

USER REPORT

Hitachi Supports First CATV System

by Andy Himmelwright

General Manager
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ALLENTOWN, PA.

Service Electric Cable Television (SECTV), the nation's first cable television company is located here and has been providing subscribers throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania with award winning local origination programming since 1969 via our cable, channel TV2. This includes everything from news and entertainment programming to some very aggressive local sports programming, with more than 200 live remote sports broadcast a year. SECTV has relied on Hitachi products for such local production work for nearly 30 years.

In the early 1980s, we acquired three Hitachi 1-inch machines for slow-motion replays in the remote truck, and also for use in the studio for editing and mastering. We also selected Hitachi's SK-91 cameras for both studio and the remote truck applications. Currently SECTV TV2 has three remote trucks for their sports channel, 2Sports. All are equipped with Hitachi SK-2700 and Z4000W cameras.

Our plans to make the jump up to high definition are not very far off. SECTV's president and owner, John Walson Jr., has always demanded the best in broadcast technology to provide the highest quality programming to our subscribers and Hitachi has always been by our side, not only with the sale but with top-notch service also.

RELIES ON HITACHI STORAGE

Two years ago 2Sports started a daily local sports magazine show covering everything from peewee events to professional sports. The equipment choice once again was Hitachi. The use of the Hitachi Z-DR1 hard drive technology is a major part of the workflow for this show. It's very versatile, as the storage media can be removable Hitachi 2.5 hard discs or solid-state Flash memory chips packaged in a robust, portable and convenient "Mediapacs." Last year we saved more than \$25,000 in tape cost alone and our camera guys love it, as it's very reliable and they don't have to worry about running out of tape when a team scores the only point of the game.

This technology has also been



Service Electric Cable TV's TV2 staff. (L-R) Andy Himmelwright, general manager; John M. Walson, executive vice president; Scott Richardson, chief engineer; Donny Long, assistant manager

very useful for the reporters when they pull out their laptops and start cutting highlights and sound bites

after the event is done. There's no more waiting for a tape machine to become available to start working on the story. Another very useful feature is the FireWire connectivity between the Mediapacs and our Mac computers. We chose Final Cut Pro as our editing platform for several reasons. It is by far the most widely used platform across the board, one of the

most stable running editing platforms and just about everyone at the station can use it. When a reporter is

finished with a story, it is sent across the network to the server and then played out digitally, and we stay completely tapeless. Tape tears, dropouts and generational losses are things of the past. The Z-DR1 hard drive recorders and the SK-555 cameras we use them with are keeping the integrity of the product to the highest possible standards available to us.

Andy Himmelwright is general manager at Service Electric TV2 and has been in the television production business since 1983. He also serves as a freelance technical director for regional and national sports networks. He may be contacted at himmelwr@sectv.com.

For additional information, contact Hitachi at 516-921-7200 or visit www.hitachikokusai.us.