



REAL-TIME SPANISH CLOSED CAPTION TRANSLATION DEBUTS ON-AIR IN COOKEVILLE, TN

BOULDER, CO (December 4, 2024) – The Public Media Venture Group (PMVG) is now providing real-time translation of closed captioning from English to Spanish on PMVG’s NextGen TV (ATSC 3.0) station in Cookeville, TN.

The initiative is a collaboration among DigiCAP, XL8, PMVG, the Korean Radio Promotion Association (RAPA) and PBS station WCTE. The translation solution detects English closed captions within a television program and translates the captions into a selected language using an AI-powered translation engine operated by XL8. The translated closed captions are then multiplexed back to the program stream and broadcast over PMVG’s NextGen TV station in Cookeville. While the LiveCAP service offers translation to many different languages, the current initiative in Cookeville focuses on Spanish.

According to Marc Hand, president and founder of PVMG, “It has always been the mission of public broadcasters to serve all members of their communities. Captioning has extended the reach of public broadcasters to hearing-impaired viewers but has—until now—only been available in English. This new service will extend the benefits of closed captions to households where English is not the primary language.”

The translation engine incorporated into LiveCAP is provided by XL8, a Silicon Valley tech firm which is a leader in the translation field. According to Tim Jung, CEO of XL8, “Whenever human language is involved, there will be variables from specific regions or topics. The XL8 translation engine uses a combination of AI and machine learning to enable translations that can take into account local language variations. This is ideal for broadcasters who operate in unique local environments.”

The LiveCAP system uses features built into NextGen TV sets and receivers. There is no need for consumers to add additional hardware if they have an ATSC 3.0 receiver; they simply use the set’s accessibility menu to switch captions to a different language.

Integration of the LiveCAP system into the NextGen TV content stream is provided by DigiCAP, a NextGen TV gateway supplier. According to Joonyoung Park, Senior VP at DigiCAP, “Language translation for television closed captions is not new. But LiveCAP’s use of cutting-edge large language model technology for translating captioning of ATSC 3.0 broadcasts provides highly accurate translations at a fraction of the cost of human translation. This has the potential to expand the use of translated closed captions to new television audiences.”

Concluded Marc Hand, “Many public broadcasters operate in multilingual communities where closed caption translations could make programming accessible to more viewers. We are excited that PMVG’s ATSC 3.0 testbed in Cookeville is where technology is being developed to extend the reach of public broadcasters to audiences that speak a variety of languages.”

Avery Hutchins, President and CEO WCTE, whose programming is simulcast on PMVG’s NextGen TV transmitter with the translated captioning, added, “We have a significant number of households in the WCTE coverage area where Spanish is the first language. We are thrilled to work with PMVG, DigiCAP, and XL8 to make public television content more accessible to these important members of our community.”

To see LiveCAP in action, tune into WCTE PBS Channel 35 (W35DZ-D) and select Spanish-language captioning for the primary WCTE channel (CH 35.1).

About PMVG: Comprised of 32 leading public media organizations, PMVG develops scalable technology use cases to help sustain public media's vital services in the long term. Public broadcasting is an essential part of American media, and PMVG is committed to ensuring the system's central role in the nation's future social ecosystem. PMVG member organizations own and operate over 100 public stations that collectively reach 250 million people.

About XL8: XL8's proprietary AI technology is redefining machine translation for media content, having translated over 800,000 hours of content, reaching millions of users worldwide. From delivering groundbreaking solutions like automated subtitling and real-time interpretation to top media companies, to enhancing communication across 45+ major languages, XL8 is at the forefront of language technology. For more information about XL8, please visit www.xl8.ai.



About DigiCAP: DigiCAP Co., LTD is a South Korean company that provides a variety of software-based devices to support the ATSC 3.0 broadcast system. DigiCAP also products in content protection, rights management, conditional access, smart car software, and a variety of cloud-based services. For more information about DigiCAP, please visit www.digicaps.com.



About RAPA: RAPA, The Korean Radio Promotion Association is an organization that brings together the Korean Government and private industry in Korea to promote the success of Korean companies operating in television broadcast and production. RAPA has supported the joint initiative between PMVG and DigiCAP that has made the LiveCAP demonstration possible. For more information, visit www.rapa.or.kr.



About WCTE: WCTE is the PBS station that serves Cookeville, TN and the surrounding area. Although WCTE is one of the smaller stations in the PBS system, it is also one of the most active locally, deeply engaged with its community and offering many hours of locally produced programming about the region it serves. For more information, visit www.wcte.org.



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