MBI & Webvision Cloud

MBI (Media Business Insight) publishes a number of online, subscription-based magazines for the specialist television, film and creative industries. Broadcast Now and Screen International are two of the company's most well-regarded titles. Formerly part of EMAP Ascential Group, MBI became an independent company in 2014.

In August 2017, the day before the prestigious Edinburgh International Television Festival, the company's new Webvision Cloud-based digital experience platform, from Abacus, went live. It has already delivered significant and measurable benefits to MBI.

> "With the advent of the new platform and our ability to significantly improve user engagement, we have seen an 18% increase in the number of unique subscribers for Broadcast in the year starting February 2017. The title also beat all its KPI goals for the year as a result of moving to the new platform. Screen saw an increase of 44% in unique users, with 49% of all traffic for this title now coming from mobile devices.

"The cost for our two new responsive sites was 50% of what we'd have had to pay for a new enterprise solution, and we made this money back within just six months based on our ability to sell native advertising."

RICHARD YARWOOD, MANAGING DIRECTOR DIGITAL AT MBI

A legacy inheritance

EMAP had been using Abacus' Webvision Enterprise solution for website content management since 2008. When MBI became a separate company in 2014, the new organisation also inherited the use of the Webvision platform.

Richard Yarwood: "Webvision is a business critical system for us. It is used by about fifteen to twenty people for editorial, product management and marketing. Broadcast and Screen provide a significant contribution to our overall turnover and having an efficient online publishing platform is absolutely essential."

MBI started discussing the move to a new technology in 2016. Although the legacy system had worked well, it could be expensive and relatively slow for any custom changes to be implemented. The web sites were not responsive and even though a separate 'mobile-friendly' site had been developed, it was not integrated and rather 'clunky' to use. Richard Yarwood: "We were also keen to implement a technology move from a hygiene aspect, given the importance of digital and engaging with our users."

The Cloud-based platform would provide MBI with a continuous roadmap and a substantial number of new developments and enhancements with each release. "It was also an attractive proposition to be using a platform used by other clients and thus offering increased security and future protection."

MBI considered the option of a brand new enterprise solution but the costs were prohibitive, amounting to at least twice as much as a Cloud-based approach.

Moving to the Cloud

The new sites went live in August 2017. The project involved design of the new responsive Broadcast and Screen sites, extensive business analysis to ensure that the solution delivered exactly what MBI needed and training for the users. In addition, Abacus integrated seamlessly the new Cloud-based platform with other systems in use by MBI.

Campaign Monitor was selected as the company's new email system, replacing two existing products and allowing MBI to consolidate email activities onto a single platform for both ease and speed. The Webvision Cloud platform supports out-of-the box integration with Campaign Monitor, which makes the set up and deployment of new email-based products effortless.

The Air Business bureau subscription service (formerly known as QSS) was also integrated with Webvision Cloud, including migration of the content.

