

Case Study

Boomerang+ Adopts Snell's Kahuna to Ease HD Migration



Multi-format HD/SD production switcher enables smooth transition for Welsh broadcaster S4C and lays foundation for Boomerang+ to provide high-quality HD to other clients.

The Customer

Based in Cardiff, Wales and founded in 1994, Boomerang+ produces a wide array of national and international programs including extreme sports, drama, comedy, live events, children's programs, web content, and radio broadcasts.

The company's combination of in-house talent and resources enables it to operate across the whole spectrum of creative industry activities including program production, post-production services, television facilities, and talent management. Supporting all Boomerang+ plc group companies' work are integrated studio and post production facilities that include two multi-camera studio spaces; live transmission links; 12 video edit stations; two audio dubbing studios; radio production facilities and extensive location equipment, both HD and SD.

For more information, visit www.boomerang.tv.

The Challenge

Like many production companies, Boomerang+ was looking to upgrade to High Definition (HD) production. What makes this infrastructure investment project different is that it was being implemented to support the HD migration of a key client, Welsh-language channel S4C. The choice of HD production switcher within the new infrastructure is strategically important since – if selected correctly - this one device will enable Boomerang+ to offer exceptional service to all of its broadcasting clients requiring high-quality HD output.

The Snell Solution

After researching market options extensively and talking with numerous production switcher manufacturers, Boomerang+, selected Snell as its preferred technology partner. This leading UK television production company chose Snell's Kahuna multi-format HD/SD production switcher as an integral component in its upgrade to HD operations.

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Designed for fast-paced, live production environments, it combines a comprehensive and versatile feature-set with the most innovative signal processing capability ever seen in a switcher.

Kahuna is the world's first true multi-format switcher. It offers simultaneous High Definition and Standard Definition operation in the same mainframe, with the same control panel. Even more remarkably, thanks to an advanced new pixel-filtering technology called FormatFusion™, it allows users to integrate any SD material such as handheld camera feeds, graphics or archives into HD productions, seamlessly, without the need for up-conversion.

Instead of enabling operation in either SD or HD, Kahuna goes much further by eliminating the distinction between the two. Fully software upgradable, Kahuna, can be installed initially in SD-only or HD-only form and, when required, converted instantly to combined, multi-format SD/HD operation with no additional installation requirement.

Boomerang+ maintains a fiber optic connection with S4C that enables the production company to supply live output to the network. When S4C began putting into place an infrastructure that would enable a smooth migration to HD operations, the network requested that Boomerang+ replace its aging SD switching equipment with a solution that could provide superior-quality HD video output from multiple input formats. Installed by systems integrator, Megahertz, the Kahuna switcher has enabled Boomerang+ to incorporate video in any type of format, including SD, into the HD stream without requiring additional conversion equipment on the input side. Kahuna went live in January 2010, supplying S4C with down-

converted SD that was switched to an HD signal when the network moved to HD on May 1.

The Results

Migration to HD operations continues to be an enormous technology hurdle facing broadcasters and the production companies they work with, but Kahuna offers a smooth and cost-effective path to HD that enables the broadcaster to continue leveraging content from many different sources and formats.

Boomerang+'s choice of Kahuna is a true win-win: S4C was able to launch its HD service without a significant investment in conversion equipment, and Boomerang+ has a world-class switcher solution that it can now provide to other clients.

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