

Media Management and Automation System for Broadcast



Infopanel

USER MANUAL

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1 Summary

Infopanel is a comprehensive solution for visual informing.

Infopanel solves the problem of informing various groups of people (administrators, technical staff and visitors) about events that are important for them, providing the needed information in a convenient graphic form.

The information is centrally displayed on a lot of Infopanel Screens which are usually flat monitors with large diagonal screens.

The server part of the system provides automatic collection and preparation of all the necessary information.

Special workplaces provide interaction between the staff and the Infopanel, allowing for manual entering of that information into the system which cannot be collected automatically.

The number of simultaneously active Infopanel Screens is not limited, it can be pretty large (more than 100), and connection of new Infopanel Screens does not require reconfiguration of the server part or enhancement of its hardware possibilities.

A single complex can include multiple Infopanel Screens displaying different information or displaying the same information in different ways, depending on the location where the information box is installed, as well as its purpose and the tasks of the staff who are using it.

2 Features

The main feature of the system is the close integration of Infopanel with Digispot II/III media management and automation software. The server part of the Infopanel is built using the Digispot system core components. Therefore, the Infopanel Screen easily displays information about events happening within the system, such as the state of broadcasting players for example. If needed, information bars and other components of the Infopanel Screen can be built directly into the Digispot II complex workplaces.

Extensible architecture allows for easy enhancements to the system with new components for solving specific tasks.

3 Structure

Components of three main types are included in the Infopanel package.

- Infopanel Screens
- Value server
- Value sources

3.1 Infopanel Screens

They provide visualization of information with a preset configuration. They are basically a monitor connected to a compact computer. This is what Infopanel Screen users see. Usually, from one to several dozen panels are included in the complex. The panels are connected to general or specialized local network via physical connection or WiFi.

3.2 Value server

Provides reception of information from various sources, stores it and distributes it among Infopanel Screens according to their configuration. This is an essential component of the Infopanel that is always active. It is usually enough to include only one value server in the complex. The server connects to the same local network that the Infopanel Screens are in. It can also connect to other networks to communicate with information sources.

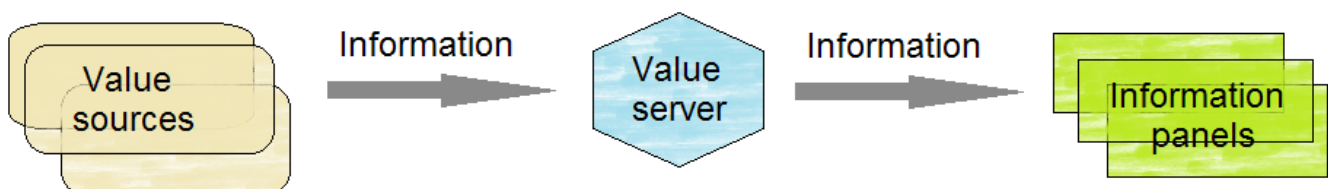
3.3 Value sources

These components ensure transfer of all the necessary information to value server. The set of sources for a particular complex depends on the types of information displayed on Infopanel Screens. The sources are included in the same local network that the value server is in. The sources, depending on their type, can operate continuously or be run periodically. The sources may be located on a single workstation, including on the same workstation the value server is on, or can be placed on other workstations.

There are completely automatic sources of information and those that are controlled manually by an operator.

3.4 Diagram

The Infopanel complex can be represented schematically as a simple diagram.



4 Functions

The possibilities of each particular complex are defined by the value sources included. Existing sources allow for the display of the following information on the Infopanel Screens.

4.1 Infopanel: Clock

Analog and digital clocks, synchronized with the rest of the complex, with a possibility to specify time shift in relation to UTC.

There are several preset varieties but custom design can also be developed.

4.2 Infopanel: Events

The occurrence of certain events is displayed on the Infopanel Screen in the form of a glowing indicator (banner) with respective lettering or image. The following can act as a source of event:

- GPI (closing of a contact pair). For example, activation of a microphone, phone call and so on.
- USB-GPI TP-314 converter is required additionally.
- Digispot II system event indicator.
- Practically any random event connected with the rest of the available values, such as the start of a commercial block in X-Player for example, or playback of a composition by a certain artist.

4.3 Infopanel: Level meter

Displaying of audio signal level with a scale, overload indication and peak level risks.

The following may serve as a source:

- Any LiveWire network node: Axia driver or node, its input or output
- Analysis of signal coming from the physical soundcard input (in development)
- Analysis of signal supplied to output from one of the recording or playback devices of Digispot II system (in development)

The meter can be configured by displaying the 0 mark, the scale marking can be adjusted, the range of displayed levels can be set, etc.

4.4 Infopanel: Player state

Displaying of a schedule fragment from Digispot II system player's queue, with visualization of practically any field of those available in the broadcasting schedule. Direct or reverse numeric playback count is displayed, together with graphical playback progress meter.

It is possible to set different visual layout depending on played material. For example, commercial block playback may differ from musical playback.

4.5 Infopanel: Timer

Displaying of direct or reverse countdown timer with numerical and graphical count meter. The timer can be run via GPI. Additional lighting is possible, similar to event displaying.

4.6 Infopanel: Video

Currently displaying of video stream is implemented with quality sufficient to monitor the presenter in the studio, for example. Possibility to display video stream formed by the Digispot II system player is under development.

4.7 Infopanel: Operator text

Allows for immediate display of random text entered by the operator on his workstation. It can be the topic of the program, hot news and so on.

The operator enters the text using a special component. The component may be built into the Digispot II software complex or, alternatively, installed as a separate application.

4.8 Infopanel: Random information

A clean interface for connection of external applications allows to easily transfer to InfoServer and display on the Infopanel Screens any random text information coming from these applications.

For instance, it can be currency rates, stock prices, temperature, atmospheric pressure, current technical parameters of the complex and any other such values.

5 General notes

Each of the objects described above can be displayed on the Infopanel Screen in one or more copies, with different size and different visualization parameters. The number is only limited by PC performance, which is especially important for video.

In addition to the types of information listed above, Infopanel Screens can also display random static text and graphic images: titles, logos, backgrounds, layout elements and so on.

Every kind of text information can have font type configured for it, as well font parameters, boldness, spacing, etc.

Layering and transparency settings are also available for all widgets (visual elements).

The configuration that defines the layout of a particular Infopanel Screen can be developed independently for each particular case or, alternatively, one of the preset configurations can be used. The customer himself can change the configuration after installation.

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