

# European Parliament



## Customer Profile

The European Parliament (EP) is the only directly elected European Union (EU) government body and one of the largest democratic assemblies in the world. It hosts 754 members who are elected every five years to represent the 500 million citizens of the EU.

Most of the European Parliament's in-depth work is done in specialised committees that prepare reports. Those reports will later be voted on in the plenary sessions. Because it represents all European citizens, the assembly's multilingualism is one of its most unique attributes. Parliamentary documents are published in all the official languages of the EU, and every Member of the European Parliament (MEP) has the right to speak in the official language of their choice.

## Business Challenge

The audio-visual (AV) department at the EP needed to optimise its archiving process and help the archivists in Brussels (Belgium) and Strasbourg (France) be more responsive when handling increasing demands from internal staff and journalists (producers and video editors). In addition, the department wanted to gain better control of the EP's considerable media assets and its growing database, while being able to scale to meet future demands.

The EP has an obligation to make all of its plenary session debates, which are recorded in 23 languages, available to the public and politicians as quickly as possible: its AV department must make the same information easily available to everyone. This represents a significant amount of content, as each video can last up to five hours. Handling metadata precisely is crucial to the EP: information must be perfectly accurate and not a word can change in the process, per the EU regulations.

### Customer

- European Parliament  
(This project has been carried out in the context of a public procurement following a call for tender where Imagine Communications has been selected as contractor)

### Industry

- European Union Government Body

### Challenge

- Need to optimise archiving process and help the archivists in different countries be more responsive when handling increasing demands for content

### Technology Solution

- Imagine Communications delivers Nexio® Digital Asset Management to create more efficient workflows in the EP archive department

### Business Value

- Easily accessible, searchable archives; reduced time-lag between the storage of content and availability to journalists

The archives — which date back to the beginning of the institution and include video, audio and now, digital, media files — are made up of a 35 GB database containing 15,000 tapes, 65,000 high-resolution video files and 65,000 low-resolution video files. This database is growing daily through the addition of up to 20 new files. In addition, the archives also store daily content from more than 40 other types of events within the EP.

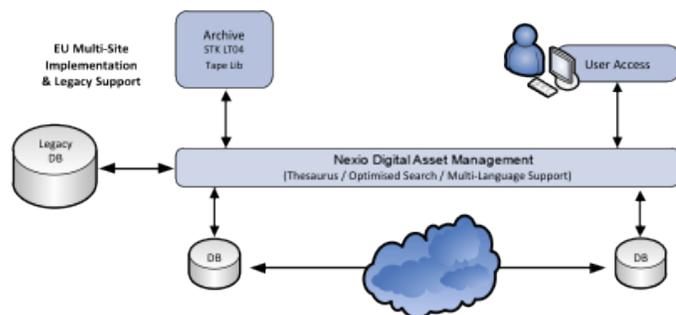
The increasing complexity of managing a growing archive presented a number of challenges to the AV department. The EP needed a better workflow process, including optimised metadata management, enhanced browsing functionality and multilingual options, to make those materials available to journalists quickly and in an automated manner.

## Technology Solution

The archive redesign at the EP was achieved using Imagine Communications Nexio® digital asset management technology. The new system handles the automation, restoration and movement of assets, as well as the copying of files into other systems.

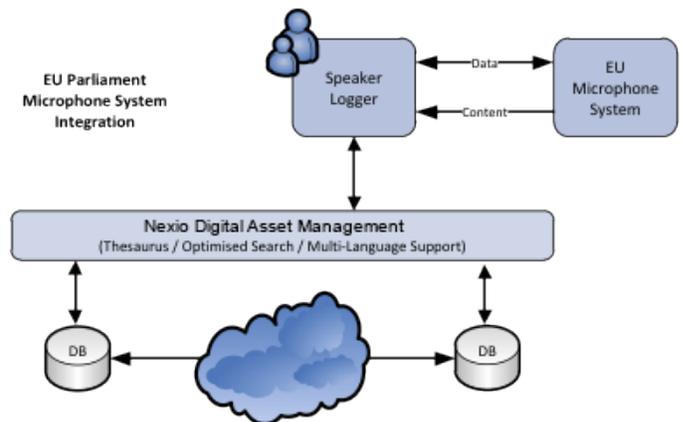
“The project was more than a simple migration — it was a complete redesign of the workflow of the archive department,” explains the Audiovisual Unit of the European Parliament. “The previous system was unable to cope with our demands, as it could only handle tapes and not video files, for example, and didn’t have any automation functionality.”