The new sites went live the day before the Edinburgh International Television Festival in August 2017.
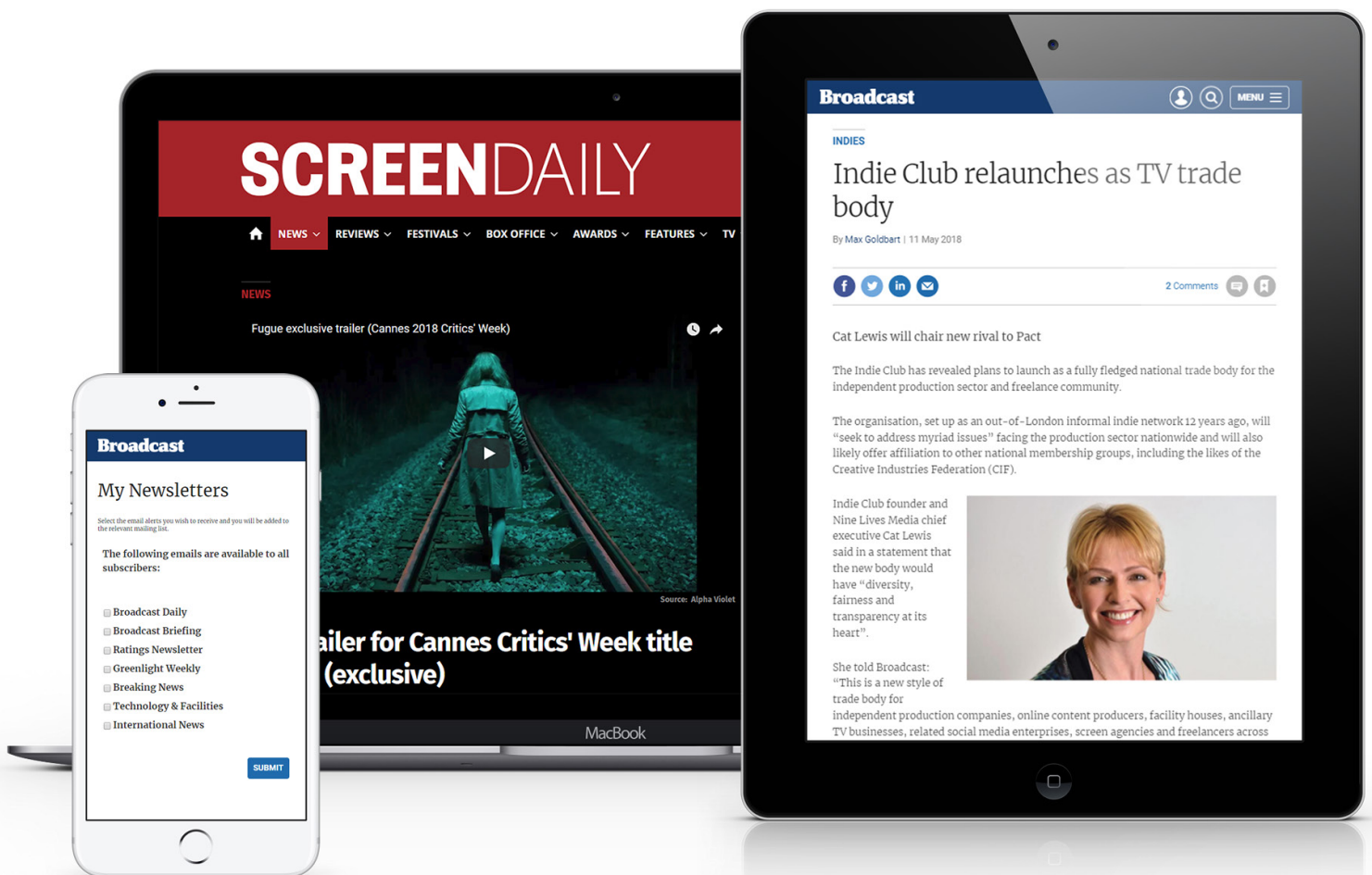