

CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY GROUP

Getting Creative with T2 at the 2010 Detroit Auto Show

CUSTOMER:

 Creative Technology Group, US,
www.ctus.com
APPLICATION:

Trade show media playback

REQUIREMENTS:

 HD file-based workflow and
 HD-SDI playback signal


Multimedia Key To A Successful Auto Show

Along with all of the exotic cars and prototype vehicles on display at the annual North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) convention, held in Detroit (known as the Detroit Auto Show), the event is also renowned for its sophisticated live multimedia presentations that vie for attendees' attention. Looking out across the exhibit floor, one is more stunning and captivating than the next. A lot is riding on the success of these presentations because they are often viewed as a precursor of how well the car will be received by the auto trade press and eventually the general public.

Creative Technology is an internationally recognized professional audio visual staging services provider with locations in the US, UK, Germany, Dubai, China, and Singapore. They have worked with many of the major automobile manufacturers around the world to help announce new products in the most imaginative way.

Making A Great First Impression

To automatically play back pre-recorded video on large screen displays at the 2010 NAIAS convention at Detroit's Cobo Hall in January, Creative Technology used a unique, file-based digital disk recorder—the T2™ intelligent digital disk recorder (iDDR) from Grass Valley™ to drive numerous high-definition video screens in support of the recurring live presentations. In total, Creative Technology deployed 14 Grass Valley T2 iDDR decks within five different automakers' exhibit booths located throughout the convention hall.

The Grass Valley T2 iDDR combines advanced nonlinear features (direct, frame-accurate access to content), with VTR-like controls, making it ideally suited to the staging of live presentations. It has two playback channels and one record channel, all simultaneously and independently available, supporting full 1920x1080 (60i/50i/24p) and 720p HD resolutions (via HD-SDI and DVI) as well as standard-definition 480i digital content.

Always looking for ways to improve upon previous projects, the Creative Technology crew had worked with Grass Valley's previous generation Turbo™ iDDR and has fully embraced the power and flexibility that file-based workflows bring for live events like those created for the Detroit Auto Show. The new T2 iDDR offers full support for HD video, which was deemed critical to the staging company's clients and their success. T2 also offers the ability to accurately and automatically start and stop video clips based on pre-determined cues that were pre-programmed before the event.

"We needed a device that would output the highest quality HD-SDI content and the customer wanted something that could accept digital files... that's the Grass Valley T2 iDDR."

Darren Alexander, Technical Director,
 Creative Technology Group



“The T2 units performed flawlessly over the run of the show, and were only turned off when the show was over. We judge our success by how well the exhibit is received by convention attendees and our clients. The Ford exhibit booth was one of the most crowded throughout the duration of the convention, both because of the great new cars on display and because of the stunning video displays supporting the company messaging. Thanks to the Grass Valley T2 iDDR, everyone agreed it was a job well done.”

Darren Alexander, Technical Director, Creative Technology Group

Ford Exhibit Driven By T2 iDDR

The largest of the presentations staged by Creative Technology the 2010 Detroit Auto Show was for The Ford Motor Company, announcing “first-look” versions of its 2012 Ford Focus and 2011 Mustang GT vehicles. Creative Technology built a custom interface (dubbed “Ford Automation application”) running on several PC workstations to control multiple T2 iDDR units simultaneously, which were used in conjunction with Barco ImagePRO II processors and HD LED display screens in a variety of innovative ways. This included a massive oval media wall made up of four HD screen “sets,” consisting of a primary LED screen supplemented by multiple LED “fingers.” There were also two “Welcome Walls”—LED displays with projection inserts—which added to the overall dramatic visual experience.

These massive video-centric display walls were all driven by a pair of T2 decks, displaying pre-recorded, synchronized content across all the HD video displays, and is exactly the type of sophisticated presentation the T2 iDDR was designed for. Live video was also part of the multimedia exhibit.

Small Files, High-Quality Images

The fast workflow implemented for the Ford presentation and others at the Detroit Auto Show was aided by the T2 system’s internal HQ codec, which reduces files sizes—making them easy to store, organize, and transfer across a network—while maintaining pristine, artifact-free HD video quality throughout the process. Working with video images as digital files saved Creative Technology time during setup before and takedown after the event.

To serve the owners of hundreds of T2 decks that have been sold around the world, Grass Valley is producing free Service Packs for new features and functionality that make the T2 even more flexible and powerful for all types of file-based workflows. This includes increased format options for ingest and transfer of video, more features and functions when controlling the T2 from another device over an Ethernet connection, and highly accurate slow-motion capability using frame interpolation.



“In previous years we used tape-based ingest, and it was costly for our clients having to go to an edit house to produce tapes. With the Grass Valley T2 iDDR we were able to take the client’s media, ingest it very quickly as digital files, and put it into a play list as needed. All of our projects we run are on a very tight schedule and the program has to go off without a hitch. The Grass Valley T2 iDDR helped make that happen.”

Darren Alexander,
Technical Director,
Creative Technology Group



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