

How TUI Cruises Programmes Venue Energy Fleetwide

Interview with Torsten Hirche, TUI Cruises
Superintendent Newbuild Entertainment Technology



MS3 TUI Bar, atmosphere Virtual Live Bands

The atmosphere365 media platform

Video + BGM on one platform: Built for real sea operations

How do you deliver a premium live feeling across an entire fleet without adding operational complexity onboard? TUI Cruises treats entertainment as a scalable platform, not a set of disconnected systems.

From first install to fleet standard

atmosphere media:

Why did you choose atmosphere Virtual Live Bands onboard?

Torsten Hirche:

“It was new and exciting at the time, and we were immediately impressed, and honestly a bit blown away by the outstanding production quality.”

atmosphere media:

“How did it evolve after the first install, and what role does it play today?”

Torsten Hirche:

“From the first installation in the TUI Bar on Mein Schiff 3, guest feedback was very positive. Today, the atmosphere Virtual Live Bands are a standard element of our onboard venue entertainment across the fleet.”

When venues feel live

atmosphere media:

What do you actually observe in the venue when the virtual bands are on?

Torsten Hirche:

“Guests like the live feeling of the performances, and it helps create the right energy and a more social, engaging atmosphere in our bars and restaurants.”

atmosphere media:

Do you have a specific moment that captures that effect in real operation?

Torsten Hirche:

“With the atmosphere Virtual Live Bands in the TUI Bar, we see guests sit down in front of the screens, sometimes even on their own, and simply enjoy the live music. In those moments it feels personal, almost as if the band is playing just for them”

Key facts

- Deployed across the entire TUI Cruises fleet
- 40 bespoke audio zones per ship
- Exclusive and engaging video content
- Synchronised Video + BGM programming



Video plus BGM, one venue, one experience



MS3 TUI Bar, atmosphere Immersive Nature Films

atmosphere media:

At what point did you think, “We need one system for the whole venue, not just video”?

Torsten Hirche:

“For me it was important to be able to programme and control a whole space from one platform. With atmosphere365, video and background music run in sync, depending on the situation, the time of day, and what guests need in that moment.”

atmosphere media:

What does that synchronisation enable for you in day to day entertainment operations?

Torsten Hirche:

“We can programme an entire venue as one experience, including video, background music, and light triggering. Depending on the situation, we run the video with its own audio, or combine the visuals with a separate music layer. What matters for me is consistency, so the loudness does not jump when we change the scenario.

atmosphere media:

How established is this approach across the fleet today?

Torsten Hirche:

“We’ve been installing the atmosphere365 platform across all our ships since 2020.”



Automation, fewer errors, less pressure

atmosphere media:

What is the biggest day to day benefit of having audio and video on one platform?

Torsten Hirche:

“A key benefit is planning and automation. Audio and video are scheduled centrally and programmed precisely per venue.”

atmosphere media:

What changes for the onboard teams during peak hours, when things move fast?

Torsten Hirche:

“That takes pressure off our teams because nothing has to be triggered manually, so there are fewer operational errors. Overall, having one platform simplifies day to day work across the fleet.”



What makes the difference

atmosphere media:

Where does atmosphere365 BGM make the biggest difference for you onboard?

Torsten Hirche:

“For me, it starts with audio quality. I want it to sound premium in the venue, but still leave space for conversation. The channels are stereo, with a high sampling rate and precise LUFS loudness levelling. The platform avoids additional compression, so the dynamic range stays intact.”

atmosphere media:

Aside from audio quality, what really matters in day to day operation?

Torsten Hirche:

“Curation. We get playlists that are tailored to each venue and structured by day, hour, and event scenarios. They are well built from the start and continuously updated. In practice, you can complete a full cruise without hearing the same track twice.”

atmosphere media:

And when real life onboard requires fast changes, what do you need most?

Torsten Hirche:

“Operational flexibility. With local access via the atmosphere365 Controller app on iOS, Android, or browser, the management and bar teams can adjust quickly when needed.”

Themed cruises and charters

atmosphere media:

TUI Cruises has many different cruise concepts. How do you handle very specific content requirements onboard?

Torsten Hirche:

“We can cover a wide range of specific customer requirements. We combine the continuously updated atmosphere library with our own custom audio and video content, and run tailored playlists and schedules for specific cruise concepts.”

atmosphere media:

Can you give an example of how far that customisation goes in practice?

Torsten Hirche:

“For themed cruises such as Full Metal Cruise or Jeckliner, we maintain hundreds of playlists. The same applies to full charter cruises: we can respond quickly to guest and client requests.”

Sea-ready architecture

atmosphere media:

Sea operations have very different constraints than shore-based hospitality. What is essential from a technical perspective?

Torsten Hirche:

“All curated video and audio content is automatically updated from the atmosphere cloud, cached locally on the onboard atmosphere365 server, and played back onboard. This avoids typical streaming issues such as dropouts, quality fluctuations, and bandwidth contention.”

atmosphere media:

How do you distribute the content across multiple venues onboard?

Torsten Hirche:

“We distribute content in two ways. Either the platform feeds a dedicated physical player in each venue, or we virtualise players on the onboard server and deliver them via Dante. Both models support central control with local override, run reliably in hybrid setups, and using the existing backbone reduces cost.”

Interactivity and shared experiences

atmosphere media:

Guest expectations keep evolving. What kind of interactivity is interesting for you, without breaking the concept of a venue?

Torsten Hirche:

“I know atmosphere media is already testing their new guest engagement app that will allow guests to take part in the music experience via their phones without changing the brand concept of a location.”

atmosphere media:

If you could add one feature that would immediately upgrade the guest experience, what would it be?

Torsten Hirche:

“We would also like a karaoke version of the atmosphere live-band videos so professional singers or guests can sing along directly with the band with studio-quality sound.”

In one sentence

atmosphere media:

If you had to describe atmosphere365 for cruises in one sentence, what would you say?

Torsten Hirche:

“Quality, experience, and dedication in music and video productions make the difference.”

atmosphere media:

Thank you very much.

Interview by Ulrike Bodinka, atmosphere media GmbH - February 2026



Inside, fine dining restaurant - Mercure Casino

Please contact us at:

atmosphere media GmbH

Im Mediapark 5b | 50670 Cologne | Germany

+49 (0)221 126116 93

contact@atmosphere-media.com

www.wecreateatmosphere.com