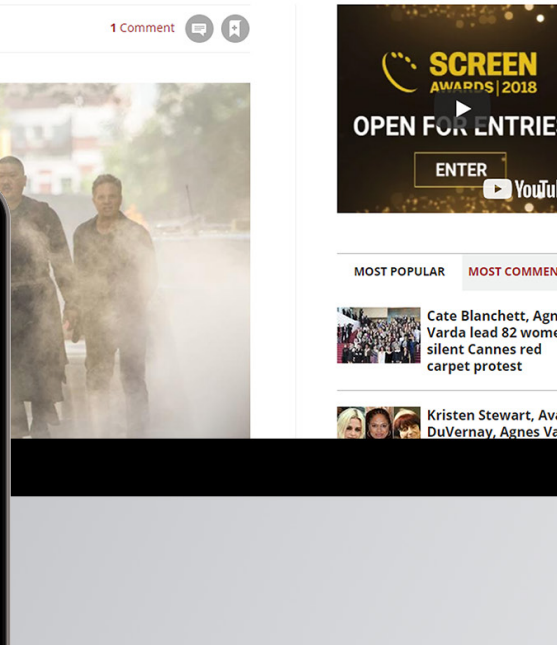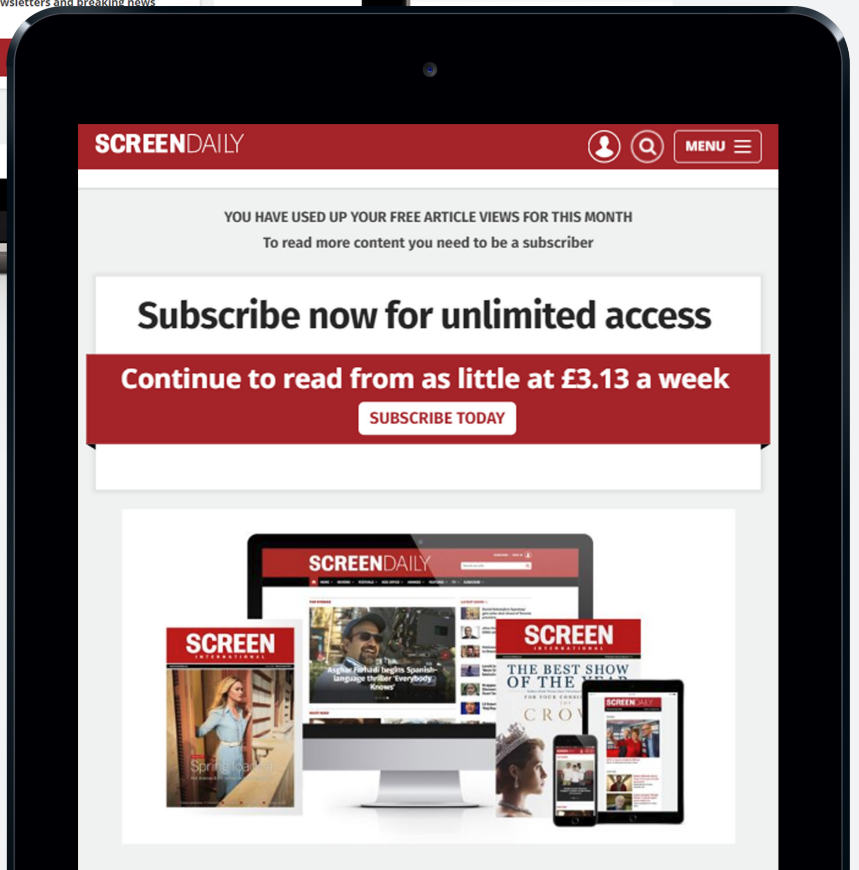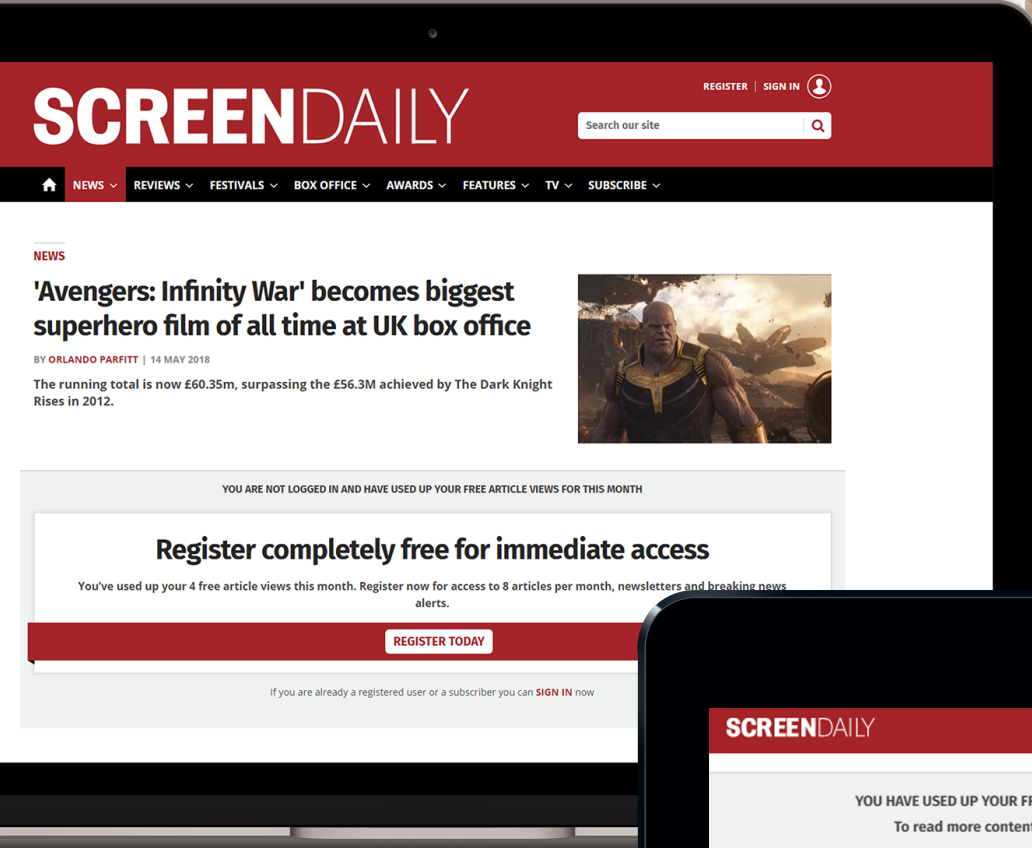
Assessing the benefits

