



Pasapalabra (The Alphabet Game)

ESTUDIO, THE POWER BEHIND A LONG-LASTING QUIZ SHOW

Based on the UK format "The Alphabet Game", Pasapalabra is, with more than 18 years on-air, one of the most veteran quiz shows in Spain. In 2007 the show started to be broadcasted by Tele 5 with Brainstorm technology.

The show is based on different games which allow two contestants, teaming up with celebrities, to accumulate seconds which then will be used in the final game, the "rosco" which is a virtual wheel with all the letters of the Spanish alphabet. There, contestants

will need to answer all the definitions of the wheel, a word per each alphabet letter. What appears to be a simple game turns into a test of culture that has provided some of the highest monetary prizes in Spain's television history, up to 2.2 million Euros.

When in 2007 Tele 5 started to broadcast the show, the production company counted with Brainstorm Production Services to create the technology for the games and eventually operate the system. This technology allowed to create new look for the show, including new animations for the games and one of the most recognizable moments of the show, the build up of the alphabet wheel, the "Rosco" in Spanish, with all the letters flying to their position.

Using Brainstorm's eStudio, the operators were able to manage the scores, drive the games, launch the sound effects and even activate a button, via GPI, to be able to know which contestant was quicker on answering a given question.



Pasapalabra even made Brainstorm to develop technological concepts such as the "Timed Undo", a functionality that registers all the clicks and movements during the show. This is crucial in live or "live-to-tape" shows such as this, as it allows the directors to know, in case of failure or pause, the status of the show at that time, including the exact second and the current letter the contestant is at, plus the status at that time (success, mistake or pass).

In the Summer of 2018, Xanela, the company that currently produces Pasapalabra, also counted with Brainstorm Production Services for the redesign of the show. Its looks were familiar and well accepted by the audience, but Xanela felt that the new season will require an updated image, while keeping the traditional look and feel the audience appreciates.

By following design guidelines provided by Xanela, Brainstorm applied the new line to the existing games and, of course, the alphabet wheel. The logic of the games also required some updating on the score management, audio effects and GPI triggering, while the new graphics implied creating several new



elements and updated scripting in some cases.

Apart from the redesign, Xanela asked for a new requirement for controlling the studio lights via GPI, so when a contestant scores or fails the general lighting turns red or green accordingly, which is reflected in the public. Also, some design and animation changes in the alphabet wheel required some additional scripting, coupled with visually updated letter containers.

Amazingly enough, Pasapalabra is controlled by an extremely simple workflow, involving a single HP workstation with an AJA video board and a GPI card. The eStudio software takes care for the graphics,

animations, scores, sound effects and GPI triggering for the whole show.

"Brainstorm's eStudio has proven its power, flexibility and reliability at Pasapalabra for more than 10 years, and the Brainstorm team is always at hand to support us. It is incredible how such an apparently simple setup can run the whole show, taking care of everything from graphics to sound effects."

Rafael Guardiola, Director of Pasapalabra, Xanela Productions

