

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Please find here attached the document regrouping all the questions asked by the prospective bidders, and the answers given to help formulate proposals for this tender.

All questions received after this will not be considered.

- EPG Platform: Which Electronic Program Guide platform are you currently using, or are you looking for recommendations as part of this solution?

We are using "Cherry EPG" software, the server is running on VMware virtual machine.

- Security Measures: Regarding DDoS and other security threats, are you specifically looking for a fully encrypted service? Could you elaborate on your security requirements and expectations?

We are not looking for a fully encrypted service. However, we expect minimal service unavailability in case of DDoS and other security threats. But we would like to consider an encrypted service as an option for OTT proposal.

- Catch-up TV & Timeshifting
 - How do you envision the implementation of catch-up TV and timeshifting functionality?
 - Will you be providing set-top boxes to end users, or are you expecting cloud storage solutions as part of our proposal?

Time shifting functionality (Optional): access to any point from the beginning of the present EPG event (TV program) to the current time for playing. Catch-up TV functionality: a 7 day EPG schedule for playing. Immediate access for playing after present event is finished. Sequential playback of EPG events. If TV channel doesn't have a real EPG we plan to use a virtual EPG ("No EPG" events with 2 hours duration for each). Rewind, forward and pause functions for Catch-up TV & Time shifting should be available.

We don't plan to provide set-top boxes. For the first step we are looking for IOS/Android applications and an OTT player for web browsers.

- Content Streaming: Are you looking to stream your media content separately on top of the OTT service, or should this be a fully integrated solution?

It should be a fully integrated OTT solution. We don't look to stream our media content separately.

- Audio Format Specification: Your reference to MPEG-1 audio format, which is generally considered obsolete - were you perhaps referring to MP3 or another more current format?

The transport stream has our TV channels with Mpeg-1 audio; this is what we use for satellite broadcasting. Audios could be transcoded to a newer format for OTT as part of the provided OTT service.

- Could you please clarify whether you're seeking:
 - A fully managed service operated by the provider
 - A platform that your team will host and operate internally
 - A hybrid approach with shared responsibilities

We are seeking a fully managed service from the provider. We will need to add or remove channels during operation. If there is a customer portal that allows us to make these adjustments, that would be acceptable.

- Due to the Easter holidays, would it be possible to extend the tender submission deadline to Monday, April 30, 2025?

Unfortunately, this is not possible.

- What is your current audience? What are your audience's projections over the next 3 or 5 years?

We are broadcasting across the full Eutelsat 13E European footprint but do not have a precise estimate of our audience size. We are an FTA satellite service, (no return path, no CPE), broadcasting into Russian territory, as well as across most of EMEA.

- Are you considering an initial 3 or 5-year contract for the development and maintenance of the solution?

If there is a long-term contractual obligation, please list this clearly in the proposal. In general, we would favor flexibility over a long-term, locked-in, commitment.

- We are being asked to establish costs per average user. To do this, could you provide us with a current estimate of the number of users?

As a guideline you can show a sliding scale from 0 to 50k monthly users.

- Do you have an anticipated launch date for the solution?

Once we can decide upon a vendor, we would like to launch as soon as the vendor can deploy the solution. This time to market should be clearly stated in your proposal.

- Are there any crucial interim milestones that must be met before final deployment?

Nothing from our side outside of the standard process of testing and due diligence.

- 7. Can you confirm that there are no other documents related to the tender besides the following two available on the website?
 - ToR tender Svoboda app.pdf
 - Request for Pricing, Svoboda OTT Project, v4.xlsx?

There is one more, now on the same web page, our Statement of Integrity, which also needs to be completed.

In reference to the requirement "OTT player development for web browser as an option"

a. Does this mean that you are not planning to launch a dedicated Svoboda web platform but instead want the ability to embed a video player on existing websites (e.g. rsf.org)?

We prefer to have a dedicated web platform with the same functionality as iOS/Android apps.

