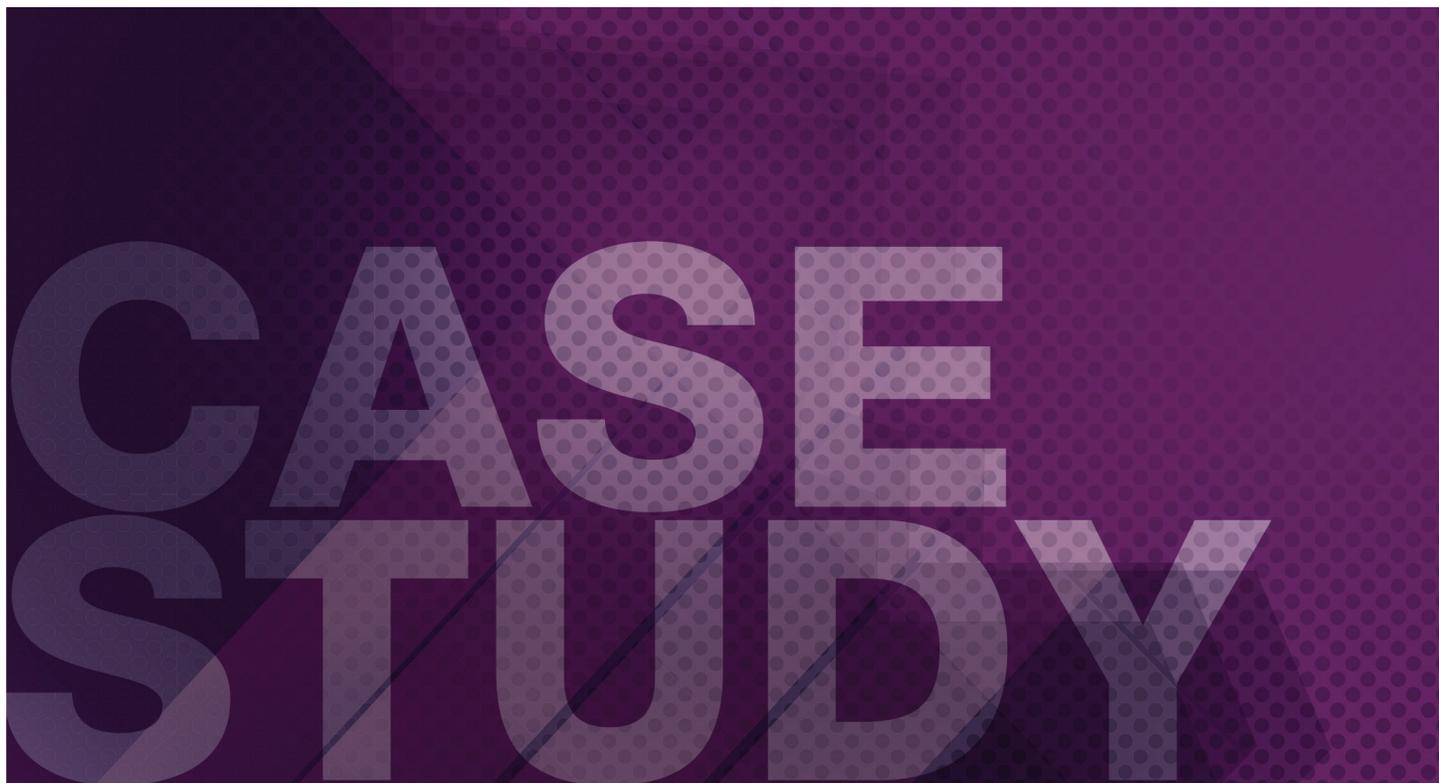




Manhattan Center Productions Juggling multiple clients with Kayenne makes good business sense



CUSTOMER

Manhattan Center Productions, US
www.mcstudios.com

Recording studios, television studios, and video post production facilities at two of Manhattan's most unique event spaces: The Hammerstein Ballroom and The Grand Ballroom.

CHALLENGES

Rebuild Studio 1 with the latest, future-proofed video switching technology
Small footprint required for limited rack space

SOLUTION

3.5 M/E Kayenne in an 8 RU frame that is easy to learn and familiar to most freelance TDs

BENEFITS

Producers and clients continue to ask for the Kayenne by name
TDs can load their individual show settings on a USB stick and take it with them
Interoperability with Grass Valley Trinix routing switcher and K2 Summit media servers directly from the switcher panel

Background

With competition coming from all sides, today's production studios are continually challenged with keeping those studios busy in order to stay financially successful. That means implementing reliable technologies that production clients want to work with and that is flexible enough to handle any project that comes through the door. The technologies also have to be easy to use and maintain, so that it lasts and the studio realizes a full return on investment.

