



Information TiC Narrow Casting

English Product information

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Introduction and Background

About TiC Narrow Casting

Our business philosophy is that we put qualitative targets above quantitative targets and our priority is to build good long term working relationships with our customers. We also achieve this through an effective support team within our organisation and a high level of after sales service. Our products additionally are of course competitively priced.

Our skilled team stands for reliability and professionalism combined with a high level of technical knowledge. We have in house programmers who are capable of developing new features within TiC. Our template designers can create customised and functional templates for you. Our sales advisors can advise you on the best solutions to meet your requirements. Our team does not work on commission or targets so there is no pressure and we can make time for you.

History of TiC Narrow Casting

TiC Narrow Casting was introduced to the market in 2006. Previously there was a period of one and a half years of detailed testing, during which time the product underwent several stages of development. Additionally testing was undertaken with non-resident data-bases, live video input, RSS-feeds and Tickertape. All these functions are standard in TiC Narrow Casting.

Philosophy of TiC Narrow Casting

We have studied the market and the end user requirements. This has resulted in the lay-out and functionality being kept simple, easy to use and understandable. We have arranged the system so that users are able to change the content easily without having to constantly refer back to the manual or help facilities. Examples of facilities which make it easier to use are a flexible and reliable planning schedule diary program, repeating playlist patterns and the ability to see at a glance which clients are on line and what their status is.

For all our future updates simplicity will remain a priority.

Simple, flexible and timesaving...That is the power of TiC Narrow casting.

Future vision for TiC Narrow Casting

Within TiC we will continue to focus on the market requirements and we will develop the product accordingly.

General Functional Features

TiC Narrow Casting is the medium that is able to communicate audio visual messages in an attractive and interactive way to specific groups of your customers or staff. A number of LCD displays can be connected together over several different locations. These are manageable and can be controlled from a central point or locally so you can create the maximum visual effect and impact at the specific location.

With TiC Narrow Casting you are able to present flash and video content, WebPages with RSS-feed and/or a Tickertape and PowerPoint presentations in a dynamic way. These will be featured on individual or groups of LCD displays, at the right place, at the right time and for the right people. You can reach your target group on a personal level. This is actually the meaning of narrow casting.

TiC Narrow Casting is a innovative solution where our so called TiC Manager software will be installed on a server. This server acts as a database where the content is stored. By way of a push structure the hardware (referred to as the TiC client) will receive the actual playlist(s) and play all the relevant content which is controlled by the TiC manager.

Advantages and Usability

Simplicity

TiC Narrow Casting uses a simple user interface which people will recognise as it is common to many E-mail and diary software facilities. There are no special editing tools or different layers of content. This enables the user to quickly and effectively change the type of content. There are easy to use functions built into TiC such as the playlist. In the playlist one can move the content to any required day or days and/or to any time. One can even do this with a repeating pattern. This results in the optimal efficiency in the manageability and flexibility of the content.

There is no special manual required to work with TiC. The content is very easy to manipulate. Messages in the template are easily translated into a text message so that the house style of the organisation is maintained. We do supply a functional user manual which explains, step by step, how to work with TiC.

Flexibility

TiC Narrow Casting is flexible in the way the content is planned and controlled. One can easily group or separate out the TiC Clients. Content can be readily changed for an individual TiC Client or for a group of TiC Clients by way of the TiC Manager. Separate play lists and content can be created for every TiC Client or a group of Clients. An overview of the groups is also available on the TiC manager.

Time Saving Features

The TiC Clients are controlled by the TiC manager and the status of the TiC Clients is automatically displayed. If a problem does occur the TiC Client can be taken over by the TiC Manager. One can have an overview of how the content is viewed on any of the TiC clients in the network. The LCD screens can be turned to standby mode, saving time, extending the life of the screens and also saving energy.

Summary

TiC Narrow Casting offers the following features:

- Easily recognized diary layout.
- No course or manual necessary to use TiC.
- Text can be easily changed and content such as photos added.
- Activities can be planned or changed for any time (today, next week, next year etc.) for both repeating patterns and individual play lists.
- Facilities are available to change or override centrally driven activities at the last minute.
- TiC Narrow Casting supports the following file formats: HTML, Flash, MPEG (MPEG2/MPEG4), AVI, WMV, PowerPoint.
- RSS-feed and Tickertape chains are supported via external servers and central databases.

Technical Features

Screen Features

Text, photographs, video images and/or slide shows can be easily added to a template. Live video input and the display of real web pages is also available. There are many possible combinations of these media files. There are also facilities to determine how much of the screen is used when the files are being shown.

There is a transparent template which can be used ,for example, to overlay the company logo.

Letter type, colour use, and "Look and feel" are fully flexible and can conform to the company's house style.

Within a specific TiC template you can position the media file (MPEG, WMV, AV1, RSS-feed, live video input etc.) to the front or back of the screen. TiC Narrow Casting is developed for touch-screen applications and has screensaver functions thus it is possible integrate different media.

The Tickertape facility enables text to be readily added as well allowing the selection of the colour, letter type, speed and length of the tickertape. The tickertape is provided as an overlay over the media files. It can be switched on during the execution of a playlist via the TiC Manager.

