

TV TECHNOLOGY

THE DIGITAL TELEVISION AUTHORITY

Serving the Broadcast, Cable, Production, Postproduction, Business and New Media Markets

REPRINTED FROM DECEMBER 10, 2003

WWW.TVTECHNOLOGY.COM

USER REPORT

Home Depot Builds on Leightronix

by Bruce Covey
Chief Engineer
Home Depot TV

ATLANTA

In May 2002, Home Depot Television (HDTV) upgraded its 1,400-site satellite "occasional use" network to two full-time channels. To accomplish this change, we upgraded our automation capabilities to gain control of ingest and playout of multiple-language materials.

Home Depot's HDTV is a training and educational tool that reaches more than 300,000 associates in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico. This system combines automated graphics with an Associated Press news crawl and a live video squeezeback for associate news and merchandising information. We perform off-air recordings of news reports and multicamera recordings for studio production.

The info channel broadcasts 24 hours a day, seven days a week in breakrooms at Home Depot stores, and is interrupted for live programs and/or replays as listed in the monthly HDTV Guide. Instead of a traditional on-air automation system, we needed a very sophisticated and flexible event controller and the Leightronix TCD/IP was the perfect solution for our needs.

Our TCD/IP controls a four-channel Leitch VR445 server, three RS-422 VTRs and a Fast Forward Omega Deck, all connected using the Leightronix PLUS-BUS interface. The TCD/IP controls multiple VCRs and DVD players via the PRO-BUS and a Pesa Cougar routing switcher through a serial connection.

KEEPING IT SYNCHRONIZED

We added a Leitch CSD-5300 interface to maintain exact synchronization with our master time system. Additionally, a PLUS-BUS-controlled serial interface is used for GPI control of our VertigoXMedia ProductX and Pinnacle StreamFactory II systems.

The Leightronix TCD/IP controls a dedicated VR445 output channel for the info channel. The remaining channels of the VR445 interrupt this feed for an ad hoc program schedule that averages 50 hours per month. The TCD/IP allows us to maintain a tight and accurate on-air presentation.

The integration with the server and source/destination name integration with the routing switcher make programming schedules a breeze. Unlike a traditional event controller, the 16 script engines of the TCD/IP allow simultaneous event scripts to execute independently of one another.

We can create and transfer new schedules into the system without interrupting scripts currently in execution. Additionally, the system offers powerful remote management and logging features.

Since installation, the new system has satisfied all our operational needs without a hitch. The integration between the prod-



Bruce Covey uses a Leightronix TCD/IP to maintain a tight on-air schedule.

ucts in our system helped us create a powerful satellite network to keep our associates trained and informed. ■

Bruce Covey has been the chief engineer of Home Depot Television for 11 years. Prior experience includes four years with WATL in Atlanta and nine years of military service. Bruce can be reached at bruce_covey@homedepot.com. The opinions expressed above are the author's alone.

For more information, contact Leightronix at 517-694-8000 or visit www.leightronix.com.

LEIGHTRONIX, INC.
CONTROL PRODUCTS