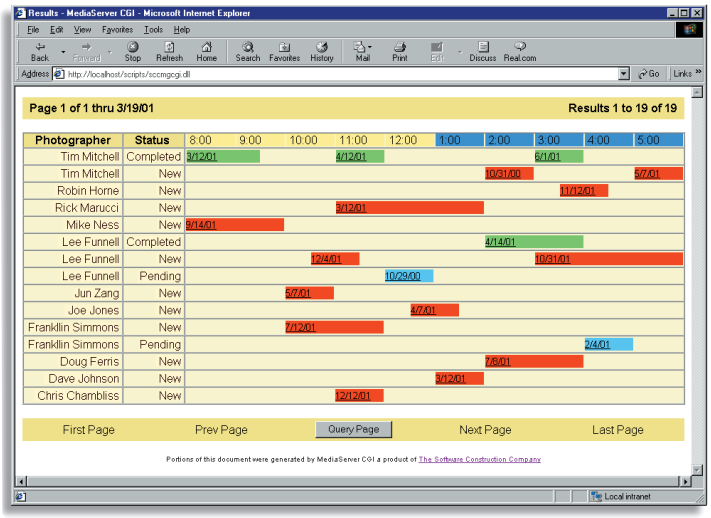
The Software Construction Company

SCC MediaServer™ Assignment Module

The Assignment Module allows the creation, tracking, updating and automatic linking of photo and story budgets and assignments within an SCC MediaServer system.

The SCC MediaServer Assignment Module allows the creation of an assignment within the SCC MediaServer database. Assignments can be created from SCC MediaGrid, from an editorial system, from a third party database system, from a Web browser, from an email form, or from any source capable of outputting a structured text document to a server directory. Once created, the assignment is given a unique reference number (URN) and this, as well as any of the contained assignment information, can be used in search queries. Assignments can be tracked and updated throughout various stages of production and can be linked automatically to submitted photos and graphics. Access to assignments is controlled by user logins created in the MediaServer User Manager. Users can be prevented from seeing certain assignments, or restricted to viewing assignments by field content, such as Event Date, Photographer and Status.



Assignment Scheduler

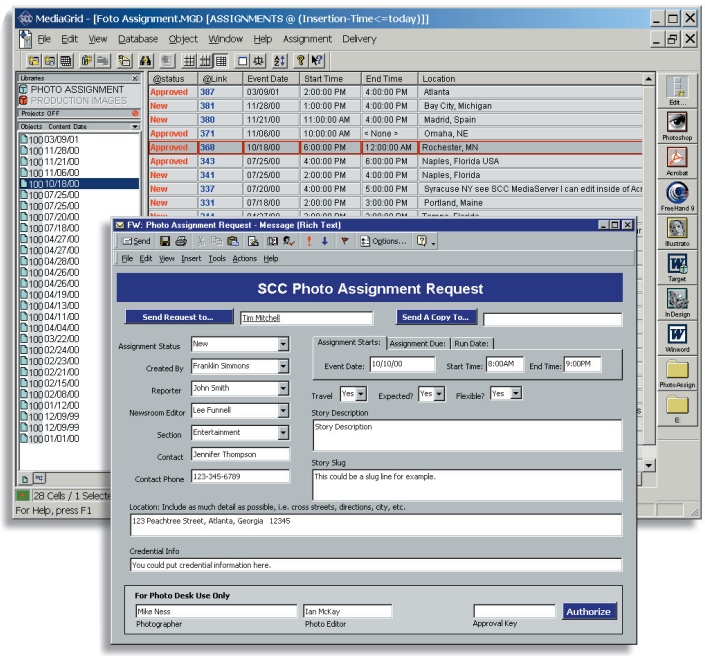
The assignment module allows search and display of assignment information in a bar chart format. This display is completely customizable and accessible via a standard Web browser. The user can choose to view any combination of attribute fields, such as a photographer or a reporter's schedule either by the hour, by the day, week, month, etc. Multiple schedules can be viewed simultaneously in separate browser windows, with search results limited and sorted by contained values such as time or status. In addition, any of the fields within an assignment can be used to color code the display bar e.g. "New" in red, "In Progress" in blue, "Completed" in green, or alternatively by section or publication.

Linking Assignment Objects

The assignment module also includes SCC MediaFactory's "Harmonizer" channel, which allows automatic linking of submitted objects (photos, graphics, text, pages, etc.) to their parent assignments. The Harmonizer channel allows any field attribute or combination of attributes from the assignment to be configured as matching fields. When the content of the assignment field attributes match exactly the same attributes in the submitted photo or graphic file, then they become linked together automatically by the Harmonizer channel. A typical matching field might use the assignment number (URN), for example. By simply including the assignment number within the filename or within a pre-configured field attribute, submitted files are automatically linked to this assignment.

Merging Assignment Fields into Linked Objects

During the link process, the Harmonizer channel incorporates an option to merge selected field attributes from the parent assignment into submitted (linked) files. For example, a photo caption could be written to an assignment record prior to a photo or graphic being created. As soon as the assignment files are available and inserted into the MediaServer database, they become linked and receive a copy of the default caption from the parent assignment. Additional fields such as contact name, address and phone number, event date, etc., may also be transferred during linking. The benefit being that this additional information is available for search and display within each photo or graphic removing the need to constantly refer back to the assignment record.



Note that field attribute content is merged only if the destination attribute is empty. This ensures that field content is not overwritten if already containing information. Submitted files from each assignment remain linked to each other as well as to the parent assignment and once one file has been found, all others can be easily retrieved.

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