

Media Management and Automation System for Broadcast



Schedule

TOOLKIT

2014

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Schedule

Schedule is the main on-air playlist that allows, apart from the sequential list of phonograms, to clearly specify air time for certain elements. A schedule represents a daily interval divided into **blocks**. The blocks, in their turn, contain elements. All elements within a block will be played in sequential order. The block itself can have parameters that define its behavior.

The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "C 07:24 SALÜ VERKEHR SPONSOR". It has several tabs: "General", "Remote control", "Retransmission", "Description", "User", "Apply", "Extra", "Constraints", and "Rej". The "General" tab is selected. The "Name" field contains "SALÜ VERKEHR SPONSOR". The "Behaviour" dropdown is set to "Broadcast block". The "Block type" section has five buttons: "C" (blue), "N" (purple), "M" (green), "P" (yellow), and "B" (white). The "Time and duration" section has "Begin time" (07:24:00), "End time" (07:24:00), "Duration" (00:00:00), and "Real duration" (00:00:00). The "Block time options" section has checkboxes for "Fix block time", "Start time fixed", "End time fixed", "Link next block", "No sooner", "No later", "Cut off blocks", and "Cut off items". The "Allowable deviation (mm:ss)" section has "Sooner" (01:00) and "Later" (01:00) fields. The "Retransmission and commutation" section has "Retransmission channel" (1) and "Retransmission source" (empty). At the bottom are "OK" and "Cancel" buttons.

Usually, blocks are created preliminarily according to a skeleton (more details in “Skeletons and Grids” description). However, with respective access rights, blocks can be created from the context menu “Blocks – Create block”. This command will open the “New block” window. All basic parameters are found on the first tab called “General”. It is recommended to start with specifying the “Name” of the block. “Block type” can be selected from five options: C – commercial, N – news, M – music, P – program and B – block of no specific type. It is required

to specify “Begin time” of the block, even if no time reference is used, as this parameter is needed to determine the block’s position within schedule (a block with a later time will always follow that with an earlier time). The “Block time options” group of parameters is used to indicate certain points where the airing should commence strictly according to specified time.

As a rule, three combinations of these parameters are used. In the left column, “Fix block time” and “Start time fixed” are activated and in the right column all options are activated – this is the most rigid time reference that guarantees that the block will always be aired strictly on time. Even if another phonogram was played back at that moment, it will be cut with a crossfade (default length of the crossfade is one second). This type of reference is usually specified for first blocks within an hour that are preceded by musical blocks with fill-in jingles at the end. This type of block is marked with a red-blue sign in the schedule. Another variety is when “Cut off items” option is switched off. The difference is that in this case the audio item of previous block will not be cut in the middle but rather will be played back until the end. However, the next item will be skipped. This type of block is marked with a yellow-blue sign. Finally, the third configuration is when all options are switched off. This kind of time reference is recommended for all other types of blocks, as in this case they will be seen by the software as a continuation of the previous block, but using different types and names you can break the air structurally into short fragments.

>... T	Start	Dur.	Type	Ver.	Title	End	Fade	E.	Addi...
	11:43:27	0:05	C		-CRR Verkehr INTRO neutral	11:43:32	1.6		
			B		-CRR VERKEHR				
	11:43:30	0:02	C		-CRR Verkehr OUTRO neutral	11:43:32	1.2		
		0:05			<				
		33:48			P 11:02 (30:00) CRR LIVE SHOWOPENER				
	11:43:31	0:08	N		-SO CRR NEUTRAL	11:43:39	1.1		
	11:43:38	4:30	M		-BOSTON	11:48:07	5.5		
	11:48:02	0:17	J		-CRR TS 18 LEBACH	11:48:19	0.7		
	11:48:18	3:16	M		-SNOW PATROL	11:51:35	3.9		
	11:51:31	0:05	J		-CRR TS 13	11:51:36	0.5		
	11:51:35	4:48	M		-QUIET RIOT	11:56:23	10.5		
	11:56:13	0:09	J		-CRR TS 16 LEBACH	11:56:22	0.7		
	11:56:21	3:28	M		-ZZ TOP	11:59:49	6.0		
	11:59:43	0:08	J		-CRR TS Allgemein 02	11:59:51	0.4		
	11:59:51	4:33	M		-THE CONNELLS	12:04:24	9.1		
			J		-CRR - Jingle 08				
	12:04:15	4:47	M		-THE DOORS	12:09:02	2.9		
	12:08:59	0:23	J		-CRR HP 07	12:09:23	0.3		
	12:09:22	3:24	M		-SUPERTRAMP	12:12:47	3.4		
	12:12:43	0:03	J		-DI CRR 08	12:12:47	0.5		
	12:12:46	4:33	M		-30 SECONDS TO MARS	12:17:19	1.7		
		33:48			< + 03:46 > (+45:18)				

The schedule is displayed on the eponymous tab. It consists of a customizable set of columns (it is similar to Media Data Base list configuration). The picture above shows three blocks.

Each block has its own background color according to its type. The type is also displayed in the header where other information is also given. There is a reference mark near the type indicator and to the right there is information about airing time and block length. The name of the block is specified further. The header is always displayed – everything that's below can be minimized by double-clicking on it.

The header is followed by the list of items. Usually, these are items of the same type and jingles. Depending on the set of columns, respective information about these items will be displayed. The "Start" columns includes information about planned air time of the phonogram. This time is calculated based on the air time of the item above that has a time reference. As more and more items are aired, planned time will be replaced by real one, a tick sign will appear on white background and planned time of following items will be re-calculated.

As mentioned earlier, the reference of following blocks can prevent fill-in jingle items from being aired. This, in the musical block shown on screenshot part of musical tracks should have been aired after the following block. That's why they are marked as "OVER", which means that such items will be skipped.

In the last line, the total length, deviation from planned air time and deviation from planned block end time are calculated.

Items can be interchanged or moved to other blocks. Using the Delete button, they can be deleted from the schedule. If needed, you can change item parameters opening its properties. However, you should remember that whatever changes will not apply to the original Data Base item. The "Audio Editor" option, if available, allows editing an item found in the schedule. The same can be done with BCS Editor software, choosing the "Schedule" window of that program. Once again, the changes will only apply to the schedule, while the original item will remain intact.

The schedule contains a daily interval. Each day has its own schedule. There is schedule name and date specified in the header of the "Schedule" window (default name is "Default", but you can configure several schedules in the system, each with its own name). In the left part there are buttons for quick jumping to previous and next days but if you need to select a certain date or another schedule, you will have to click on the «...» button and select "Load schedule".



Below is the schedule tool bar. On the left there are buttons for block filtering by type. On the right there are three buttons: scroll schedule to current time, synchronize scrolling with a schedule on another tab and track current playback position.



Usually, the planning work for schedules is performed for a few next days or with blocks of the following hours. It is not recommended to change blocks that are close to being aired from off-the-air workstation because any performed changes will be immediately visible on all other workstations, which may interfere with the work of the managing editor. It is exactly for this reason that the access to schedule is given to a limited number of users.

In most cases, a schedule for the next day is created using a skeleton and contains all necessary blocks and some other items, such as jingles. All that is left to the user is to insert all necessary audio items or programs, taking them from Media Data Base. In case of programs, a special item called Stop (to insert it, press S) or a microphone item (press D) are sometimes used. These two items have a similar function – the broadcasting will pause at the point where such item is placed, which will give the opportunity to broadcast signal from microphones in the studio. By pressing G, you can mark the whole item as Stop which is the same as adding a Stop item directly after it. Further broadcasting according to schedule must be launched manually by the managing editor.

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