

Peak Performances With *Das ist Spitze!*



Cliparts.TV Uses Ventuz for Famous Game Show's Graphics Package.

The single most famous German game show of all time was called *Dalli Dalli* and was on air from 1971 until 1986. A total of 153 shows featured celebrities competing against each other in a wide variety of exciting action games and quizzes, moderated by the very popular host Hans Rosenthal. All winnings were donated to help families in need. The show ended with the premature death of Hans Rosenthal and left a gaping hole in Germany's TV landscape.

In 2013 the German public channel ARD finally decided to relaunch the show under the new name *Das ist Spitze!* with host Kai Pflaume. The concept has remained the same: fun family entertainment in a positive, not too competitive atmosphere, all for a good cause. What has changed is the technological background, which the show is built upon.

Munich agency Cliparts.TV has been commissioned to create the entire infrastructure for all electronic games as well as TV graphics, including on-air inserts and in-studio installations. "We handle our entire graphics operations with Ventuz", said Andreas Heinrich, CEO of Cliparts.TV. "A show like *Das ist Spitze!* needs a wide spectrum of solutions beyond the usual score boards and timers. With Ventuz we are flexible enough to cover every crazy idea the producers come up with."

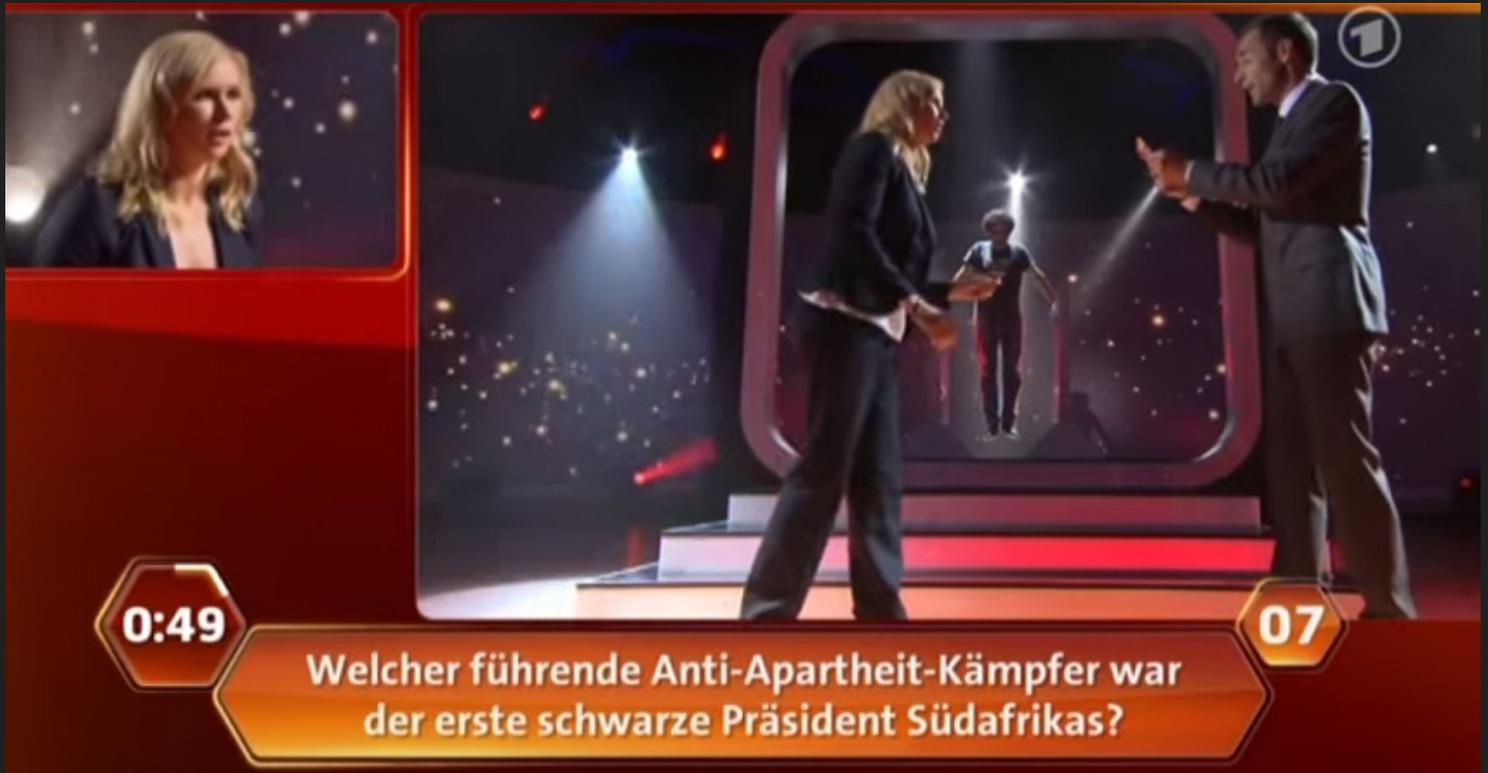
The show features two teams of celebrities competing against each other. Each team has a desk with embedded screens for the contestants and camera facing screens, which show the scores. Usually the game frenzy starts off with a quiz: Questions are shown on the contestants' screens and as a lower third insert, while the timer counts down in the lower left corner of the screen.

Right after that, the more action focused games come into play. *Das ist Spitze!* uses elaborate decorations and costumes, including many different props. Some games are all about collecting as many items as possible during a certain timeframe and therefore require little to no technology, but others are indeed more complex.



“We have never experienced a system failure during production since we switched to Ventuz.”

Andreas Heinrich, Cliparts.TV



“We had one game where the contestants had to put on fake beards and take pictures of themselves – all without using their hands”, explained Andreas. “The pictures were captured in real-time and streamed into a Ventuz machine, which then displayed them next to each other on the backdrop LED wall behind the stage.”

The games as well as the screens embedded into the player desks are operated through servers on the show floor. All buzzers and triggers are directly connected to the game servers to guarantee a delay-free flow of the games. The machines for controlling and on-air graphics, however, are located in the gallery. Cliparts.TV uses .NET remoting to transmit all data streams – questions, scores and backdrop graphics for full-screen display – and thereby operates the entire show as one connected system in which reliability is imperative.

Although Cliparts.TV makes sure to foster a sufficient backup park, they have never experienced the failure of a Ventuz system during production. Even switching the entire show from SD to FullHD caused no problems due to the scalability of Ventuz.

The producers of *Das ist Spitze!* introduce new games in every show, so the key feature of any solution in use has to be flexibility. “We have to create new backdrop graphics and game workflows all the time”, said Andreas. “Ventuz allows us to work quickly and make changes on the fly, a feature that our previous solution didn’t offer. Especially when it comes to design, many suggestions arise during rehearsal in the studio. With Ventuz, we can implement these changes right then without even having to close down the application. Our customers love that.”

Additionally, the requirements for the creation of on-air graphics have changed over the last years. While before it was common for Cliparts.TV to receive a full set of graphics including all animations, today they are merely given the start and end looks and have to create the animations in real-time.

“Designing truly unique content has become much easier with Ventuz”, said Andreas. “At the same time our graphics creation has become much faster. So, although our workload is increasing, we get the job done in shorter time periods.”

Das ist Spitze! has received a solid market share of thirteen to sixteen percent and still ranks among Germany’s most popular family entertainment programs. After two successful seasons, new episodes will be aired in fall of 2014.