One Wheatstone IP Console Connects Three Stations and Communities

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CHARLOTTE, N.C.—Bahakel Communications is a family-owned communications business with 14 TV and radio stations primarily based in the south. When we de-

USER REPORT

cided to move to IP networking to share live productions between three of our six TV stations, we wanted to push the envelope of IP without getting into unproven territory. We needed the system to work reliably and that meant the right IP networked audio console.

We planned to produce most of the newscasts and weather reports for WCCB-TV, WOLO-TV, Columbia, S.C., and WFXB-TV, Myrtle Beach, N.C. from our WCCB newsroom in Charlotte.

RELIABLE IP AUDIO NETWORK

We were looking for the ideal IP networked console to replace our Wheatstone TV80, which had served us faithfully for the past two decades. We didn't have to look far—we found it in Wheatstone's Dimension Three, a capable board like our TV80, yet with the proven WheatNet-IP audio network that could handle mic control, IFB and final mixing for all three stations from our main studio in Charlotte.

For our purposes, Dimension Three was perfect. It was layered, had a very capable touchscreen interface on the bridge,

and more busses than we'd ever need (16 mix-minus and 16 AUX sends on every channel, plus two stereo and two 5.1 surround master busses), plus stereo and 5.1 surround panning… with EQ and dynamics processing available for each input, each subgroup and each program bus.

Most important to us was the proven reliability of the IP audio network behind Dimension Three; WheatNet-IP is an AES67-compatible audio network known to be reliable and fail-proof.

Senior audio mixer for the WCCB-TV morning show, Richard England, is shown here in front of the Dimension Three Touch audio console.

THREE FOR ONE

The Dimension Three IP audio console now handles mixing, mic control and IFB for all three stations from the Charlotte studio. This is done through I/O BLADEs, the access units that make up the WheatNet-IP audio network. All studio cameras, mics, IFB, prompter, weather system, and set monitors in the Columbia newsroom are linked to Charlotte by IP. In Charlotte, it all goes through production and master control,

and is then re-encoded with all the sub-channels and sent back to Columbia via IP transport for transmission. The same setup is used for some programming for WFXB-TV in Myrtle Beach. Mid-day weather is presented from the Columbia newsroom, through WCCB-TV production, and fed back via IP to WFXB-TV for air. News and weather can originate from any of the three locations for all or any of the three stations, as was the case during Hurricane Matthew.

When the storm hit in late 2016, we broadcast live updates for all three communities from each of the locations as it developed, and we continued to broadcast updates even during a mass evacuation in Myrtle Beach without losing connectivity. As WFXB-TV's building sat empty and dark, we remotely produced live updates for the Myrtle Beach community from our studio in Charlotte.

Recently, we expanded on the WheatNet-IP audio network with Wheatstone's EDGE and AuraIP-8 BLADE for an eight-channel audio link over Ethernet IP. We now use the system for transporting multiple Columbia radio stations' audio back to WOLO-TV's master control in Charlotte for EAS compliance.

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For more information, visit www.wheatstone.com *or call 252-638-7000.*