2. In reference to the requirement “Ability to adjust the apps to RSF requirements for importing the RSF TV and radio channels, the RSF logo, Cyrillic EPG support, English and Russian GUI”

a. How will the schedule for live channels be created? Is there a source for import (e.g., XML files), or will manual editorial work in the GUI we provide be sufficient?

There are two options. 1. Extract EIT from our transport stream, which we use for satellite broadcasting. 2. We can provide a link to download the XML file with EPG for our channels.

3. In reference to the requirement “No viewer registration and DRM protection at the start, but DRM and payments as an option per channel”

a. Regarding payments as an option, could you please specify how you foresee the payment model? Will it be a kind of subscription model for watching live TV or per live event?

No such option is currently planned, but this is an option that can be proposed

b. What are the expectations for integration with online payment systems? Will Stripe be sufficient?

There should be options for integrations with the standard payment systems.

4. In reference to the requirement “HLS content delivery via CDNs (main target: Russia)”

a. What about the DASH format? Is it out of scope? Please note that in case of DRM on Android, the DASH format will be required

It is important that RSF applications work on the maximum number of devices. If DASH is not supported on Apple devices, then we will use HLS without encryption.

5. In reference to the requirement “System allowing for advertising integration”

a. With which specific advertising system will you be integrated with? Will Google Ad Manager be sufficient?

Currently we do not have a preference for any particular advertising system.

6. In which countries will the applications be available?

Globally

7. Could you please elaborate on the user profile and target audience?

Russian speakers globally

8. Will there be on-demand (VOD) materials?

a. Are you planning to create VOD materials from live channels e.g.?

Yes, we would like to have VOD library.

9. How long should the catch-up content be available? How many days backward?

7 days backward

10. Regarding the scale of the service, could you please share more details?

a. How many channels will be available daily?

9-20 video and 3-10 radio

b. Where is the source of the live channels located?

We do not plan for any live transmissions in the broadcast sense of an event being filmed and broadcast simultaneously.

If you are referring to our standard channels, the TV and radio channels sources should be the RSF DVB transport stream from Hotbird 13.0E satellite and SRT transport stream via ethernet.

e. Will the live channels be available 24 hours a day?

All channels are available 24/7

f. How many VOD materials (if any) do you predict?

TBD

g. How many users do you expect monthly?

As a guideline you can show a sliding scale from 0 to 50k monthly users.

11. How large DDoS attacks have you experienced in the past?

We haven't had such an experience yet, because we didn't have an OTT platform before.

CDN

- Are you willing to use a P2P CDN?

At the first stage we are not ready to use p2p cdn. We are interested in a simpler solution like pull cdn.

- Monetization

- Do you have an ad server, and if so, which one?

We have not yet chosen one

- EPG

- Do you have an EPG, and if so, who provides it?

We have EPG from VseTV. We can provide a link to download the XML file with EPG for our channels.

- Do you have a marker in the satellite feed?

We don't have any markers in the satellite feed.

- Do you have any EPG constraints?

If necessary, this can be discussed at the integration stage.

- Catch-up option

- What buffer size for the origin server

- What buffer size for timeshifting

These will be determined at a later date.

Do you need geoblocking?

No

Project launch date

ASAP

- Estimated number of users per month

As a guideline you can show a sliding scale from 0 to 50k monthly users.

- Estimated number of concurrent users per day

As per your experience given the above.

1. Should we downlink radio and TV channels from Satellite and generate OTT streams? Or can OTT streams (HLS) be provided to us?

TV and radio channels sources should be the RSF DVB transport stream from Hotbird 13.0E satellite and SRT transport stream via ethernet.

2. Provision for optional catch-up, time-shifting, and recording of content. a. Is this optional? b. Should there be a provision to trigger recording via CMS? c. Will there be an EPG to trigger the recording? d. There may be some manual intervention to clean up the recorded content, like removing ads, sharp cuts, etc. Is it that the agency should take care of all these and we should include it in our costing?

