



## Digital presentation systems feed satellite TV broadcasts at the Bureau of Land Management

Anyone who watches the nightly news knows that a wide variety of video devices – camcorders, webcams, even cell phones – can create compelling video for broadcast television.

It should be no surprise that the federal government’s Bureau of Land Management (BLM), in an effort to reduce travel costs and reduce the agency’s carbon footprint, has begun using video conferencing systems to help create its “M Street Live” series of employee briefings.

“We think of the series as shirtsleeve television,” says Roger ‘Chip’ Calamaio, manager of the Bureau’s Phoenix-based video production department. “We can do very sophisticated live broadcast events, probably equal to most public television stations, but for these staff briefing telecasts we utilize a more casual level of production quality.”

The popular and informative broadcasts allow BLM’s nationwide staff to listen to managers and specialists in Washington explain important emerging issues, including policy and regulatory changes. To improve teleconference meetings,

Calamaio led an effort to install all-digital audio/video systems in the new BLM headquarters in Washington.

### Occasional users

The Bureau of Land Management is a large organization with about 10,000 permanent and 2,000 seasonal employees, managing about 253 million acres or one eighth of the land mass of the United States.

With a large staff located in remote field offices scattered throughout the country – mostly in Western states and Alaska – the Bureau works to contain travel costs. “Our goal is to move information, not people,” Calamaio says. “We’re aggressively utilizing video conferencing technology and other solutions to avoid putting staff on airplanes.”

One of the challenges Calamaio and his team have is that, even though these systems are readily available to staff specialists and managers, most use them rarely for training and briefing purposes. “Our model is not like a university or high school where you have the same instructor in the same lecture hall for the whole semester,” Calamaio explains. “We frequently see staff lead presentations without prior knowledge of the video conferencing system. So, our systems have to be very intuitive and user-friendly.”



Given this need, Frank Vass, design engineer for ExhibitOne Corp of Phoenix, recommended Crestron control systems throughout the new conference center, plus Crestron DigitalMedia™ technology in the larger rooms. In an age of HDCP copy protection, EDID and other less-than-user-friendly innovations carried with the HDMI digital standard, Vass and the others on the design/sales team felt that it was crucial that the newest laptops and video gear plug into the new systems and work every time. “As soon as they told us they wanted to include Blu-ray Disc® players, we knew that the analog standards the Bureau followed for years were not going to be good enough,” he explains.

There was one more requirement that argued for the use of digital systems. “The Bureau asked us to make the conference rooms future-proof for at least five to ten years,” Vass says. To make sure they could do so, Vass spoke to Crestron about using new DigitalMedia cable and components, which at that time had not been released. “Crestron agreed that DM would be best for this customer, and they assured us it would work seamlessly.”

### The new conference center

The finished conference center includes ten rooms with audio/video systems, including a very large AB divisible

multipurpose room, a large training room and seven smaller conference rooms.

ExhibitOne installed four 4000-lumen projectors in the divisible room, each with a 120” diagonal motorized screen. Depending on the meeting and room configuration, a presenter may choose to use all four projectors. “These are huge rooms, 60 x 60’ each when divided, so it can be very useful to have multiple projection screens,” Vass explains.

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**Frank Vass**, Design Engineer, ExhibitOne

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In addition, ExhibitOne installed a high-definition video conferencing codec in one section of the room and in each section processors, lecterns with microphones, wireless handheld and lavalier microphones, assistive listening systems, Blu-ray Disc players and inputs for laptops and other devices.



In each section, a DM 8X8 matrix switcher handles all signal routing, a Crestron HD Scaler scales analog and standard-definition video sources to 720p or 1020p, and a Crestron control system with 12" touch screens handle all system operations and lighting controls. A Crestron wall plate/transmitter provides one composite video, two HDMI and three DVI/RGB inputs plus stereo audio for each room section.

The training room is equipped identically, although with just one projector and screen. The seven smaller rooms also include the same projector and Crestron processor and touch screen.

Vass says the project went smoothly, and ExhibitOne finished the installation in a short timeframe. "Crestron made us proud, shipping three of the first 8G switchers to come off the factory

floor," Vass says. The completion date was more than a month before the official ship date for DigitalMedia 8G+ components, yet there were only a couple of minor interface issues, which Crestron addressed. "In our experience, it's unusual for a manufacturer to put themselves out that far, but they did and we are delighted by the results."

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