The project first involved the migration of all existing tape content from the legacy system to video files within the Invenio system. All the metadata available in the previous system had to be successfully migrated to Invenio in a sometimes complex procedure that often involved correcting time codes and video drops. The project teams then deployed Nexio Motion as the workflow engine and for integration with third-party systems and Nexio Insight to automate workflow processes and give front-end users full control of the flow of assets.



To meet the needs of the tender, Imagine Communications also developed EPlogger, a custom application that allows the EP to log specific moments with time code information and appropriate and precise metadata. The plenary sessions of the EP, for example, are recorded in 23 languages, and these recordings are automatically fed into the Nexio DAM system with EPlogger. Other events, such as symposiums and meetings, can also be logged manually in EPlogger or updated by the archivists themselves with qualitative data after the event.

The Nexio system is linked to the EP’s in-house semi-automatic eCarton flow system, which among other things captures metadata from each microphone used during events. Electronic Video News (EVN) files are also created by post production after many events and need to be archived appropriately. Not only is the solution able to detect new video files on the server, but it can also restore and archive videos back into the archive system.



In the archive itself, the GUI interface of Nexio allows users to search for content in two languages, English or French. Users can play, mark in or mark out, enrich archive with selections, listen to videos in multiple languages, handle audio or still images, and export metadata to other systems if needed.

The system is highly redundant and can handle three points of failure, with a Imagine Communications Maintainer service assisting the move from one node to another.

## Business Value

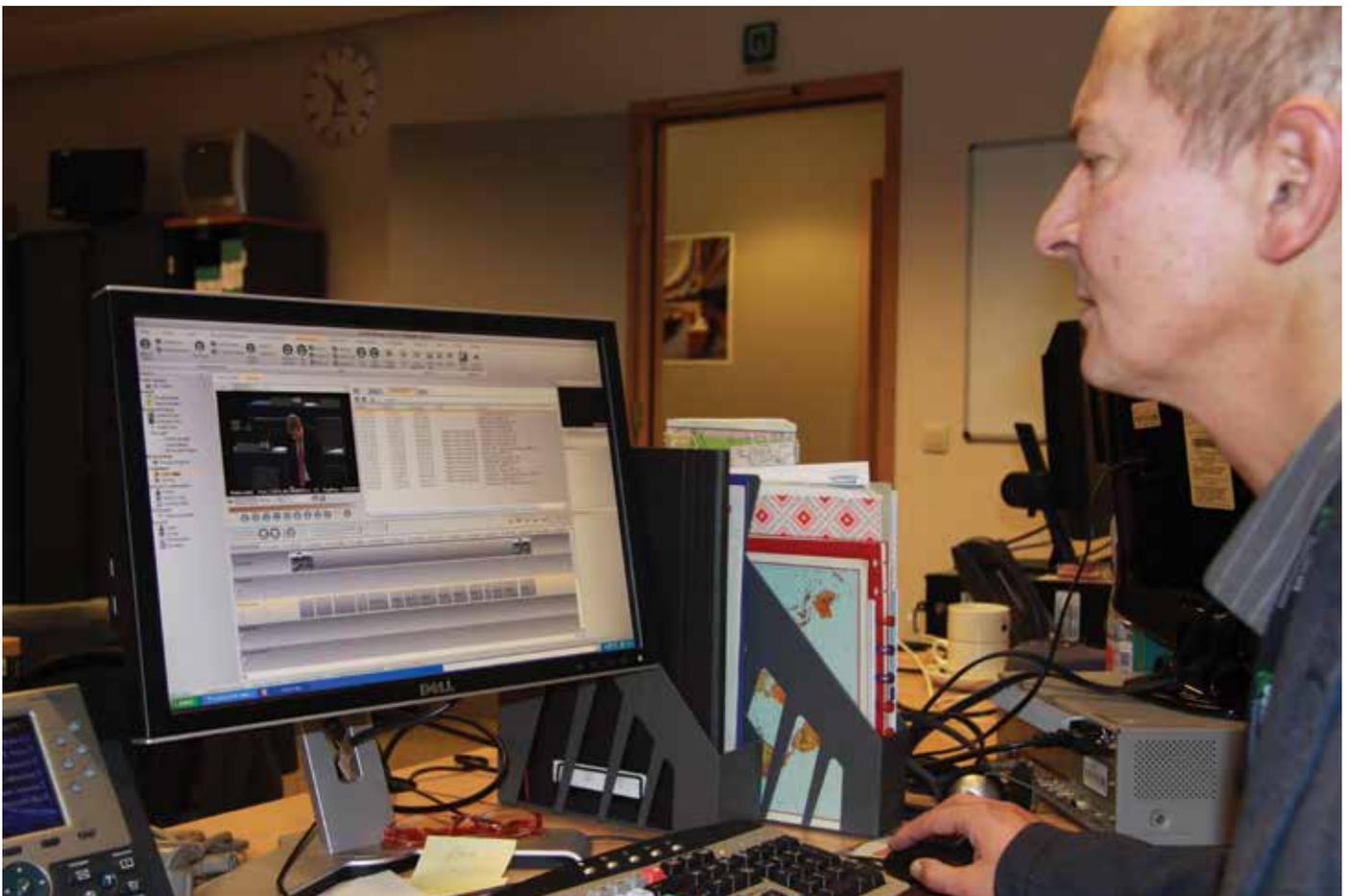
The new digital media asset management technology at the EP archive helps keep EU citizens informed about public policy news in their own countries and in the whole of the EU. The archives are now easily accessible to national and international journalists, as well as to internal staff, in the form of video and audio ingest files in pre-edited form or in rushes. The Nexio system makes all of those files accessible with multi-language support from within the system, so journalists can search for events by person, date topic and more.

