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QvidiumHD 1394 IP gateway

New IP Technology Moves HD Video Directly from Camcorder to Networked Storage

In an effort to bypass the ingest process, two companies have demonstrated technology that enables direct digital video recording to networked storage from a 1394-equipped high-definition video camera.

The technology from Control Communications Systems and QVidium Technologies—called 1394 Gateways—enables direct recording to storage area network (SAN) or Network Attached Storage (NAS) directly from the camcorder. It was shown at the recent HD World Conference and Exhibition at Javits Convention Center in New York City.

The system uses QVidium Record Manager Software to take the video and audio coming from the camcorder, or other 1394-equipped system, and converts the feeds into standard IP packets. Once in the IP domain, the media can flow across networks that can span a studio or any location in the world.

The 1394 interface is very powerful but many uses of these HD cameras are limited by the short cable length, said Anthony Magliocco, Controlware's director of sales and marketing. Now, he said, the camcorder's images and sound can be instantaneously stored and edited anywhere in the world.

Using 1394 Gateways, camera operators can continue to operate their normal media in the camcorder while feeding the network drives simultaneously. Controlware, a company that specializes in loss-free terrestrial and satellite delivery of broadcast video, said it is offering both wired and wireless versions of the 1394 Gateways technology.

The technology offers support for all DVDPro formats, including DVCPRO HD, DVCPRO50 and DVCPRO25, as well as 19.75 Mbps 720p and 25 Mbps 1080i HDV and a wide range of audio formats. It can display HD video to a PC's VGA or DVI interface.

For more information, visit www.cware.com and www.qvidium.com.

— E-mail Michael Grotticelli Here



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Editor's Choice: HD

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Panavision Genesis with SSR-1 solid-state recorder

Panavision Unveils Compact Solid-State Recorder for High-Resolution Cameras

At a special preview event on October 11 in Los Angeles, Panavision introduced a lightweight solid-state recorder capable of docking to the Genesis Digital Camera System or Sony's F23. It's something digital cinematographers who use these cameras have been waiting for. A Genesis camera with the SSR-1 weighs just 21.5 lbs.

With the SSR-1 mounted either on the top or rear of the camera, shooters now have the freedom to move around a set or location with the same capability as a digital camcorder.

Weighing under six pounds, Panavision's SSR-1 provides the same recording functions as the tape-based Sony SRW-1 HDCAM SR (4:4:4) recorder commonly used with the Genesis system, but with a seven pound weight savings. Both devices can record 1080P 4:4:4 or 4:2:2 at fixed-speed formats, including 23.98P, 25P and 29.97P fps, along with variable speed (from 1 to 30 fps) capability.

The SSR-1, however, brings all of the advantages of solid-state recording, including instant access to all recorded takes (no tape cueing or shuttling is required) and no required pre-roll. The SSR-1 also consumes less power than its tape counterpart, providing roughly 40 percent more recording time than the SRW-1 without changing batteries, according to Panavision.

The SSR-1 records signals in uncompressed 4:4:4 or 4:2:2 formats, as single link HD-SDI, allowing easy transfer to an HDCAM SR deck for delivery to a client. It records 20 minutes in 23.98 fps 4:4:4 SP mode or 40 minutes in 23.98 fps 4:2:2 LP mode.

The SSRD can also be used for record/playback using an external docking station, the SSRD, which provides HDSDI and audio outputs for footage recorded on the SSR-1 flash memory.

Bob Beitcher, President and CEO, Panavision, said solid-state technology was chosen rather than a hard drive because it is more reliable, lighter and quieter, and consumes less power.

For more information, visit www.panavision.com.



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TV One C2-7210

TV One Debuts HD Video Processor for Live Events

At first, it can be hard to figure out exactly what it is that each offering in TV One's dizzying array of video boxes actually does. And therein lies the beauty of some of the most flexible multifunction processors available to producers of HD programming.

