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USER REPORT

Leightronix Automates Wheaton College's WETN-TV

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WHEATON, ILL.

In July 1996, the city of Wheaton granted Wheaton College full-time use of one of its cable access channels. The school created WETN-TV and immediately began offering live broadcasts of events at Wheaton College to the campus and local community.

Two years later, we began streaming this same video over our Web site, wetn.org. Over the years, as we pulled fiber to more and more campus venues, we've been able to offer live video of a growing number of events. Today, we broadcast scores of Wheaton College concerts, debates, academic lectures, and sporting events each year.

We wanted to offer as much video programming as possible, and found there was great interest in offering rebroadcasts of these events. To accomplish that task, we turned to Leightronix. Our first purchase was in 1996 and consisted of a PRO-8 controller for operating a rack of S-VHS players.

After a few years, we needed more inputs, so we switched to a PRO-16 controller and used it to control multiple DVD players. The Leightronix controllers have allowed us to leverage our limited staff resources. Rather than paying employees to perform simple playback duties, we could instead send our staff to provide live coverage of events or post programs for rebroadcast.

Over time, our program demands outgrew our PRO-16 and playback devices and we found it difficult to present rebroadcasts around the clock, and thus often had to

resort to an electronic bulletin board on weekends, holidays, and overnight. We needed a better way to offer video around the clock without straining limited staff resources.

AROUND-THE-CLOCK OPS

Leightronix again offered the best solution within our budget. The NEXUS digital video server allows us to stay on the air around the clock. We took the hundreds of videos and DVDs we had produced over the years and loaded them onto two external 500 GB hard drives. Now, it takes just minutes to drag and drop these programs from our NEXUS media resource library and create a full 24 hours of programming. This scheduling interface includes resource management and error checking, and our playback has never run more smoothly.

The MPEG decoder playback channels on the NEXUS are two of the inputs on our new 16 x 8 video switcher. While the NEXUS is equipped with an internal video/audio routing switcher, we decided to take advantage of the external routing switcher control feature. This allowed us to automate several more DVD players and live video feeds from the Wheaton campus.

Video from these venues can be recorded directly into the NEXUS, but typically we record content directly into a central campus server. Video from there can be pulled into any one of a number of our post-production work stations. We create titles and ins/outs and then send completed programs directly into the NEXUS as MPEG-2 for playback.



John Rorvik with Leightronix equipment installed at Wheaton College

Keeping the programs completely in the digital realm has speeded up presentation time for rebroadcasts of Wheaton College events to our cable and online viewers.

When we have questions or need training on a product, we have always received excellent phone and online support from the Leightronix technical support team. As we've developed our ability to present live and rebroadcast video, the Leightronix product line has matured with us, and the result is better service to our cable and online constituencies.

John Rorvik has been broadcast manager of Wheaton College since 1996. He oversees FM radio, local cable and video and audio Webcasting there. He also serves as an adjunct instructor in the college's Communication Department. He may be contacted at john.rorvik@wheaton.edu.

For additional information, contact Leightronix at 800-243-5589 or visit www.leightronix.com.