That was the thinking of the engineering management team at Manhattan Center Productions (MCP), a full-service production facility in New York City, when they rebuilt their main high-definition (HD) production studio — Studio 1. After their last full-time clients had completed their production schedule, a decision was made to completely rebuild the studio and all new live production technologies were installed.

Essentially starting with a clean slate, Marvin Williams, Director of Video Engineering & Operations at MCP, said he knew they needed the latest video switching technology and that it had to be future-proof. It also had to come with a small footprint as rack real estate was at a premium, considering the equipment used by the other studios MCP operates from the same facility.

Solution

With all of this (and more) in mind, Williams and his team chose a new Kayenne Video Production Center switcher from Grass Valley, a Belden Brand, for Studio 1's new state-of-the-art production control room. According to Williams, the Kayenne has been "an absolute pleasure" to work with. Shows that have already been completed with the Kayenne at MCP include Would You Rather for the BBC, Center-

Stage for the YES Network, Mob Wives Reunion for VH1, and a comedy game show for the IFC Network. Producers and clients continue to ask for the Kayenne by name. That's how valuable it's been for MCP's business.

"In order stay busy, we have to offer the latest technologies and tools that our clients want and need most," said Williams. "The Kayenne fills a number of those requirements and helps make Manhattan Center Productions the 'go to' studio for TV shows to base their operations in."

The video production switchers are probably MCP's important technology, in terms of supporting the various studio shows they produce on a weekly basis. "It has to handle a myriad of projects, from one day to the next, and be immediately familiar to the pool of freelance operators that we have working on different shows. Compromise is not an option," said Williams.

Pre-production set up of the Kayenne is fast and easy. For all of the shows produced at MCP, each technical director establishes the effects and preferences they want to use for the run of their show and saves them within the switcher's internal memory as well as on a USB memory stick. When they come in to work on their show, they simply recall or load their settings and the Kayenne is ready to roll.

"The ability for TDs to save their show's settings internally and on a USB stick is really important, especially for shows like CenterStage which are produced about once a month," said Williams. "Since there's a fair amount of time between tapings, the TD doesn't have to worry about forgetting all of the settings they used to originally build the show — they just load in their files and off they go. The flexibility of the Kayenne is second to none — it really can do anything imaginable. We got great value for the money we spent."



"Even if you've never used a Grass Valley switcher, I'm sure you could sit down and begin using the Kayenne within a few hours."

Marvin Williams, Director of Video Engineering & Operations, Manhattan Center Productions

Benefits

One of the best things about the Kayenne is that freelance operators that have been trained on other Grass Valley switchers (MCP also owns a Kalypso switcher) are able to work with the Kayenne immediately. TDs new to the Kayenne are impressed with the power of the Kayenne's control panel and how many keyers it has.

"Even if you've never used a Grass Valley switcher, I'm sure you could sit down and begin using the Kayenne within a few hours," said Williams, adding that training on the new Kayenne has very easy, even for a chief engineer like himself. "It's pretty intuitive for our operators and our engineers."

The 3.5 M/E Kayenne at MCP includes 72 inputs, 36 outputs, 6 keyers per M/E channel (24 total), FlexiKey programmable clean feed mode and DoubleTake split M/E mode which increases the number of M/Es to a total of up to 10, all within an 8 RU frame. Williams says that MCP has only scratched the surface on what can be done with it, in terms of sophisticated effects and transitions.

MCP also owns a Grass Valley Trinx 256x256 HD routing switcher, managed by Grass Valley's Jupiter AccuSwitch control system, that is

integrated into the Kayenne panel so that TDs have unlimited access to the routing switcher's sources. TDs can set up access to a limited amount of sources for a specific show, or to every source in the routing switcher. That saves MCP's engineering team a lot of time by not having to route the correct sources to the correct destinations. With Kayenne, the TDs can do it all themselves.

Williams said that the facility also makes heavy use of several Grass Valley K2 Summit media servers, "which also play very nice with the Kayenne's panel." This tight integration, which gives TDs operational control of the K2 servers as well as displaying video clip thumbnails on the Kayenne's panel, is made possible by Fusion, Grass Valley's interoperability protocol.

MCP also uses a Grass Valley GeckoFlex signal processing fiber backbone to interconnect the world famous Hammerstein Ballroom, The Grand Ballroom, Studio 1, and Studio 2.

"We'll have to live with this switcher for a long time, so it has to easily accommodate HD workflows both now and into the future, and maybe even 3D," said Williams. "We fully intend to take advantage of everything the Kayenne has to offer and it's nice that we can accommodate anything our clients ask us for. Our business depends on it."



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Marvin Williams, Director of Video Engineering & Operations, Manhattan Center Productions



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