

News Release

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Starfish Isis subtitling goes live at ITFC, London

Subtitlers at ITFC's LiveText South subtitling facility in London now use Isis-6 Subtitling System from Starfish Technologies to subtitle regional news programmes in five areas across southern England. Continued roll-out is expected in the north of England's ITV regions, according to Chris Higgs, ITFC's Managing Director.

In November 2004, London-based facilities house ITFC purchased Isis-6 to deliver live and pre-recorded subtitles, within its LiveText South facility. It has also been used to produce pre-recorded subtitling within the department. From July 2005, it has also been used to deliver subtitles for regional news in the Meridian and Anglia regions.

Isis-6 interfaces remotely with regional Inews servers from Avid to create replica rundowns on the workstation complete with news text, from which subtitles are produced. Transmission of subtitles occurs manually (via the keyboard) or automatically (with Isis taking its cues from Inews transmission). Isis-6 also allows live input for unscripted stories. Shortform dictionaries and user-configurable keyboards help to make this a precise and ergonomic process. Text entry via speech-recognition packages (e.g. Dragon and Viavoice) is also possible.

"We fully recognise the importance of this sale," said Graham Neden, Managing Director of Starfish Technologies. "ITFC is a major subtitling provider and we are proud that Isis-6 is used here."

Final user training was provided by Julia Watts of Swan Subtitling Ltd, who has extensive experience of using Isis to subtitle national news programmes. "Subtitlers' input was invaluable in achieving the desired user interface," she said. "My job was to ensure subtitlers understood the system and had the confidence to use it."

The same architecture underpins live and non-live systems, minimising cross-training costs for operational and technical staff and allowing live workstations to be used for pre-recorded subtitling in what would otherwise be downtime. With appropriate licences, Isis can also be used for open captioning, DVD and internet subtitling, and Audio Description.

The system is straightforward to install, configure and maintain. ITFC bought the database version, structured around a mirrored pair of SQL servers. Workstations are linked via the ITFC network in their West London offices (although workstations could equally be linked remotely for home-based users or satellite offices). Gez Quinn, IT Manager at ITFC said: "I am pleased with all the built in functionality of Isis and the flexibility of the database provided by Starfish. The major benefit to me in IT is the way that Isis and the other products in the Starfish portfolio can be moulded to fit in with ITFC's own current requirements and the roadmap for (live) subtitling at ITFC"

ITFC purchased a number of other software tools from Starfish to improve quality and reliability, including the Immedia system to manage the encoding of video and video-server disk space. Developed as an offshoot of Isis, Immedia is now a successful product in its own right.

More installations are likely, following the successful deployment in West London. Chris Higgs, Managing Director of ITFC, confirmed that Starfish will soon be heading north to install Isis-6 for use in ITFC's LiveText North facility, which subtitles ITV regional news and programmes in the Yorkshire, Tyne Tees, Granada and Border Television areas.

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About Starfish

Starfish Technologies Ltd is an established leader in the supply of Subtitling and Teletext solutions to the Broadcast TV industry. Starfish also supply a range of specialised technologies for this market including scheduling and compliance recording.

Starfish have developed a range of media management technologies and have a successful track record of media management project design and implementation.

Further product and press information can be obtained from the Starfish website www.startfish.tv