



Parliament of Victoria



Parliament of Victoria Keeps MPs in the Loop with Exterity Integrated IPTV and Digital Signage Solution

The Parliament of Victoria is the bicameral legislature of the Australian state of Victoria. Construction of Parliament House, located on Spring Street on the edge of the central city grid, started in 1855 with various sections completed over the following decades. However, Parliament House has had several extensions and annexes added over the years to accommodate an enlarged legislature and administrative staff.



The challenge

The Parliament launched a major project in 2016 to create a two-storey building that would provide additional office space for 102 Members of Parliament. The new annexe is designed to be architecturally sympathetic to the 160 year old Parliament House building and embedded into the landscape to enhance its environmental performance while reducing interference with sight lines to and from Parliament House.

The project, managed by the Department of Parliamentary Services, included the implementation of an IPTV solution that would enable MPs and their staff to access live video from the Legislative Council, Legislative Assembly and certain committee rooms. The system would also provide access to FTA channels with a focus on news.

For the tendering processes, the Parliament commissioned an independent organisation to evaluate multiple available IPTV solutions on the market. The evaluation looked at a wide range of criteria including reliability, flexibility, ease of use and support. "With such a high-profile site, the evaluation process was extensive and one of the key factors was working with a supplier that could offer a true end-to-end solution", says Andrew Hicks, Director of Parity Technology Consulting.

With over 40 years' combined experience, Parity is a specialist Independent Audio Visual and Video Conferencing consulting firm that has worked on many high-profile government projects, including The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, The Australian Defence College and The Australian Maritime Safety Authority. As Hicks explains: "By the end of the process, it was clear that Exterity was the best-suited to this project – especially in terms of reliability."

The solution

Parity then worked closely with Exterity to develop a design to implement 142 TV screens within the new building and selected areas of the original buildings. The Exterity IPTV system also manages any digital signage content Parliament desires to push to those screens. The system was supplied, installed and configured by Fredon, a major Australian contractor.

With flexibility for the future a key requirement, Hicks says: "One of the major benefits of Exterity is the floating licence model. The licences are not locked to a particular set-top-box, which means we can assign TV or digital signage to any screen through a simple software configuration change."

The deployment includes both Exterity IPTV and extensive audio capabilities from Dante to integrate the existing audio feeds from both chambers into the IP-based system. The IPTV distribution uses one headend for FTA (terrestrial), Foxtel (satellite), and a second headend in the broadcast facilities for Internal Parliamentary broadcast that integrates seven SDI cards. The IPTV runs across a shared Gigabit Ethernet network that connects to Exterity AvediaPlayer r9300 IPTV PoE media players across 102 offices in the new annexe and 40 in original buildings.



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Andrew Hicks,
Director of Parity Technology Consulting



The result

"The first phase delivered an IPTV service that is very simple and intuitive to use and has been well received by the MPs and administrative staff", says Hicks. But with futureproofing a crucial requirement, Parity continues working with the Department of Parliamentary Services to extend the capabilities of the system. For instance, the in-house facilities team have added six IPTV screens to modernised press rooms and set up new media recording features that retain content from ten TV channels for 30 days – with the option for clips to be recorded and securely retained to help with parliamentary tasks.



"The IPTV deployment has been delivered on time and within budget and offers a system that has more than met our expectations. Exterity has proven it can be a one-stop shop for delivering, recording, managing and scheduling all our network-based content. The management software is also easy to us, yet powerful enough to allow us to adapt it for our future needs".

James Scott, Manager of Hansard with Department of Parliamentary Services

The project has been deemed a success and as James Scott, the Manager of Hansard within the Department of Parliamentary Services says: "The IPTV deployment has been delivered on time and within budget and offers a system that has more than met our expectations. Exterity has proven it can be a one-stop shop for delivering, recording, managing and scheduling all our network-based content. The management software is also easy to us, yet powerful enough to allow us to adapt it for our future needs".

The success of the project has been recognised by the wider AV industry in the region. In 2019, Parity Technology Consulting's work at Parliament of Victoria (Office Accommodation Project) won the "Best Application of AV for a Commercial or Government Project" category at the annual Audio-Visual Industry Awards.

About Exterity

Since 2001 Exterity has been designing, developing and manufacturing technically innovative products that deliver video over an IP network to some of the leading organisations across the globe. Our IPTV technology solution enable the distribution of TV, video and digital signage over enterprise IP networks to an unlimited number of end points, supporting large volumes of content and receiving devices without compromising system performance or availability.

In 2021, Exterity was acquired by VITEC, a worldwide leader in IP video streaming solutions. The move signals VITEC's intention to accelerate growth and strengthen its leadership position, with natural technology and customer synergies between the two companies that will enable VITEC to extend its reach into new geographies, market verticals and partners.