Ferncast announced the release of its aixtream 2.2 software

The new version includes multiple improvements, especially for DVB MPEG TS and legacy input/output use cases

In a market with a wide range of competing and complementary devices and solutions, compatibility and adaptability are vital. For these reasons, Ferncast is expanding its support both for legacy and cutting-edge workflows, as well as combinations of both.

With this new release, all aixtream solutions now support ASI (Asynchronous Serial Interface) input and output. While ASI is an old standard, it is still used by many broadcasters, especially for DVB use cases. In order to better support these use cases and allow users to replace even more ancillary hardware with just aixtream, we developed our ASI implementation. As always, all inputs and outputs available to aixtream can be used in any combination. This way aixtream can connect legacy inputs with cutting edge outputs and vice versa. Users could now input audio via ASI and connect it to a Dante or AES67 network without any additional hardware.

Moreover, the development of ASI support is accompanied by many improvements of our DVB implementation. Many of which were based on recent customer feedback from multiple major public broadcasters. These improvements also include enhanced compatibility with non-Ferncast solutions, even not standards-compliant ones, based on reverse engineering of proprietary solutions. This will ensure that aixtream is a viable solution even in a diverse workflow including solutions from many different providers.

The third major addition is support of LATM and LATM/LOAS AAC (Low-overhead MPEG-4 Audio Transport Multiplex and Low-overhead Audio Stream) according to MPEG-4 ISO/IEC 14496-3. As the name implies, these formats for AAC streams are focused on low overhead and are often the standard used in AAC via DVB. This too was a customer-driven expansion of aixtream. Besides being low on overhead, they are also very error-resilient which is a major advantage in the diverse field of DVB applications.

'We are glad that aixtream 2.2. supports many new DVB MPEG-TS features including ASI output. This technology has been introduced to the market quite long ago, nevertheless it is still used by many broadcasters in DVB-S, DVB-C, DVB-T. At the moment many of our customers are changing from MPEG Layer 2 encoding to AAC' commented Dr. Ing Thomas Schlien, Senior Software Engineer at Ferncast GmbH. 'Our customers are very co-operative and talking with experts from HR, SWR and WDR has been very helpful.'

Moreover, some other features have been added or improved in version 2.2 in addition to general bug fixing. Among these features, customers can find:

- HLS: Support for HLS delta playlists

- This will give the listeners even more freedom in the use of HLS web streams.
- HLS + DVB: Significant overhead reduction based on customer feedback
- DVB: Enabled additional PMT entries and custom descriptors
- Use cases: Support for automatic answering machine use cases

aixtream version 2.2 will be released today to the customer base.

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