

Radio World

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USER REPORT

WRVO Selects G5 Control Surfaces

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OSWEGO, N.Y. In November 2003, WRVO was awarded a grant from the Public Telecommunications Funding Program. The PTFP grant enabled WRVO to replace two seasoned and reliable Audiotronics consoles that were showing their age. Our main production console, a 110 series unit, had been in service since about 1982, while our on-air console, a 200 series board, had been working hard since 1985.

Our search covered many audio equipment vendors, with solid presentations from each of them, but it was the features and flexibility offered by Wheatstone's Generation Series control surfaces and the Bridge Router system that impressed our staff.

Phil Owens of **Wheatstone** demonstrated a G5 control surface and Bridge Router to us. Here was a system that integrated audio networking into the console for ease of announcer accessibility, while retaining a look and feel with which we were familiar. It was at that point we identified the usefulness that the control surface architecture could offer to our facility. We abandoned the concept of a stand-alone digital console with a separate router and embraced the control surface technology.

Studio-to-studio ease

The new WRVO system comprises two identical G5 control surfaces located in our main studios, Control Rooms 1 and 2. Sandwiched between those rooms are two edit suites, each containing a G3 control

surface. This arrangement allows our operators to move from studio to studio without having to learn a different setup. The Generation series control surfaces reinforce this convenience by allowing staff to access any audio source in the plant on any control surface fader.

The ability to create console presets that allow each announcer to organize the surface to his preference adds further convenience.

Each G5 connects directly to a Bridge Satellite Router Cage that connects back to the main Bridge Router in our Tech Center via Cat-5e cable. Equipment in the control rooms connects to the Satellite Cage in that



WRVO Program Director Fred Vigeant demonstrates the G5 surface to Student Producer Brooke Wacha (far left) and Traffic Manager Kate Percival.

Wheatstone. Installation from that point was a matter of punching down the wires. The documentation of the pre-wire harnesses was detailed and accurate.

There remains a good deal of analog

The X-Y router built into the G5 surfaces puts source-to-destination routing at the fingertips of the operator, eliminating the need to leave the control surface to take care of routing tasks.

room. Equipment in the edit rooms connects to the closest Satellite Cage via inter-facility tie lines. Audio and logic connections are made to the router and satellite cages via DB-25 connectors.

We chose to simplify installation by purchasing the system with pre-wired DB-25 to Krone Block harnesses built by

gear in our equipment inventory. Our system was thusly outfitted with analog I/O cards with balanced inputs and outputs, as well as digital I/O cards. AES is the preferred format; however, S/PDIF can be used if necessary. Wheatstone recommends using a balun or format converter to facilitate any connections between the

router and equipment utilizing S/PDIF.

Using the system is fairly straightforward and the operational learning curve is small. Anyone who has used a slide-fader broadcast console will find the G5 and G3 surfaces to be familiar territory.

Each fader has a source selection knob that allows the user to dial up whatever audio source is needed. The X-Y router built into the G5 surfaces puts source-to-destination routing at the fingertips of the operator, eliminating the need to leave the control surface to take care of routing

tasks. A mix-minus is created by selecting which faders will feed it, then pressing one of the eight mix-minus bus assignment buttons. This is a vast improvement over WRVO's previous method of mix-minus creation, which could never have been described as "user-friendly."

I do wish Wheatstone offered a 24-hour tech support line to handle off-air emergencies. Also, I think adding S/PDIF capability would be beneficial, as a good deal of equipment now uses that interface.

Digital Radio Engineering installed

our system and handled the initial setup and configuration. When the reins were turned over to me, I feared being overwhelmed with configuration issues that I wouldn't be able to handle. To the contrary I found the Wheatstone Xpoint configuration software easy to use. When I did need some assistance, I found the Wheatstone tech support team helpful.

For more information, including pricing, contact Wheatstone in North Carolina at (252) 638-7000 or visit www.wheatstone.com. 