

SONY NEWS & INFORMATION

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ASIAN TELEVISION NETWORK LAUNCHES CANADA'S FIRST SONY BITSTREAM AND VIDEOSTORE SERVER SYSTEM.

Multichannel video file server system allows ATN to operate two stations out of a single broadcast facility.

The Broadcast and Professional Group of Sony Canada Ltd. has announced the first Canadian implementation of its BitStream™ MPEG-2 Encoding Unit and Video Store™ Multichannel Video File Server System at the Asian Television Network Inc. (ATN) in Newmarket, Ontario.

ATN is Canada's first licensed broadcaster to serve the South Asian community. Granted CRTC approval in 1996, Asian Television is a multilingual South Asian service providing prime-time programming seven days a week. ATN's services are distributed by cable and direct-to-home satellite service on a pay-per-use basis. ATN also broadcasts 24 hours a day on the Alpha Star Digital Television Network, a direct-to-home satellite television serving the US market.

Sony's BitStream and VideoStore equipment comprise a state-of-the-art digital multichannel video file server system, delivering high performance in the MPEG-2 video compression format. Providing superb picture quality, the system eliminates the need for variable compression, delivers cost savings and storage overhead.

"Sony was the only company able to provide us with the customized solution to deliver the functionality we require," said San Chandrasekar, president of ATN. "With Sony's cutting-edge technology, ATN can provide advanced quality television programming to South Asian communities in North America at significantly lower costs. Sony's VideoStore is the ideal solution for our broadcast needs and services, now and in the future."

At ATN, the BitStream\VideoStore multichannel video file server system essentially allows ATN to operate two independent television stations out of a single broadcast and production facility. At ATN, the VideoStore system with a hard disk storage array manages the broadcast of on-air commercial insertions, promos and programming from a single control site, dramatically reducing storage costs. The current system is implemented as one input and three channel outputs with a storage capacity of 2.5 hours. As ATN's services grow, Sony technology provides the potential to operate up to six independent channel outputs and 30 hours of storage from a single facility.

"The VideoStore system offers the ideal solution for broadcast stations such as ATN," said Pat Whittingham, senior vice president, Broadcast and Professional Group for Sony of Canada. "VideoStore delivers the flexibility to react quickly to advertising and programming opportunities, significantly increases on-line storage capacity and lowers maintenance costs, all while providing a high quality, digital on-air look."

In addition to the processes of encoding/storing and playing out material, the AirTrac™ automation software also controls program play out through a Flexicart Multi-Cassette System.

The BitStream\VideoStore system is capable of providing up to 60 hours of on-line audio\video clips, feeding up to 12 independent simultaneous output channels at 5Mbps, or six independent genlocked channels at 5 or 10Mbps. Clip duration may range from 4 seconds up to 4 1/2 hours. The system is also compatible with a broad range of time shift applications, as well as being an ideal source of programming for large projection screens, video walls, and video-on-demand systems.

About Asian Television Network

ATN is a pioneer in the field of broadcasting in Canada. Through its subsidiaries, it provides several hours of weekly television programming to South Asian communities in Ontario and across Canada. ATN, whose beginnings go back more than two decades, has its own custom-designed studio facility in Newmarket, Ontario. ATN has the most extensive South Asian programming library in North America and has exported its Canadian-produced programming to several countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

About BPG

The Broadcast and Professional Group (BPG) is a division of Sony Canada Ltd., headquartered in Willowdale, Ontario. BPG markets and supports Sony's full range of professional video and audio equipment, including videoconferencing, high definition video, interactive and security applications for the broadcast, production, business, industry, government, medical and education markets.

Asian Television Network International Limited.

Tel: 905-836-6460 Fax: 905-853-5212

Email: atn@AsianTelevision.com