Catch-up, time-shifting and VOD are options. At the first stage we don't ask for a provision to trigger recording via CMS. But it can be as an option. Yes, EPG should be used as trigger the recording. Manual intervention does not need to be a part of your proposal

3. We are based out of India and have significant expertise in OTT, having been in this space for 12+ years. Can we participate in the bid/tender process?

The supplier must provide a turnkey project using its equipment or cloud solutions. But in India there is no signal reception from the satellite hotbird 13e, from where you need to take the source of TV channels. You must take this into account.

4. Can we know the approximate yearly storage and bandwidth requirements?

We are not able to provide this data yet.

5. Can we provide per GB costing for storage and CDN?

We would prefer to see the cost on a per user basis, using your experience and certain assumptions which should be clearly listed.

6. Will there be any support needed for metadata creation and metadata updates for videos? Will there be a team at your end to take care of content ingestion when needed and handle all necessary creatives?

No support for this is required at this time, but if you can provide this as an optional service, we will review it.

7. How will customer queries be handled, such as Play Store reviews and complaints? Do you want us to assist in this and set up a support team?

No support for this is required at this time, but if you can provide this as an optional service, we will review it.

8. We usually have the following price points: a. One-time cost b. Monthly recurring cost – platform and maintenance c. Based on usage (e.g., CDN, Storage, etc.) d. Source code licensing

9. Could you provide details on the exact scope and duration of the contract?

As per the RFP documentation that we shared

10. Can an Indian company apply for the tender?

Yes

11. Are there any specific compliance or regulatory requirements applicable to Indian companies?

None that we are aware of

12. How will the evaluation process be structured, and what weight will be assigned to each selection criterion?

As per the RFP documentation that we shared

13. Will there be an opportunity for a Q&A session or a bidder conference before the submission deadline?

None are currently planned

14. What are the expected daily and monthly concurrent users for the platform?

As a guideline you can show a sliding scale from 0 to 50k monthly users.

15. What is the applicable VAT rate for this project? Should the tender value be submitted inclusive or exclusive of taxes?

Either, but please be clear which you are proposing.

16. Should we include on-site support visits in our proposal, or will all services be handled remotely?

Remotely

17. Will submitting ISO certifications (such as ISO 27001 for security and ISO 9001 for quality management) provide a competitive advantage?

This is not currently planned.

18. Are multiple client references allowed, or is only one required?

Please share as many references as you like.

19. Will there be a dedicated point of contact for contract execution and technical discussions?

Yes

20. Are there any specific turnover requirements for a company to be eligible for participation?

No

21. What is the estimated budget allocated for this project?

Unspecified

22. Are there any local tax considerations, exemptions, or implications for foreign vendors?

This is best asked of your financial department

23. Apart from financial and technical proposals, are there any other mandatory documents that must be submitted?

As per the documentation that we shared

24. Is there a specific format preferred for the technical proposal?

Please fill in our Excel sheet. You may provide your financial proposal in PFD

25. Can the financial proposal be revised after submission if clarifications are required?

Probably not.

26. Will RSF provide feedback in case a proposal is rejected?

Possibly

27. How can we capture this in the costing?

As you feel is appropriate

-
- Which devices are you planning to use for service distribution?

iOS, Android, and a browser player are required. You can list other devices as optional, i.e. smart TVs, etc.

- Which Smart TV Platforms would you like to provide the service?

This is purely optional, but if you wish to list something, Android TV and Tizen would be the main platforms.

- number of STB / Smart TV subscribers you expect within Y1:

We don't have STBs, and no projections for Smart TVs

- number of mobile / Tablet / PC subscribers you expect within Y1:

As a guideline you can show a sliding scale from 0 to 50k monthly users.

