

Case Study

Metro Broadcast Boosts HD Capability With Ukon™ Universal Conversion Platform



Snell's Ukon shares duty with Archangel™ Ph.C for HD mastering.

The Customer

Metro Broadcast has 25 years experience in providing pioneering services to the broadcast market in the United Kingdom. The company, with offices in London, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, offers an unrivaled range of services including editing, duplication, content restoration, equipment rental, live events, webcasting, and digital media. Metro Broadcast was one of the first companies in the U.K. to invest in high definition, establishing itself as a pioneer in use of the technology.

The Challenge

With an increasing number of client masters arriving in 24p, Metro had no elegant way to up or downconvert to formats such as 25 or 60 fps. In addition, the facility needed to upconvert standard definition video to HD for broadcast.

The Snell Solution

Metro acquired Snell's Ukon, a platform that provides upconversion, downconversion, and crossconversion, either singly or in any combination. Designed to handle different frame rates, image sizes, and aspect ratios, Ukon includes features such as tilt, pan and zoom, timecode conversion with precise frame mapping, comprehensive audio handling, and 3:2 cadence detection and repair. Unlike any other format conversion system, Ukon executes all these functions at the same time, in a single pass. Frequently used conversions can be programmed for reuse at the touch of a button.

Ukon allowed Metro Broadcast to add flexible SD and HD conversion capability to its VT duplication and restoration areas. A shared resource in the facility's machine room, the Ukon is being used as an upconverter for restoration on a Snell Archangel Ph.C system and as a duplication tool for Metro's increasing volume of HD mastering work.

"We receive a lot of masters in 24p, and until we began using the Ukon, there was no straightforward way to up or downconvert material in that format," said Richard Baker, media and operations manager at Metro Broadcast. "We do envisage the HD market expanding quite rapidly over the next year to 18 months, and the added conversion capability we have with the Ukon gives us significantly greater flexibility in the HD environment."



Case Study

Henninger Uses Ukon™ Platform in Virtual Telecine Environment

The Results

Henninger Media Services is using Ukon in a virtual telecine environment to enable SD video footage to be integrated seamlessly into finished HD productions. Ukon was installed in a multi-standard finishing suite along with a da Vinci 2K color correction system to deliver highquality HD onlines to clients such as Discovery Channel and A&E's History Channel.

"We selected the Ukon for our conversion suite because it's the best converter available today," said Sam Crawford, chief engineer for Henninger's Arlington, Va. facility. "It understands every HD format out there and has a setting for each one. Because it recognizes different formats and can tell the difference between interlaced and progressive, Ukon is able to identify exactly the right kind of processing to get the best conversion."

"It does an unbelievable job of upconverting to HD, and as a result we can leverage both clients' SD and HD media resources without compromising quality," Crawford concluded.

