



SBU-TV 20 • Stony Brook Student Television

SBU-TV operates from the Union Building on the Stony Brook campus, which is part of the State University of New York (SUNY)

Like most higher education institutions, Stony Brook University (SBU) provides its campus with a cable television service that has a channel lineup similar to what most people receive in their homes. In addition, SBU has one private channel on the system, SBU-TV 20, that originates from the campus student cable television station.

Because a university campus itself is practically a city, cable television service is often provided to the university by a cable operator independently of the system feeding the local city or town. SBU-TV originates from the offices in the Stony Brook Union and is fed to the main campus headend via fiber. The SBU-TV signal is forwarded to Cablevision, where it gets combined with the other channels and fed back to campus. The private cable channel, SBU-TV 20, is not viewable off campus by the general public.



The NEXUS is an automation controller, video server, device controller, and video/audio switcher in one. A typical NEXUS system with hard disc storage, and even playback support from DVD and videotape, only requires a few rack units of space.

BACK ON THE AIR

After a number of years of operation, SBU-TV, formerly known as 3TV, had become inactive. When students requested in 2000 to restart the channel, university officials required that a video professional oversee the television operations. In 2001, Steve Kreitzer, wanting to give back something to his alma mater, took on the part-time task and SBU-TV was on the air again.

TIME FOR A DIGITAL UPGRADE...

The original SBU-TV 20 playback system was based on videotape and included a playback controller with a built-in switcher for selecting controlled (VCRs) and non-controlled (fallback electronic bulletin board, studio feed) sources. To better facilitate program playback and recording, in 2001 the SBU-TV playback system was enhanced by connecting a digital video server to one of the playback controller's switcher inputs. While the server allowed live programs to be recorded and played back easily, it could not be controlled and synchronized with the playback controller. Instead, the server ran its own schedule. This required the impossible task of keeping the clocks for the server and playback controller in sync. The playback controller ran for 12 hours a day and then switched over to the video server for the remaining 12 hours. The successful operation of the server and controller depended on whether the other was doing the right thing at the right time.

The Solution:

While attending the AHECTA conference in 2006, Steve began his search for the perfect system replacement. Something that could replace it all. With a vast selection of digital video systems on display, Steve found the complete solution in the LEIGHTRONIX NEXUS. The NEXUS replaced SBU-TV 20's server and machine control system and even more importantly, provided an internal video/audio routing switcher. In one device, the NEXUS offered all of the functionality SBU-TV 20 needed at a price easily covered by the student television operation's limited budget.*

*Association of Higher Education Cable Television Administrators www.ahecta.org

*"It came down to cost"
"a complete package price"*
— Steve Kreitzer



A portable video production system serves double duty in the studio and at remote campus locations.

OPERATING BUDGET

Being a non-commercial television operation, SBU-TV 20 relies on funding from the Undergraduate Student Government (USG), Inc. SBU-TV 20 is a campus club, so any student is free to join. The student officers run the station and are responsible for making the programming and purchasing decisions. Despite a limited budget and funding cuts, Steve and his staff of students manage to produce dynamic entertaining, educational, and informative programming for the university and about the university.

PROGRAMMING

SBU-TV 20 maintains a comprehensive schedule of television programming, including USG Senate meetings, student-produced programming, and external programming from various providers. SBU-TV original programming includes news, a late night show, and Seawolves Sports, featuring football, basketball, hockey, lacrosse and rugby.

WORK FLOW

Live events are fed directly into the NEXUS and digitized during broadcasting. Students shoot on DV camcorders for on-campus productions, allowing programming to be directly imported to PC and Mac editing systems via a Firewire connection. Although final programs (digital video files) may be sent directly to the NEXUS video server, students are required to produce DVDs for Steve's viewing and approval prior to airing.

External programming is currently received on DVD and recorded to the NEXUS in real time. In the future, Steve will make use of the recently released NEXUS DVD import utility, Total Import™. Total Import will change the edit to air workflow into an all-digital process while still allowing Steve to maintain control over program content.

EMERGENCY MESSAGING

The NEXUS emergency messaging feature allows authorized SBU-TV staff to log into the NEXUS remotely via Internet Explorer and quickly broadcast emergency messages for a specified duration. Steve and his staff are able to select from a variety of ready-to-use emergency graphic overlays included with the NEXUS and also upload their own partial or full-screen PNG files, complete with graphics and text. The SBU-TV staff also uses the emergency messaging feature to add dynamic, multi-line text messages for display on the lower third of their viewers' screens.

Although the fallback bulletin board, one of the resources connected to the NEXUS internal video switcher, has remote messaging capabilities, Steve prefers to leave external sources running and interrupt the channel with the NEXUS emergency messaging feature. "Because of what happened at Virginia Tech, the university is more aware of getting news out to the students right away". . . "if I am off campus, or at my other job, if something happens, they can call me and get it on the air right away," said Steve Kreitzer.



"the thing I like about the NEXUS is that it has its own internal switcher... we did not have to sync anything up... it was all internal"
— Steve Kreitzer

About Steve

Steve is a graduate of Stony Brook University. After graduation, Steve worked briefly in radio before embarking on a 20+ year career in the television industry. For more information on SBU-TV, contact Steve at sbutv@ic.sunysb.edu

About LEIGHTRONIX

Specializing in television automation and digital video servers, LEIGHTRONIX offers a wide range of sensible solutions that include the popular NEXUS video server/system controller. For more information, please call us at (800) 243-5589 or visit our Web site, www.leightronix.com

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