

Melinda FM uses Lawo crystal Broadcast Console



L-R: Chris Schoutteet, Marc De Coster. Picture: Aircast

Melinda FM, a beloved radio station situated in the picturesque coastal town of Middelkerke in the Belgian province of West Flanders, has made a significant leap in its broadcast capabilities by upgrading its mobile radio studio with a state-of-the-art Lawo crystal broadcast console. This transformative project was expertly handled by Aircast, an independent broadcast equipment supplier and a subsidiary of antenna manufacturer Lambda Technologies.

“In view of the challenges in the near future as well as for everyday broadcasts and special events in the coming years, we wanted to purchase a new, mobile radio studio”, states Chris Schoutteet, Chairman of Melinda FM. “In my opinion, investing in state-of-the-art technology opens up new ways of producing informative and entertaining programs, which is crucial for retaining our audience”, he explains.

Looking back, Tommy Degraeve, Media Solution Manager at Aircast, says: “When Melinda FM, one of our long-standing customers, asked us to upgrade their mobile studio, we analyzed their requirements. Together we scanned the market for a solution mapping best the radio station’s demands for optimized workflows, system openness, and future potential, and found that, considering all this, we should test the Lawo crystal broadcast console.”

Schoutteet adds: “We wanted a versatile mixing system that would offer us expansion options, so that we could, for example, offer programs with extended listener participation via telephone. or voice-over-IP connections. With the crystal, for a slightly higher initial cost, we now own a system that is tailored precisely to our requirements, is of high quality, reliable and expandable - and therefore future-proof. References from major broadcasters support our decision.”

The versatile, high-performance crystal mixing console is designed for broadcast and pro-audio applications, powered by the Power Core, Lawo's compact 1RU

Software-Defined DSP Mixing Engine and Modular I/O Device. This setup ensures seamless integration of RAVENNA/AES67, MADI, Dante, AES3, and analog signals, making it an ideal solution for future-proofing broadcast operations. Features such as AutoMix, which maintains the balance of multi-mic productions, and AutoGain, which optimizes mic levels with a single button press, enable operators to produce compelling and engaging programming effortlessly. The ability to store and recall an unlimited number of snapshots and DSP profiles allows for customized show setups and individual talent profiles accessible from any networked console, supporting remote operations and OB setups.

Melinda FM's first event using the new Lawo crystal was a live broadcast from the five-day Sluze Kermesse (ship-lock fair) in Middelkerke during the extended Pentecost weekend. The event was a resounding success, featuring live interviews and music mixed seamlessly on the crystal console on site. "It's a pleasure to showcase what local radio can achieve," says Schoutteet. "Our mobile studio now enables us to bring music and engaging conversations directly to the community, which is essential for maintaining close contact with our audience."

"With the experience we gained from this event we know to have taken the right decision. The intuitive operation, the host of assistive mixing technologies, the flexibility in workflows, enable our operators to produce compelling, engaging programming. And we are still far from having identified all the possibilities and options the new console offers. It will be a pleasure to find out in the next weeks", Schoutteet closes.

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