

Radio-Assist and security

Multiple databases and double file servers

Radio-Assist workstations can access a range of database servers and file servers. The databases only contain file indexing data: name, length, author, etc., plus the addresses of files in the file servers. The file servers contain the radio's multimedia files.

Double database mode

In this mode, workstations are connected to two synchronous databases. This means that when data is written to one database (i.e., file insertion, deletion or modification), the other is updated at the same time. Practically speaking, each client program manages the double database mode by querying both databases. The second database is installed on another computer which is physically separated from the main server or else on another segment of the network, so there is very little risk of a crash on one computer having any effect on the second or of both computers being unsafe at the same moment. The double database mode ensures uninterrupted service whenever a failure occurs.

Double file server mode

A security feature in addition to the double database mode is the double file server mode. Definition:

When a new file is acquired (recording/import), it is simultaneously copied on both servers. For broadcast, both copies of the file are called by the broadcasting programs to guard against any future incident on one of the servers. In other words, if the link between the client workstation and one server is interrupted, the other server takes over to ensure that broadcasting carries on without any hindrance.

Local database and remote database

Over and above its management of a double database, which the programs treat as a single logical database, Radio-Assist manages an extra database. This can be a personal database, a specific database out of several in a radio company, or else a remote one. Both local and remote can be accessed via the Radio-Assist Browser. The Browser displays the contents of one database at a time but it is easy to switch to the other and to make file transfers.

To cope with the decentralised structures of some radios, Radio-Assist 7 allows for using several remote databases such as those of regional stations.

The means of connection to remote servers depends on the links installed. On a WAN (Wide Area Network) or a VPN (Virtual Private Network) with high output, client access to database servers and multimedia file servers is available with high-performance transfer capacity. For a lower output link, only remote database server access is available for client workstations. Multimedia file transfer performance is then entirely dependent on the bandwidth allocated. For more complex operation between sites (main studio to region, region to region, etc.), Netia proposes 'Media Management' solutions. This will be the subject of a future technical letter.

These mutually complementary solutions are designed to meet a range of requirements with regard to security, maintenance, broadcast, on-air recording, archiving and data storage.