A new model, TV One's C2-7210 Dual Channel HD Video processor, can be viewed as a Swiss Army Knife for live event video. This 11-input device provides two independent video processing and scaling engines and two video mixers for handling SD/HD-SDI, composite, YC (S-Video), YUV component, YPbPr HD component, DVI and RGB video.

The unit moves beyond processing and switching by also providing HD-SDI up- and down-conversion and

HD-SD cross-conversion. TV One said the new CORIO EXP Front Panel makes running a live HD event easier with 48 push buttons, multi-way navigation, and a LCD screen.

Video-processing capabilities include Edge Blending, Seamless Switching with cross fades, two Independent Output Channels in HD and Dual PIP with up to five layers of video.

If you really want to get creative, a C2-7210 can also be used as an HD video scaler or converter, chroma/lumakeyer, worldwide standards converter, frame synchronizer/TBC, and aspect-ratio converter.

The C2-7210 is operable in several modes: a traditional switcher mode, independent mode and dual PIP mode. The switcher mode has equally powerful program and preview channels that allow any function (Next Image, PIP, Keying, Logo, etc.) to be set up and previewed, totally independent of the program output.

An Independent mode provides all the power of two completely separate scalars in one box—each with a full range of features including PIP, keying, and transitions. Each output can deliver different formats and resolutions simultaneously. Dual PIP Mode allows any video input to be placed into either of two windows of any size and positioned anywhere on the screen, even overlapping each other with user-defined layer priority control.

The C2-7210 handles all existing HDTV formats plus any analog RGB resolution up to 2048x2048. It is now shipping for \$10,500.

For more information, visit www.tvone.com.

Sony Debuts Switchable Shotgun for HD Field Production



Sony ECM-680S electret condenser mic

Targeting HD video production, Sony has introduced a lightweight switchable shotgun microphone that provides both stereo and monaural operation in a single device.

Sony's ECM-680S MS (mid-size) electret condenser microphone, introduced at the recent AES audio show in New York City, incorporates newly developed capsules that provide high sensitivity, low inherent noise, and a flat-and-wide frequency response.

Capable of digital multichannel sound capture, the new microphone can switch from capturing voice and distant sound in highly directional monaural operation to a spatial stereo mode for natural environmental sound quality, said Paul Foschino, who heads Sony's professional audio division in the U.S.

The mic—nearly 10 inches long and weighing 4.9 ounces—can be mounted on a boom or directly on the camera. Its large-diaphragm capsules with bi-directional characteristics provide sensitivity of -28 dB in stereo and 32 dB in mono. Noise is less than 20 dB SPL in both stereo and mono.

Modes can be switched from the microphone itself or from compatible Sony professional camcorders. In the stereo mode, the MS stereo microphone signal is internally decoded to left and right (stereo) outputs. The mic also includes an LED that illuminates when stereo mode is selected.

The shotgun has a frequency response of 50 Hz to 20 kHz in stereo and 40 Hz to 20 kHz in mono. There's a built-in two-position low cut filter.

The ECM-680S MS is now available for \$960.

For more information, visit
www.sony.com/professional/.



Archion Synergy HD4

Archion Offers Trade-In Program For Unity Storage

With hundreds of aging Avid storage systems in the field that have no replacement or expansion options. Archion, based in Burbank, CA, is offering a storage trade-in program for Avid Unity and LANshare owners. The trade-in, which runs until Dec. 31, allows customers with obsolete ZX and ZX3 chassis to receive trade-in credit toward Archion's Synergy HD storage array.

Archion said its Synergy HD provides media protection for a 50 percent lower cost than equivalent mirrored Avid storage. Its hardware RAID protects data in the event of a drive failure without the need to mirror. The array is designed to expand the storage requirements of existing Unity systems without the need to replace or upgrade their current Unity infrastructure.

The company's latest product, the Synergy HD4, features full compatibility with Unity, while offering 400MBps to 800 MBps bandwidth with dual 4GB FC ports and a capacity of up to 12 TB in a 3 RU box. It's a SATA II to FC Raid storage system designed for networking digital video systems in an Avid Unity environment. It offers 2 ports of 4 GB FC connectivity and is certified with Unity 3.3 thru 5.0 systems.

