

# Royal Show

## Flexible Software Makes LED Billboards do Tricks

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA – Every year the Royal Easter Show brings together everything that is Australian, from agriculture to entertainment, into one huge exhibition. To inform and direct almost 900,000 people over a



two-week period, show organizers needed a flexible platform to maintain the messaging on their larger than life digital billboards and Scala's InfoChannel software suite exceeded their expectations.

Visitors came from all around the country to attend the event, dubbed the Great Australian Muster and hosted by the Royal Agriculture Society (RAS). Therefore despite the fairgrounds atmosphere, everything behind the scenes featured the latest technological innovations.

The show was held at the site of the 2000 Olympic games, and while still a great venue, the RAS took the opportunity to update the Olympic Park signage into a centralized Scala InfoChannel network. Five outdoor billboards strategically

situated around the Showgrounds all displayed unique content managed by dedicated computers running Scala's InfoChannel Player software. Relevant information specific to each location showed upcoming events, daily schedules, public transportation, sponsored advertising, and even television commercials.

InfoChannel provided all the tools needed to schedule the accurate playback of the 14-day show guide for each billboard – in advance. Working with an advertising agency, Scala integrator TechMedia met their requests of being able to show proof of playback and accountability. InfoChannel provided a daily detailed log of ad run times. This data could then be analyzed after the show to provide info to advertisers about which ad was played on which screen and at



what time.

To keep audiences hooked, TechMedia produced small documentary video segments throughout the show and loaded



them onto the InfoChannel Players as MPEG-2 clips. No matter what day or how many days that people attended, the screens were always up-to-date with fresh content, which also kept advertisers happy by ensuring a high retention of viewers.

However the most unique application of InfoChannel took advantage of its support for interactivity, usually reserved for kiosks. The RAS wanted a way to be able to show action from the floor. Live video feeds were set up to come from any one of the three arenas and were routed on-site to the appropriate screens. Though the real-time footage could go live at anytime and was thus difficult to schedule, producers in the booth were able to instantly switch to the camera feeds while on-air using

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hotkeys they had defined in advance. At the touch of a button, ad breaks and logos were controllable inside the production itself. Therefore TechMedia was able to jump in and out of program playback, from fully scheduled and automated programming to manual control. It proved to be a very powerful feature in a slightly unpredictable environment.

#### About Scala, Inc.

Founded in 1987, Scala pioneered the cable TV industry with software and services to allow users to create localized channels inexpensively. Today, Scala has grown to lead the corporate communications, retail dynamic signage, and interactive kiosk industries as well. With an unrivaled software suite to handle authoring, networking, monitoring, and logged playback, Scala has been the choice of tens of thousands of customers worldwide. Built on reliable and flexible network architecture, Scala software can support nearly any existing infrastructure from dial-up to LAN to Wi-Fi to satellite and terrestrial-based multicast networks. Scala's powerful and efficient store-and-forward design allows the control of unique content on a single cable headend or thousands of remote displays or kiosks from a single desktop PC without the constraints of streaming video.

