Broadcasting Remote Sports Commentary with IP Video

Challenge

Fox Sports 1 needed a flexible way to easily contribute remote interviews into their broadcasts. Traditional methods, like satellite links, would take too long to commission and would be costly. Bexel and Haivision provided a more nimble way to get remote talent on-air, in no time.

Solution

With the goal of enhancing FOX Sports 1 channel with more live coverage of sports events around the world, Bexel created 16 self-contained, crewless home studios for the network's remotely-based top talent. Bexel's crewless home studios, "analyst kits," are permanently installed in the commentator's homes and connected to a private IP network, removing the need for satellite transmission. Whenever a relevant sports news or event takes place that calls for their expertise and analysis, the commentators can go on air immediately from the comfort of their own home, without driving to the nearest local studio or having the network send over a satellite truck.

The Bexel studio units feature Haivision's HD encoders, making it possible for the client to bi-directionally stream low latency video over a private network from the remote commentator to the studio during a broadcast. Encoding up to 1080p video and designed for interactive HD communications, the Haivision encoders deliver extremely low end-to-end latency and make it possible to conduct flawless interviews between the remote commentator and the studio.

About Bexel & Fox Sports 1

Bexel, the worldwide provider of broadcast services, provides brilliantly designed and flawlessly executed systems and solutions to broadcasters and producers of the biggest and most important televised events in the world. FOX Sports 1 is America's fastest growing national multi-sport channel that boasts nearly 5,000 hours of live event, news and original programming annually.

Customer Success

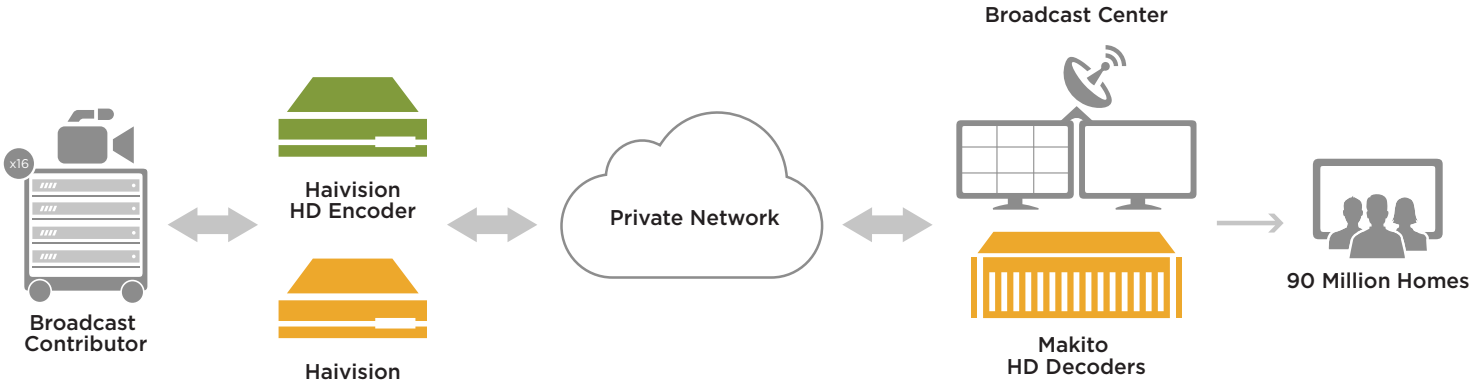
Solution Implementation

:: Bexel Remote Studio Kits
:: Haivision HD Encoders

Solution continued...

The systems also includes AW-HE60SN Panasonic cameras that can be manned remotely from the control room in any location, allowing the client to pan, tilt, zoom or adjust color and saturation. Litepanels 1x1 Bi-Color panels were chosen to provide key light, fill light, and back light on stands, and can also be controlled remotely. The backdrops, approximately 6x6 feet feature custom logos relevant to the client. Beyond the standard backdrops are smaller pull-up devices, and in one case, a motorized unit that comes down from the ceiling.

Rack mounted cases, approximately 48x24x30 inches, are at the core of the systems. Their contents include a UPS that controls power, an IP power switch which allows the system to be turned on and off remotely, a network switch that keeps the circuit open, and audio and video support that provides the IFB and camera feeds.



Results

Since the remote analyst kit launched, Fox 1 Sports has purchased several systems and used them in commentators' homes. The in-home location segments have become staples of FOX SPORTS LIVE, FOX FOOTBALL DAILY and other FOX Sports 1 programming. Brian Billick in Queenstown, Md., Ken Rosenthal in New York, N.Y., Mike Garafolo in Hoboken, N.J., Jon Paul Morosi in Ann Arbor, Mich., Reid Forgrave in Des Moines, Iowa, and Alex Marvez in Miami, Fla., are among the analysts who have been prominently featured from the new installations. The network simply connects into any of the in-home studios via a bonded T1 pair, and goes live with HD quality video.

While most functions of the in-home studios are controlled remotely, the units were designed to make it easy for the on-location users to complete the tasks necessary to perform. With a very straightforward audio system, the talent does not need to do anything beyond plugging in their microphone.

"Haivision and Bexel bring cost effective and efficient solutions to broadcasters, helping them gather interview content quickly and more flexibly than typical satellite options."

John Mills
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