For more information, visit www.archion.com.



Seth Melnick

60-Second Q&A: Seth Melnick, Independent Director of Photography/Producer, Co-Owner, SLM Production Group, New York, NY

With a Master's degree in computer science and an extensive background in directing and acting, Seth Melnick has shot a series of HD shorts, music videos and full-length features. He mostly uses a Panasonic HPX500 P2 solid-state camera with a Fujinon 17x7.6 HD lens and four Anton Bauer dionic 90 batteries.

His latest feature, *Chasing the Green* (directed by Russ Emanuel) was shot with a single HPX500 in 20 days in August and September with four 16 GB P2 cards and a 40-person crew. The ability to review shots immediately with an on-set 26-inch Panasonic LCD monitor (BT-LH2600) allowed the crew to match shots more quickly and check reference footage.

Melnick said he's shot nearly 2,000 P2 cards worth of footage (starting with 4GB cards and now using 16 GB cards) and never had a clip lost. Other films shot with P2 include *American Standard* (www.americanstandardthemovie.com), directed by Josh Abraham, and *3rd of July*, directed by Ben Chace.

Q: Describe your P2 workflow.

A: We shoot with one card in the camera (for features I find this best, although with longer form projects more than one card can be loaded). When the card is full we pull it and put a new card in.

The full card is put in its case and immediately wrapped in a strip of red tape, signifying the data needs to be offloaded. The card is inserted into a Dell XPS laptop by a 2nd assistant camera operator (AC),

where it is copied to two hard drives connected via USB. This takes about 14 minutes for a 16 GB card. We also use a Duel Systems DuelAdapter to allow insertion of the PCMCIA P2 cards in the PCI Express slots of the laptop.

Once offloaded, a visual inspection of a couple of randomly chosen clips is done using a P2 Store viewer to make sure the data transferred properly. All of these actions are documented in the footage log by the AC, including what drives it has been copied to, the amount of data, the time code and the time the card was pulled from the camera. Once the footage is on two drives and confirmed visually, the card is taped with green so we know it is now available for use.

When time allows, the cards are then copied from one of the hard drives to a third hard drive location. This results in three redundant copies of the footage. At the end of each day one set of drives goes with production, one with the line producer and a third stays with me so I can review dailies.

Q: You've said tape is not as secure a storage media as hard drives. Please explain.

A: That single copy is the only copy that exists, unless you're going to bill nightly dubbing into your budget. When I offload the data from the P2 card, I transfer it to three different hard drives. So I've got three copies in less time than it takes to make three video dubs. And the chances of losing three copies is next to none. When I hand off that single videotape copy, the client may not know how to handle it properly, and I can't ensure the safety of the recorded images.

Q: Looking at the differences between a tape-based production and using solid-state media, it seems that organization is more critical when using solid state. Is this true?

A: Not necessarily. You have to log footage more carefully on a tape-based production because you have to log it into the editing system and get it off tape. With solid-state, because each clip is its own file, you can be a bit more lax with logging. You have to know what hard drive it has been copied to, but I don't think there's any more organization with solid-state than with tape.

However, solid-state recording can necessitate a dedicated person on the crew whose job it is to manage the various P2 cards. It's not that different than having a loader on a film production. On smaller productions, you may not be recording as much footage, so there are fewer files to keep track of and you won't need to pay a separate person to do that.

Q: What's the biggest misconception about HD production?

A: People underestimate the complexity of a HD production. Before you actually get started, you should always do a test with a camera and the sound person, then send the two elements to the editor and have them sync the two together to see what it looks like. Test every step in the workflow before you are on set. Many times I have gotten a call with issues related to not doing this.

Most of the people who are against solid-state recording are those that haven't really worked with the format and experimented with it. I would say that you have to test the gear out before you start your first production with it. Once you get comfortable, there will be fewer problems and you'll find your production goes a lot smoother.

For more information, visit www.slmproduction.com.



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