

Kahuna Gives SOFT an Edge

MICHEL REULIER on how French production company **SOFT** expanded its capabilities with the **Kahuna** multiformat production switcher from **Snell & Wilcox**

Our company, SOFT, is headquartered in Lyon, France, with resellers in cities including Paris, Marseille, Annecy, Besançon, Clermont Ferrand, Dijon, Grenoble, Nantes, and Poitiers. We specialise in providing services to the broadcast and live event industries. We perform both production and post-production work for these clients for events such as concerts, sports, and corporate events. With our fleet of outdoor broadcast (OB) vans and mobile production units packaged in flight cases, we're able to set up quickly and capture video in a broad range of environments.

Some of our work also includes system integration, and we serve as a reseller of broadcast gear. This background has allowed us to build our own OB vans, and we've just recently completed a new HD unit built around the Snell & Wilcox Kahuna SD/HD multiformat



production switcher. We found the Kahuna to be the only switcher capable of handling SD and HD formats without any problems, which in turn puts operators at ease with whatever types of signals they receive in the production area.

The conversion of material, such as camera feeds, graphics, archive footage, and so on, is invisible to the operator and is managed internally, so we didn't have to spend money, take up space or create additional heat with external conversion gear. We also appreciate the very low delay of the Kahuna system. The quality of the switcher's conversion processing ensures the quality and continuity of audio and video in HD or mixed-format productions.

While the Kahuna's multiformat flexibility was key to our decision to include it in our newest OB van, we also felt confident selecting it

because it offers good quality for the investment and comes to us from a well-established vendor with a history of delivering reliable products. SOFT has been a Snell & Wilcox customer for some time now, as the company's IQ modular gear is already installed at our facility and in use every day. We use all types of IQ modular cards for audio and video processing (analogue and SDI).

The Kahuna is the first switcher we've purchased from the company, and it's been a great fit for our truck because of its capacity and ease of use. Operators gain the ability to work with both HD and SD while using a switching interface that's familiar to them. The system allows for simultaneous SD and HD outputs of the program being produced, so we've been able to expand our services to include simulcasting of live events.

We purchased a Kahuna SD/HD system configured with

two control surfaces, one 4-M/E (mix/effects banks) panel board and one 1-M/E panelboard. We can assign M/Es to either SD or HD sources, or mix the two formats on a single M/E. The switcher lets us take advantage

of all available M/Es by linking our control surfaces to different mainframes, allocating one mainframe to separate control panels, or operating in SD or HD as required. Many of our productions are just output as HD feeds, but when more than one feed is required, the Kahuna enables not

only simultaneous outputting of HD and SD, but also creation of feeds customised for multiple clients.

The Snell & Wilcox switcher is installed along with HD IQ modules that perform a broad range of tasks, such as decoding, synchronising, audio mux and demux, distribution, etc. Also incorporated into the 26ft ton truck are 14 cameras and 15 records, including five slow-motion engines. We're using a Pro-Bel router along with the IQ Modules and, for audio, a Vistek 8 system with 52 faders.

Our truck was ready to roll on July 1, 2006, and it's been in great demand since then. With the Kahuna on board, we're ready to take on the challenges of any live production. 📺

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HYBRID ROUTING SWITCHERS; VARIABLE RATE ROUTER

The IXS-6000 and IXS-6700 hybrid routing switchers from Sony support SD/HD video, AES digital audio and RS-422 control and can be used with Sony MVS and DVS production switchers or as standalone routers. Sony's MVS-8000 SD/HD switcher has a new editing interface and keyboard called the MKS-8050. Also available from Sony is the SD-only MVS-9000 four-M/E switcher. The MFS-2000 from Sony is a 3RU compact, low-cost switcher for use in small-scale OB vehicles, production studios and editing suites. The SD configuration can be upgraded to a multi-format system. Useful preset effect patterns are provided as preset wipes and DME wipe patterns on this unit and the 'FlexiPad' control panel enables operations such as Macro, M/E and Effect Snapshot. Other features include a colour touch-screen LCD panel, serial and parallel tally outputs, and both the control panel and switcher processor can be fitted with redundant power supply units.

Sony's HDS-X5800 variable-bit rate router supports virtually every digital video format as well as 1080/24p and DVB/ASI signals, topping out at 1.5Gbps. The HDX-X5800 has a 264x272 basic matrix that can be expanded to a 1056x1088 matrix by cascading multiple frames. +44 (0)1256 355 011.



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