the one 4K monitor.

"The content mapping is achieved using different viewports with four main and four sub mixes, so a bucketload of layers are in use due to the fact that there is a lot of changes for every broadcast! All upright LED strips are also pixelmapped in the Boreal+ MK2." During live broadcasts, one Hippotizer operator is on-site at all times, programming and creating visuals on the fly.

Viaplay's services include the on-demand subscription streaming service Elisa Viihde Viaplay and V sport and V film pay-TV channels. In Finland Viaplay's sports rights include a wide range of worlds best sports events like Formula 1, Premier League, Bundesliga, UEFA Europa League and UEFA Europa Conference League, NHL, UFC, FIS Winter sports, MLB, golf and much more.

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Main Image Caption: The broadcaster's built-for-purpose, state-of-the-art new studios feature a curved 2.6mm LED screen driven by a Hippotizer Boreal+ MK2