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Your Master Control Automation System Checklist

A Guide for Broadcasters



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Choosing the right master control automation system is a crucial decision for your broadcasting operations. It can mean the difference between a smooth, well-oiled production and a stressful, error-prone broadcast. Or worse – the system could take the whole station down!

This checklist will guide you through key features to look for, helping you make an informed decision.



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Flexibility and Integration

✓ Does the system have a large library of interfaces and APIs?

A small library of interfaces and APIs can make it difficult to connect with new or specialized equipment, limiting your options for growth and innovation.

✓ Can it integrate with various vendors and technologies?

Limited integration capabilities can lock you into specific vendors, hindering your ability to evolve and optimize your broadcast setup.

✓ Can your MCR handle on-prem, cloud, and remote production in the same interface?

Lack of unified control across on-prem, cloud, and remote environments can complicate operations and increase the likelihood of mistakes.

✓ Does your master control automation play nicely with your MAM?

Poor integration between your MCR and Media Asset Management (MAM) system can lead to inefficient workflows and difficulties in managing and accessing your media library, including not being able to find the clips you need, potentially causing delays in content delivery and on-air errors.

If you're forced into bundled products with inferior automation, then you're stuck. In contrast, AVECO boasts the industry's largest library of interfaces and implemented APIs, providing you with complete flexibility to grow and adapt your system with freedom of choice. You can use AVECO to control on-prem, remote, and cloud resources in the same, easy-to-use UI that requires minimal staff training.

ASTRA MCR has integrated multiple MAMs and PAMs, including AVECO's own high-end media asset management system, GEMINI, in addition to all of the other major manufacturers. So as incoming media happens, you can automatically process it, assign it, and notify people in different subsystems with greater efficiency.



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Self-Healing Automation

✓ Does your master control offer system failover?

Without automated system failover, your broadcast operations are at risk of extended downtime during failures.

✓ Can it instantly restore one-to-one operation after a failure?

Manual intervention to rebuild backups can lead to errors and delays that you can't afford in live production.

✓ Does your MCR apply facility management to ingest operations?

Lack of facility management for ingest can result in resource conflicts, missed recordings, or inefficient resource allocation.

Self-healing automation detects, diagnoses, and recovers from failures without human intervention. If a part of the system fails, it gets rebuilt without anyone needing to intervene. It happens automatically in the background.

ASTRA MCR's unique self-healing redundancy architecture automatically rebuilds a new backup by assigning dynamic resources, ensuring seamless operation during failures. This underlying facility management stands out in the industry as one of the gems in the AVECO architecture.



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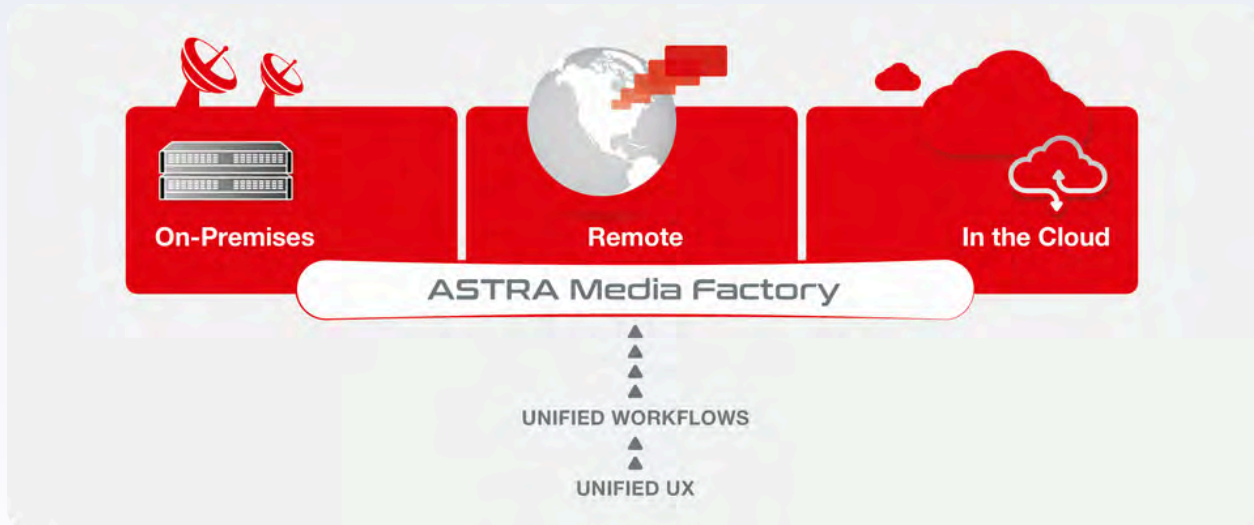
Integration Between Newsroom & Master Control Automation

✓ Does your MCR offer you the flexibility to integrate with PCR for live news production?