- number of SD live channels:

We currently broadcast 9 SD channels and plan to increase this number to 20 over the course of a year

- number of HD live channels:

We don't have plans for HD at this point

- What is the input format of these channels?

TV and radio channels sources should be the RSF DVB transport stream from Hotbird 13.0E satellite and SRT transport stream via ethernet.

- number of SD channels with Catch up TV:

We would like to have all channels with this as an option

- for how many days in the past should be recorded:

7 days

- number of SD movies for VOD

To be determined

- In which territories should the service be available?

Globally

- CDN - Number of required CDN locations:

We have no preference

- Will this be a paid subscription based service or free service?

It will be a free service to start with, but we would like to have the option to create a paid service if we should want it.

- expected streaming concurrency or max number of concurrent streaming users:

To be determined

- Will this be a fully Cloud based solution or on-prem or in some Hybrid capacity?

Cloud based

- Do you need transcoding?

We need transcoding to HLS format

- Where is the downlink facility?

Slovenia

- *How many monthly active users and/or total active users are anticipated per app or in total?*

As a guideline you can show a sliding scale from 0 to 50k monthly users.

- *Could you please provide details on the expected monthly usage for CDN (GB), transcoding (minutes) and content storage (GB)?*

To be determined

- *If this data isn't available, could you please share the expected viewing hours per month, the total number of assets available, and the average asset duration?*

To be determined

- *Are we required to provide IRDs?*

No

- *Are we required to provide a NoC?*

Yes

- *What metrics are expected to be tracked within real-time monitoring?*

Main metrics:

- 1. Total number of viewers**
- 2. Number of viewers and viewing time for each channel**
- 3. Connection statistics by country and CDN**
- 4. Statistics by types of connected devices.**

Other possible statistics are welcome.

- *Do you have a preferred CDN that is region-friendly?*

No

- *Is the content available globally or restricted to specific regions?*

The content is available globally

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- 1. Total Number of Channels**

Could you please confirm the exact number of TV channels to be considered for this tender?

At this stage, we have assumed 10 TV channels (SD quality), as these are also available via satellite in SD.

We have 9 TV channels at the moment.

- 2. Transcoding Requirements**

Will RSF require transcoding for these channels?

Are the channels only available via satellite, and as a SRT (Secure Reliable Transport) stream available?

The channels have H.264 video (2.3Mb/s) and Mpeg-1 audios from the source. The audios require transcoding to newer format as this is better for OTT project. The

channels are available via satellite. Also, the channels can be delivered as SRT from our teleport.

3. Satellite Availability

Are all channels available via Hotbird 13.0E, and are they all Free-to-Air (FTA)?

Reference: DigitalBitrate.com

Yes. https://www.lyngsat.com/muxes/Hotbird-13G_Wide_10949-V.html

4. Input/Output Clarification

The input configuration depends significantly on both the number of channels and the quality of the input/output streams.

Could you please provide more details on the expected input format(s) and the desired output resolutions/bitrates?

The source: Mpeg-2 transport stream with all channels, H.264 video (2.3Mb/s), SD 720x576, Mpeg-1 audio 128-192Kb/s.

The output: resolutions as from the source, max bitrate 2,3 Mb/s video, adaptive bitrate support.

5. Assumption on Channel Quality

Based on our initial assessment, all channels appear to be in SD quality.

For our current estimation, we have considered 10 SD TV channels. Can you please confirm if this is correct?

9 SD TV channels

6. Potential Channel Portfolio Expansion

If the actual number of channels is higher than 10, or if there is a mixture of SD and HD content, this would significantly impact the technical and cost estimations.

Could you please clarify the full scope of the channel portfolio?

We do plan to have more than 9 video channels in the future. We will plan to have 20 channels in approximately year, rising steadily to that number.

7. Radio Channels

Regarding the radio component: can you confirm that it involves approximately 10 to 20 channels?

Now we have 3 radio channels, and the number will rise to approximately 10 radio channels over the course of a year.

