

Case Study

CTV OB's Upgraded HD Truck has Snell Routing and Control Systems at its Heart



High performance, reliability, and flexibility of Snell systems enable speedy upgrade of CTV OB vehicle for seamless SD/HD production migration.

Snell's Installation Partner - Neil Wilson Enterprises

On this demanding project, both in terms of the technical challenge and timescales, Snell worked with Neil Wilson Enterprises (NWE).

NWE is a UK-based company, established in 1982, which specializes in the design and systems integration of all types of broadcast TV systems from studios, post production and transmission facilities to outside broadcast vehicles of all sizes. NWE has a close working relationship with Snell, stretching over 15 years and it has worked with CTV over many years.

The Customer

Established in 1986, CTV has developed into one of the largest and well-respected independent OB companies in Europe. CTV is built upon a highly motivated team of television professionals who have established a wealth of experience and know-how over many decades. CTV is a Euro Media Group company, and with OB partners in Belgium, France, Germany and The Netherlands it can efficiently deliver expertise anywhere in continental Europe – and beyond.

CTV works with the world's leading broadcasters and programme makers, including 2 way Traffic, ABC, BAFTA, BBC, CBC, CBS Sports, Channel 4, Channel 9, Cheese, CPL, Done and Dusted, Dragonfly, E!, Endemol, ESPN, Eyeworks, European Tour Productions, Five, Fox Sports, HBO Sports, IMG, ITV, Initial, Matchroom Sports, MTV, RDF, Reuters, NBC Sports, Sky Sports, Splinter, Turner Sports, Tiger Aspect, VH1, Whizz Kid.

"We have enjoyed a long and successful relationship with Snell for more than 15 years, and we have always found the company's products to be well-made, reliable, and equipped to meet our clients' expectations. Ease of configuration, reliable performance, and responsive support are crucial in getting complex systems like these up and running in a short timescale, and we enjoy all of these benefits when working with Snell and the company's wide range of solutions." Neil Wilson, engineering director, Neil Wilson Enterprises



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The Challenge

"In the highly competitive UK OB (Outside Broadcast) market, it's important to keep downtime to a minimum, and so the key challenge was to design and build a system that fully satisfied customer requirements within the tight delivery schedule specified," said Neil Wilson, engineering director at Neil Wilson Enterprises. "To achieve this goal, we needed a routing system that met our performance specifications while minimizing installation hassles."

NWE selected Snell routing and control systems for the heart of a refurbished and upgraded HD unit for CTV. 'OB4' is a unique quadruple expando, originally engineered and integrated by NWE for the light entertainment market, and it is the last of three CTV OB units converted by NWE to meet the demands of HD production and broadcasting.

Within OB4, a large 576 x 576 Cygnus HD video router is coupled with a powerful 192 x 192 Sirius 256 AES/EBU audio router, commanded by an Aurora Control system with refurbished control panels from the original truck design and new control panels from the Snell 6700 and 6276XY range.

The Results

Snell's Cygnus and Sirius routing systems enabled a smooth installation, integrating and operating just as expected. The multi-

format routers enable seamless operation in either the HD or SD domain with very rapid conversion between the two formats.

NWE also upgraded the truck to include HD signal monitoring and Dolby 5.1 digital audio support that satisfies today's extensive multi-channel audio requirements. Since the new Snell systems support a convenient upgrade path to 1080p (3Gbps) operation, CTV OB can easily adapt its truck to 3Gbps as dictated by customer requirements.

"The Snell systems fit the bill, as they are priced keenly while still offering a full level of resilience and redundancy backup, an important factor now that OB design has become reliant on routing infrastructure," said Neil Wilson. "We have enjoyed a long and successful relationship with Snell for more than 15 years, and we have always found the company's products to be well-made, reliable, and equipped to meet our clients' expectations. Ease of configuration, reliable performance, and responsive support are crucial in getting complex systems like these up and running in a short timescale, and we enjoy all of these benefits when working with Snell and the company's wide range of solutions."

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