The days of no shared interfaces or workflows for MCR and PCR are over, and along with them go exerting additional resources.

ASTRA MCR is tightly integrated with ASTRA Studio, offering you streamlined workflows that can make both playout and live news production more efficient. You can cut costs by combining station resources, while actually enhancing the quality of the content.

This also extends to remote site operations. Several AVECO customers run from a primary location, fully manned in the primetime hours, not just at their headquarters, but also in cities across various countries. But then in the overnight hours, MCR for those stations is combined into a central system, remotely supervising everything and handling any breaking news or emergencies that come up.



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On-Air Continuity

✓ Does the system offer flexible redundancy architectures?

Without robust continuity features, your broadcast is vulnerable to outages in case of on-site issues.

✓ Can it support disaster recovery through hybrid architecture (on-prem, cloud, remote)?

Hybrid options that support both on-prem and cloud disaster recovery can offer you a more cost-effective way to prepare for the worst.

ASTRA MCR offers self-healing disaster recovery and the cost efficiency and flexibility to operate in hybrid on-prem, remote, and cloud environments, ensuring your broadcast stays on air.

If a tornado hits a station in the Midwest or a flood takes out operations in the South, you can instantly go to the cloud and continue on-air operations per normal, assuming you have an alternate IP path to the transmitter site.



18:59:57:04	00:00:40:00	R196413	MCVS_11	None		UEFA/R196413
19:00:37:04	00:40:20:02	P0323588	MCVS_11	AD		(133) Juventus Turyn - Valencia g.20.50.27.11.2018 PS...
19:40:57:06	00:50:22:11	P0323588	MCVS_11	AD		(133) Juventus Turyn - Valencia g.20.50.27.11.2018 PS...
20:31:19:17	00:00:20:00	R196416	MCVS_11	None		UEFA/R196416
20:31:39:17	00:00:05:00	S0003665	MCVS_11	None		(7) ID stacji Polsat Sport Premium 1 Super HD (czew...
20:31:44:17	00:00:40:00	R196413	MCVS_11	None		UEFA/R196413
20:32:24:17	00:13:47:07	P0327152	MCVS_11	Su...		(178) Magazyn UEFA Liga Mistrzów - podsumowanie gr...
20:46:11:24	00:13:00:21	P0327152	MCVS_11	Su...		(178) Magazyn UEFA Liga Mistrzów - podsumowanie gr...
20:59:12:20	00:00:20:00	R196416	MCVS_11	None		UEFA/R196416

ON AIR: 16:18:18

GO TO EVENT: (115) Juventus Turyn - Manchester United g.20.50.07.11.2 (115) Juventus Turyn - Manchester United g.20.50.07.11.2018 PSP1/Liga Mistrzów UEFA 2018/2019 P03222 (131) AEK Ateny - Ajax Amsterdam g.18.45.27.11.2018 PSP1/Liga Mistrzów UEFA 2018/2019 P0323585 (131) AEK Ate


16:18:18

Media Asset Management Workflows

✓ Can the system prioritize late-arriving files in the transcoding queue?

Without intelligent transcoder control, late-arriving files – which are often promos – may not be ready in time for broadcast, leading to last-minute scrambles or on-air errors.

ASTRA MCR, which is integrated with all major transcoding platforms, will instantly jump late-arriving pieces of media to the top of the transcoding stack, improving efficiency in your workflow.



