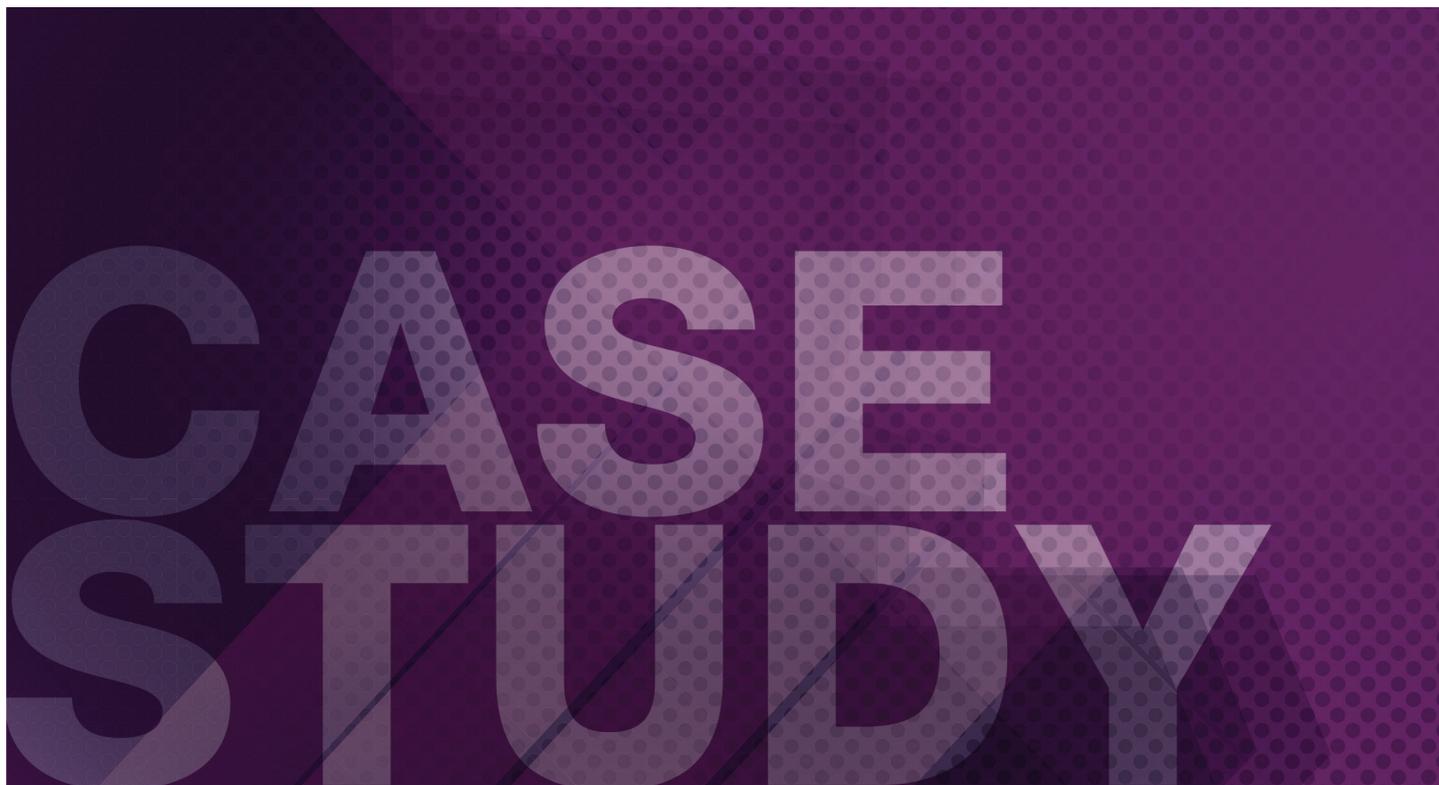




Los Angeles International Airport K2 Summit Provides Playback for New LED Architecture at LAX



CUSTOMER

LAWA (Los Angeles World Airports), US

INTEGRATORS

Electrosonic

SYSTEM DESIGNER/ TECHNICAL CONSULTANT

Smart Monkeys, Inc.