The timeframes on each request can be very short. For example, journalists can request material from specific speakers at today's plenary sessions and expect it to be available via FTP later the same day. The archive handles requests from journalists at up to 30 external TV stations during the plenary sessions, as well as web requests and requests from researchers and the EP administration. In one week, up to 80 percent of requests directed at the AV department will be demands for original archived content. In one year, the AV department will handle around 2000 requests to its database.

The Audiovisual Unit of the European Parliament explained that users of the system immediately experienced the benefits of working in a tapeless environment, as opposed to working in the old system based on tapes and a simple database. The speed of searches on servers and libraries within an archive containing more than 22,000 hours of digitised video and audio is now five to 10 times faster than before.

"With Nexio Asset Management, you can search within a large video file and pinpoint the exact clip you're looking for – it's magic," says the Audiovisual Unit. "This project demonstrates the strength of Nexio DAM when it comes to digital asset management in a complex, live multi-cultural environment."

For the archivists, the association of metadata with video and the power of the search engine allow for complex requests when searching not only inside files, but also related attachments.





The Audiovisual Unit of the European Parliament said Nexio Asset Management changes the very concept of the archive, as the time-lag between the storage of content and making it available is diminishing constantly. They mention the thesaurus as another core benefit of the system in such a multilingual environment.

The Nexio system is also poised to support future projects, such as online web content and fast FTP content transfers to broadcasters and media professionals. The Audiovisual Unit of European Parliament hopes to see continuous integration between the AV department and others, such as audio and photography, to enable the creation of a full EP media library. The team is constantly working on improving the link between items in the archive, and pinpointing hierarchical relationships and parallel content to make search results more precise.

“The new system can be described as the final layer of our tapeless production system, which improves the daily work of the AV unit and its client base of journalists, producers and members of the European Parliament,” explained the Unit. “The services offered by the AV unit of the EP depend on reactivity and quality of content, and the Nexio Asset Management system has improved these services dramatically.”