

Power Management: Luxury or Necessity?

By Chris Exelby, Managing Director TSL

Within the broadcasting environment, technological advances and changing business models continue to create uncertainty. Fluctuating advertising revenues and pressure on the budgets of publicly financed operations mean that funding of the industry is unstable, and in the scramble to stay in business no aspect of the cost base is being ignored.

One area of focus for cost savings and increased efficiency is to establish how best to leverage the capabilities of advanced equipment to automate broadcast workflow and utilise fewer engineering staff, for both operations and equipment maintenance.

Decentralisation of facilities, through the use of remote and sometimes unmanned facilities managed from a central point, also helps to minimise the staff resources required.

An important enabler of such cost reduction measures through lower engineering costs is intelligent power management. Power management software products, such as PsiMon from TSL Professional Products Group, are increasingly being deployed to provide visibility of

rack status and to quickly and efficiently identify and address any environmental factors or equipment faults that might lead to system breakdown, reducing the need for manual observation or monitoring. As the capability of intelligent power management products has advanced, the number of alarm and monitoring functions they offer has grown. PsiMon enables control room engineers to detect faults in remote and/or unmanned operations, quickly identifying faulty equipment and helping the central engineering team to develop alternative solutions to restore output. This has particular value in remote locations such as re-transmitter stations located at the tops of mountains, remote news desk facilities, remotely sited IT data-centres, outsourced engineering-supported theatre audio/video installations and even digital signage equipment located at retailers' premises. The value of a rapid restoration of service in these circumstances is easy to appreciate; intelligent power management can create significant savings in



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operational costs without negatively impacting equipment up-time. Another compelling reason to use intelligent power management is power saving. Broadcast and IT equipment is traditionally permanently powered-on and may not even incorporate an 'off' switch. Although in every rack some products may need to be permanently energised, non-essential equipment (such as the talkback, video and audio monitoring, mixing desks, ingest etc) can be turned off to save energy, not only in terms of running the equipment itself but also in powering the air conditioning needed to keep it cool. PsiMon offers the facility for rack equipment to be individually powered as operational needs dictate. It does this by individually switching the outputs, using up to four pre-defined power maps of a facility. Equipment

that is not required can be switched off in a pre-programmed power down sequence, saving energy and prolonging equipment life. When required the facility can be restored to full operation with a single key sequence that starts a pre-defined and managed power-up process. So whether your goal is efficiency savings through reduced engineering resource, a more rapid response to equipment failure, a saving on energy costs - or indeed all three of these - intelligent power management is a technique that will contribute uniquely to your business. Initial investment in deployment of the products - which some may consider a luxury - will be quickly recouped, and you will swiftly come to rely on them as a necessity for operational efficiency.

TSL Professional Products Group is a leader in the area of power management.