

Solution in Spotlight: Mediasite 5.0

Go-to-Market Premise: Rich media pioneer Sonic Foundry introduces wide-ranging upgrade to its flagship product line, enhancing the capabilities of the Mediasite appliance used to capture integrated presentations featuring video, audio, PowerPoint slides and other types of data. Other parts of the Mediasite rich media ecosystem – including its content management solution – also benefit from significant enhancements most likely to appeal to an organization’s rich media administrator.

Key Features & Capabilities: The updated version of Sonic Foundry’s Mediasite product line incorporates more than 100 individual upgrades and enhanced features not available in previous Mediasite offerings. With the raft of enhancements, Mediasite attempts to balance its historic focus for “ease-of-use” with the growing demands of organizations demanding more sophisticated tools to better address the issues of rich media development and distribution.

Content Creation Upgrades: The core capabilities for producing rich media content do not change much in this iteration of the Mediasite solution. The Mediasite Recorder – an appliance customized with varied, multiple data input capabilities and content creation software – is used to capture audio, video and computer elements of an event and then integrate them into a single on-screen presentation. And while Sonic Foundry historically has aggressively marketed the automated capture and “one-button recording” capabilities of its appliance, Mediasite 5.0 incorporates some significant adjustments that add some welcome flexibility to the appliance’s content creation capabilities.



Most of the changes are no-brainers that do not endanger Mediasite’s message of end-user simplicity. For instance, users of the Mediasite system will be able to click a “pause” button to temporarily halt the capture of a live or on-demand recording. This allows users of the system to take a break and collect their thoughts in between segments of a presentation recording. Likewise, enhancements in the appliance’s editing tools allow users more flexibility in snipping out unwanted video from any point in the presentation. Previously, Mediasite would permit trimming at the beginning or the end of a captured presentation. Taken together, the upgrades make it far easier to assemble extended, good-looking on-demand presentations

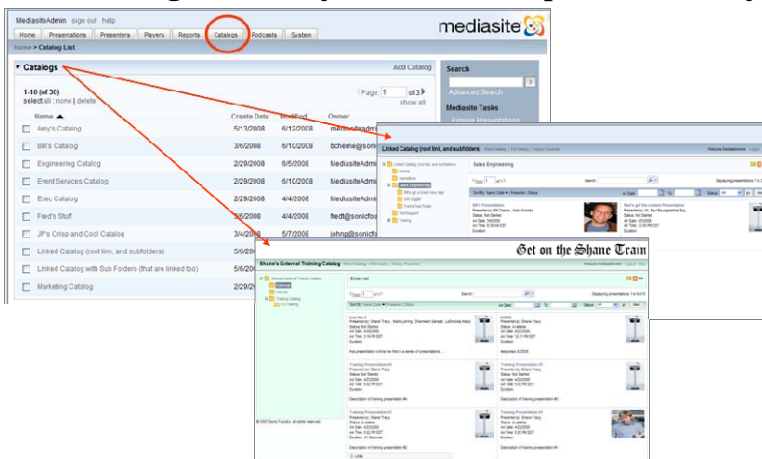
Other additions reflect the on-going maturation of the overall rich media market. The new version of Mediasite supports a wider range of content resolutions for video, an expanded set of input connectors for digital video capture and enhanced capabilities to capture and playback full-motion video as part of a presentation or embedded in a PowerPoint.

Content Presentation and Management: More fundamental, significant enhancements are evident in the upgraded version of content presentation and management available in the Mediasite EX Server 5.0. Changes touch every aspect of back-shop rich media administration with enhancements in on-screen players along with upgrades in the way on-demand content is packaged and presented in on-screen catalogs. The new version of Mediasite also significantly boosts the audience tracking and reporting capabilities available to rich media administrators.

Incremental enhancements in features baked into the on-screen interfaces generated by the Mediasite server combine to significantly improve the end-user experience. On-screen buttons now bake Tivo-style features into the Mediasite viewing experience. Viewers, for instance, can instantly skip back and replay the preceding three seconds of a presentation they are watching at the click of a button. The new version also puts more control into the hands of viewers, allowing them to hover and magnify specific elements on a slide for closer inspection. While watching a presentation, users also can e-mail links to important or favorite content clips within a webcast that allow recipients to play back the webcast from the specified relevant passage.

On the content management side, the newest version of Mediasite permits far greater flexibility in managing the folder hierarchies where on-demand content is stored and cataloged. The system also simplifies the way administrators can create links to specific

sub-folders of content featured in an organization's library of on-demand content, making it easier for organizations to embed (and automatically update) tailored content into Web sites highlighting a specific content theme or issue. Related upgrades make it possible for users to more simply e-mail links for entire content catalogs or to subscribe to catalogs using RSS feeds.



IMS First Look Bottom Line: Mediasite 5.0 is a meaningful update to Sonic Foundry's flagship rich media product line that enhances the functionality of the Mediasite solution. While no single feature is revolutionary, the cumulative impact of the improvements creates a more sophisticated platform for rich media management that stays true to its "ease-of-use" roots.