Although MBI was able to run native advertising with the previous site, Webvision Cloud has made this far easier and a much more attractive proposition for the company's staff to promote. In fact successful sales of this approach to advertising enabled MBI to cover the costs of the new platform within just six months.

As part of the new Broadcast Network initiative, MBI has recently sold its first microsite to Barclays and is keen to offer this facility to other organisations. "The new platform has given our sales and editorial staff the motivation and the confidence to sell these new services and to realise new opportunities. Although this increased 'confidence' is difficult to measure, it has made a big impact."

Whilst native advertising and microsites fit the profile of Broadcast very well, for Screen one of the major benefits has been the ability to carry out metered access via the comprehensive paywall technology that is built into the platform. This is enabling MBI to handle access and entitlement messaging far more easily, to increase personalisation and to deliver a slicker, more professional service to its advertisers.

"Overall, Webvision Cloud is enabling us to be cleverer with our marketing messages with improved targeting of relevant content and better engagement with our users."

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NEWS

'Avengers: Infinity War' becomes biggest superhero film of all time at UK box office

BY **ORLANDO PARFITT** | 14 MAY 2018

The running total is now £60.35m, surpassing the £56.3M achieved by The Dark Knight Rises in 2012.

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The improvement in user engagement is illustrated by the significant increase in unique subscriber numbers for both titles. In the year commencing February 2017, Broadcast has seen an 18% increase, and has beaten all its KPI goals – as a result of the move to Webvision Cloud. Screen has seen a 44% increase in unique users, which is attributable in part to the new platform, but also to improved content. Some 49% of all traffic to Screen is from mobile devices – emphasising the importance of the new responsive site. The number of social media referrals has also increased significantly.

For Richard Yarwood, the improved reporting and analytics from Webvision Cloud are important.

> "The extension of the data layer provides us with access to a great deal more information, such as tracking gated articles, the demographic breakdown of users with their job functions, and so on – all of which is invaluable as a sales tool.
>
> "The performance and the results from Webvision Cloud are very promising. We have a fast, secure, flexible, future-protected platform on which to further develop our digital activities and to engage ever more closely with our users. The design, business analysis and platform onboarding process undertaken by Abacus was thorough and professional. I would rate the overall experience very highly."

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