...	CF	AI	Start Time	Duration	Offset	JobId	Device	LG	PG	DI	PP	CG	AD	STL	ARC	TR	KEY	Name
...			15:15:11-01	00:00:05-00		S0003665	MCVS_121			None								(7) ID stacji Polsat Sport Premium 1 Super HD (czersw...
...			15:15:16-01	00:00:40-00		R196413	MCVS_121			None								UEFA/R196413
...			15:15:56-01	00:55:32-18		P0322273	MCVS_121			AD								(119) Juventus Turyn - Manchester United g.20.50.07...
ON AIR			16:11:28-19	00:52:25-12		P0322273	MCVS_121			AD								(119) Juventus Turyn - Manchester United g.20.50.07...
NEXT			17:02:58-06	00:00:29-00		R196415	MCVS_111			None								UEFA/R196415
			17:04:14-06	00:00:05-00		S0003664	MCVS_11			None								(6) ID stacji Polsat Sport Premium 1 Super HD (niebiesk...
			17:04:19-06	00:00:40-00		R196413	MCVS_11			None								UEFA/R196413
			17:04:59-06	00:52:30-04		P0322585	MCVS_11			AD								(131) AEX Ateny - Ajax Amsterdam g.18.45.27.11.2018...
			17:57:29-10	00:49:57-19		P0322585	MCVS_11			AD								(131) AEX Ateny - Ajax Amsterdam g.18.45.27.11.2018...
			18:47:27-04	00:00:20-00		R196416	MCVS_11			None								UEFA/R196416
			18:47:47-04	00:00:05-00		S0003664	MCVS_11			None								(6) ID stacji Polsat Sport Premium 1 Super HD (niebiesk...
			18:47:52-04	00:10:00-00		B0115202	MCVS_11			None								PSF 1-2 - Wyp LM 16/17 Legia - Real - okr01 OK
			18:57:52-04	00:02:00-00		B0122193	MCVS_11			None								PSFE, PSN) Wypielniacz LM & LE
			18:58:52-01	00:00:05-00		S0003665	MCVS_11			None								(7) ID stacji Polsat Sport Premium 1 Super HD (czersw...

Content Monetization and Ad Integration

✓ Does your MCR support advanced ad insertion techniques like non-scheduled ads?

An MCR that does not offer advanced ad insertion and monetization capabilities would mean that you're likely missing out on significant revenue opportunities.

✓ Does it offer specialized tools for dynamic, play-level sponsorship in sports broadcasting?

Without specialized tools for sports broadcasting, you may struggle to capitalize on high-value, play-level sponsorship opportunities, potentially leaving substantial additional revenue on the table.

AVECO's Ad Juggler, part of ASTRA MCR, which won the coveted Best of Show award at NAB, revolutionizes sports broadcasting monetization. It allows for play-level sponsorship on a large scale, enabling master control operators to implement sponsorship messages for specific plays at high-value moments in a game with a simple button press. This system integrates with traffic orders and provides as-run confirmations for billing, maximizing revenue potential from sports events.



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Commitment to Innovation

✓ Does the provider regularly introduce new features and capabilities?

A lack of ongoing innovation can leave your broadcast operations vulnerable to obsolescence.

✓ Can the system adapt to emerging technologies and workflows?

Without regular updates and new features, you may struggle to keep up with industry trends and viewer expectations, potentially losing competitive edge.

AVECO has displayed a consistent, 30-year commitment to innovation, keeping you at the cutting edge. If a vendor you're considering has not rolled out at least a handful of recent iterations, you can assume your MCR will be out of date within a few years.



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Security Safeguards

✓ Does the system offer robust security features?

Inadequate security measures can leave your broadcast operations vulnerable to cyber attacks, potentially leading to downtime, data loss, or even ransom situations.

✓ Can your MCR operate on different platforms (Windows, Linux, Mac) for added resilience?

Reliance on a single operating system can limit your options for secure operations and increase your vulnerability to platform-specific threats like the 2024 Cloud Strike catastrophe.

ASTRA MCR's core Linux architecture with cross-platform support provides enhanced security and resilience against threats like malware and ransomware. If a security threat occurs on Windows architecture, for example, you can switch over to a workstation that's running Linux or Mac, and the easy to use UI looks the same. You can continue running your broadcast day as planned in news automation and MCR with the best safety and resiliency of any provider.



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When selecting a master control automation system, consider these key factors to ensure you're getting a solution that meets your current needs and can adapt to future challenges.

AVECO's innovative approach has stood out in innovation after innovation, year after year, offering a flexible, secure, and feature-rich MCR that can grow with your broadcasting operations.

Are you ready to find out more? **[Schedule a call with us.](#)**



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