CHALLENGE

Constructing a massive LED architectural component that provides 24/7/365 updates and information to the airport's millions of passengers

SOLUTION

Seven Grass Valley K2 Summit transmission servers

BENEFIT

A proven system that consistently manages video and provides a level of redundancy, allowing for 24/7 operations

Background

Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) is one of the busiest international airports in the world, serving more than 63 million passengers annually. With such a staggering amount of foot traffic, it's imperative that the airport runs smoothly at all times and that passengers have up-to-the-minute information regarding their flights.

To help facilitate this, LAX recently opened the new Tom Bradley International Terminal, giving passengers a unique travel experience with new video walls called the Integrated Environmental Media System (IEMS). A massive engineering feat, the IEMS project was commissioned by Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) and took over two years to create. This dazzling display opened in September 2013 and provides passengers with a host of entertainment and information.

For the design and implementation of the project, LAWA called upon two industry veterans — Electrosonic and Smart Monkeys, Inc. — who specialize in project management, engineering, support and design of AV systems and products. Together, they spearheaded the IEMS project — which includes sophisticated K2 Summit media server technology from Grass Valley, a Belden Brand.

“Los Angeles is one of the world's most iconic cities, and we're excited for travelers to benefit from these sophisticated brand-new media features in the new terminal,” said Bryan Hinckley, Entertainment Business Manager at Electrosonic. “We had a very positive experience coordinating with different vendors, especially Grass Valley, which helped make the IEMS project a success.”

Challenges

Massive in size, the IEMS is located in the 150,000-square-foot Antonio Villaraigosa Pavilion (Great Hall). It consists of seven media features, including Welcome and Bon Voyage walls, a four-sided Time Tower, a Destination Board, a Story Board and two portals that usher passengers to their departure gates. The seven media features boast a mix of cutting-edge hardware such as high-resolution Daktronics LED screens and tiles, as well as LCD monitors from Planar. Grass Valley provided seven K2 Summit transmission servers, which act as one of the main playback systems within the IEMS. The entire system is controlled by Medialon Manager control software, which triggers the K2 Summits, as well as additional content delivery hardware from Moment Factory's X-Agora media engines.

“The biggest challenge with this project was performing this work within a public airport construction site. Typically when we work in a museum, theme park or special venue attraction, the technology we provide is critical to the show. But at LAX, people aren't coming to the airport to look at a video display — they're simply passing through to head to their next destination. So we had to carefully balance integrating the systems into airport operations and security,” explained Hinckley.

Electrosonic and Smart Monkeys, Inc. needed equipment that could consistently manage video, as well as provide a level of system redundancy, allowing 24/7 operations. Grass Valley's K2 Summit transmission servers are known for their on-air reliability and future expansion capabilities.

“Grass Valley's K2 Summits are keystone in successfully accomplishing consistency in video management as well as providing a level of redundancy. That's exactly what we were looking for in a playback system,” said Janne Hammel, Project Manager at Electrosonic.

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Janne Hammel, Project Manager, Electrosonic



Benefits

Within the IEMS, seven K2 Summit transmission systems with redundant servers and a SAN for video content storage. The outputs are then sent to an HD/SDI matrix switcher and then get processed for display on the LED features.

“This architecture allows us to use the K2 Summits as a dynamic bank of playback channels, which we can route anywhere in the system by means of the matrix switcher. It’s a really flexible, reliable setup, which is crucial to the smooth running of a 24/7/365 operation,” explained Alan Anderson, Co-Founder of Smart Monkeys, Inc.

In coordinating with different manufacturers, Anderson’s decision to use Grass Valley’s K2 technology was less about comparing it to the competition than it was about responding to operational and maintenance requirements that are often part of working in a round-the-clock operation.

“We needed a system that could play back more than 20 high quality video channels in both frame sync and genlock, one that could operate 24/7 with backups and redundancy built in to mitigate downtime, and one that could manage content inventory without stopping the system or impeding normal operations. We found all of that, and more, with the K2 Summit,” he commented.

Over the years, Smart Monkeys, Inc. and Grass Valley have enjoyed an excellent working relationship.

“Grass Valley offers world-class support, and in terms of system reliability, the company’s server technologies are the best in the industry. We’re so pleased to have collaborated with them for this very important project at LAX,” said Anderson.



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