Changes are seamless, for example, if a new playlist is sent to a TiC Client from the TiC Manager the current playlist is first completed before the new updated content is shown.

TiC Management System

The TiC Manager application is installed on a central server. The System Administrator determines who has access to the TiC Manager and one can manage and operate the system either locally or centrally.

The management system allows the organization to determine which users can manage what functions and use TiC Narrow Casting for example the administrator could have access to all TiC clients but local editing can be allocated to other people.

The content is also held on the central server but it can be changed both centrally and locally. Users should only be given the rights to manage and plan the content. This keeps the TiC System manageable and prevents unintentional changes to the system configuration.

Technical Functionality

Content Management System

Templates and Classification

TiC Narrow Casting enables the setting up of standard templates reflecting the house style. Standard templates can be set up for different requirements such as general announcements, visitor information, advertising, RSS-feed, building evacuation alarm, reception, meetings, guided tours etc. You can group the standard templates and share the media files.

Playlist Adaptation and Management

The order of the media files and/or the templates within the playlist can be easily changed with a single command. One can even choose within a planned playlist to temporarily suspend a media file without it needing to be physically removed. This gives additional functionality and specifically flexibility with the protection and planning of content.

With repeating patterns one can choose which days and at what time a specific playlist starts and ends. For each TiC Client a different time and/or date can be specified. Also the length of each file can be adjusted to the exact second. This gives the maximum flexibility in the planning of content.

Template History Facility

The template history facility allows one to recall previously planned content and restore the content. Every adjustment made is automatically stored so it can be recalled and reused. Additionally the log file holds information on when and how long a specific template or media file has been played for.

Tickertape / RSS-feed

The Tickertape and RSS feed can be adjusted for colour, duration, size, speed, and length of text. The Tickertape overlays the planned content and can be turned on and off whilst the play list is playing. The RSS feed is presented within a template which can then be included in a playlist.

Preview template facility on the TiC Manager

It is possible to have a preview of a new or updated playlist before it is distributed to the TiC Clients. In the preview mode one can see how the media in the template(s) will be seen by the TiC Clients. In preview mode there is a full screen simulation of the template i.e. without the navigation window, toolbar etc. The timing of the playlist and repeating patterns can also be individually adjusted.

Text lay-out, Media and File Support

Within the templates it is easy to create text messages (bold, italics, letter size, underline) and to change text and import different photo/video files and RSS-feeds. With the built in photo editor one can decide how to present the picture or illustration. TIF, GIF and JPEG pictures can be put in a template. All this is readily visible and manageable. The video files that can be played are MPEG2, MPEG4, WMV, AVI files and this is possible in the screen sizes 16:9 and 4:3. We also support the display and planning of websites and PowerPoint files.

If you select a capture-card or a tuner-card within the TiC Client you are able to see and input live video from any source and TV channels coming through a CAI TV signal or satellite source into the template.

Updating Functionality in TiC Narrow Casting

TiC Narrow Casting works with a software update manager. With this update manager you are at any time you wish able to make contact with our TiC support and software server. This enables the most recent version to be installed. One can see if there is a new version available and decide if this version is to be installed into your TiC manager. The updates provide new functionality and/or improved functions. The system (TiC Manager) will have a minimal downtime and the TiC Clients will not be interrupted during the update process. Updating all TiC Clients is carried out by the TiC Manager and can be realised at any time after the software has been updated.

Within these updates you have to check that:

- There are no system changes carried out to gate numbers / IP addresses.
- There is a FTP save connection with our server.
- There is a permanent or possible internet connection in house for the TiC Manager or it is possible by certain gate settings to realise a connection in order to update the system.

System requirements and infrastructure

The minimum system requirements for the TiC Manager central server

- Microsoft Windows 2000 server or higher (for example a Windows 2003 server).
- Our preference is for this to be supplied with Terminal Server or Citrix Server. This however is not essential.

Minimum system requirements hardware TiC Clients

- Microsoft Windows XP Professional SP2
- Pentium 4 processor
- 30Gb Hard disk
- 512Mb RAM

For the TiC Clients a 256Mb video card is recommended so that high quality MPEG files can be displayed without any problems.

Network / Push structure

By using a Push structure TiC Narrow Casting is able to control the content of the TiC clients. After the content is downloaded from the TiC Manager to the TiC Clients, no continuous network connection is necessary. This has a number of advantages:

- There is minimal network usage. The TiC Client only needs to send back a status report to the TiC Manager.
- When there occur unexpected network problems, the TiC Clients will continue to repeat the playlist as the TiC Clients are not network dependent for this activity.
- With the status overview you are able to see directly if there are any network problems. You are able to see which TiC client or TiC client group have no network connectivity to the TiC Manager. A built in feature of the TiC Manager is that the IP addresses can be seen directly and the TiC Manager will PING the TiC Client and take it over by remote control

Platform TiC Manager application database

TiC Narrow Casting supports Wintel in a VMWare network. TiC makes use of a SQL database.