**What Is a Workflow Management System?**

A workflow management system is software that helps to define, administer and coordinate different business processes. Every company has a variety of such processes, always involving several employees and systems. For example, a simple universal workflow could control and supervise all required tasks or steps for a vacation or order request process. These tasks are visualized as cubes with dependencies (see picture).

**How Does a Workflow System Work?**

To stick with the vacation example: after the employee enters his preferred dates in a specifically designed form, the department manager will automatically receive an approval form through a web browser (picture). If the request is approved, the system exports all necessary data to the HR system. The next step in the workflow is to inform the employee – again in a specific form, where the simple workflow instance can be completed.

**Why Do You Need a Workflow System?**

Workflow systems are used for transparent planning and control of every part of an enterprise – especially where employees work together and share information. Email, Excel, meetings and other costly manual coordination will be minimized and general process efforts reduced. In a production environment, the system will increase productivity, improve quality and will allow visibility anytime. Broadcasting and post-production are just two examples.

**How To Implement Your Own Workflows?**

Your own workflows can be designed without programming. First you have to design forms and system interfaces with various input and output elements (picture) for the different roles in your process. Then you have to connect all the tasks with dependencies in order to define the sequence of the workflow steps. In this way, your own ‘workflow apps’ can be created quickly and easily, in order to streamline any kind of production or managerial process.
Content Management
During a media production process, a variety of assets such as video, audio tracks, graphics or subtitles will be used. The workflow engine uses the metadata in the archive or from an external MAM to decide, which content has to be processed when, how and by whom. For the purposes of documentation, Word and Excel files, quality checks, flowcharts or labels can be created, filed and then distributed or printed. Search screens ensure that information about tapes and files can be found quickly, no matter where they are stored or managed.

Order Management
Each individual project or process has its own distinct features. At the beginning of a workflow the requirements are defined in an order form and/or calculated in a quotation (see picture 2). With this information, the system creates an individual workflow instance, which includes all work steps required to process the request. If a dependency of a task is fulfilled, the job is delivered and can be edited individually, in bulk and/or with pre-defined templates. During the processing of the workflow the system captures all data in order to allow reporting, invoicing or company-internal cost accounting.

Resource Scheduling
The high degree of automation and the extensive help functions serve to enable human decision making. Therefore the scheduling system displays the current workflows in numerous different views in a web browser. These views (e.g. grouped by status or due date) are easy to understand, so you can allocate the resources of your organization optimally. With one glance you can identify possible bottlenecks, check how busy employees or departments are, and see what kind of costs are being incurred. The scheduling system is a universally applicable tool for optimized resource planning.