

MANSION MOBILE TELEVISION

Keeping Business in Focus with Grass Valley HD Cameras



CUSTOMER

Mansion Mobile Television, US
mansionmobile.tv

Mansion Mobile Television is one of the most impressive mobile television production companies on the road today. With facilities like the new ME-2, Mansion Mobile has set the standard for HD television production in the Midwest.

CHALLENGES

To provide the best image quality in the region with a camera system that can shoot in different HD formats, with the durability needed for continuous OB work.

SOLUTION

The Grass Valley LDK 8000 Elite WorldCam high-performance camera system, capable of shooting multiple HD formats with superior dependability on the road. All LDK camera systems are subjected to extensive heat testing and vibration tests before leaving the Grass Valley camera factory.

BENEFITS

With the ability to shoot in multiple formats, including 1080p24, the LDK 8000 Elite WorldCam opened up production opportunities for TV pilots and live music concerts.

BACKGROUND

Any mobile production services company will tell you that the quality of the images they produce on-site for their clients is their virtual calling card for recurring business. When compared to the competition—which is becoming more fierce all the time—you are only as good as your last project and how it looks on the screen.

That's why the team at Mansion Mobile Television, a production company located in Branson, Missouri, was so careful when picking the cameras they would use for the literally hundreds of live sports and entertainment events they complete each year across the entire Midwest US and other regions.

Mansion Mobile is the remote production division of Mansion Entertainment, owners and operators of two local theaters, a recording studio, and a record label, all based in Branson. This prime location puts Mansion Mobile within an eight-hour drive of ten of the country's major cities (from Phoenix, Arizona, to Louisville, Kentucky). Gene Bicknell, a co-founder of the national Pizza Hut chain of restaurants, owns Mansion Entertainment.

SOLUTION

Mansion Mobile chose Grass Valley™ LDK 8000 Elite WorldCam cameras and Canon HD lenses for their arsenal for three simple—but very practical—reasons: the image quality the cameras produce, their ability to natively shoot in different HD formats, and their durability. Mansion Mobile could be shooting a 720p project for Fox Sports one day, and a 1080i project for CBS Sports the next. The LDK 8000 Elite WorldCam gives the company the confidence of knowing that their investment is sound and secure.

"We don't have the time or patience for cameras that can't hold up to the daily grind of our multi-camera productions," said Brad Palmer, Vice President, Operations at Mansion Mobile. "In fact, durability was a key selling point for us because we shoot in all types of climate conditions. The cameras are always getting bounced around from event to event, so when get there and we set up, they have to work, each and every time. And the Grass Valley cameras do just that."

In 2009, Mansion Mobile built ME-2 and equipped it with 11 Grass Valley LDK 8000 Elite cameras, along with seven

Grass Valley SuperXpander kits to allow the crew to use them either on fixed pedestals or handheld roaming around the outdoor field or indoor arena. Signal transmission is typically with triax cabling.

Stellar Client List Understands Quality

Among the company's numerous projects this year alone, are a Houston Rockets NBA game for ESPN, "Celtic Thunder" for PBS, and the Fox News Republican Presidential debate in Ames, Iowa. Mansion Mobile's recurring live sports client list includes covering games for Major League Baseball (Kansas City Royals), the National Football League (Kansas City Chiefs), and Big-12 college

"At the end of the day, these cameras are a wonderful piece of technology and we are very happy with them. And Grass Valley has been very good about supporting our needs whenever problems arise."

Brad Palmer, Vice President, Operations
 Mansion Mobile Television



“For a production company like ours, the camera is perhaps our most important piece of gear because it captures the action first and foremost. Our strategy has always been: If we start with a good image, the rest of the production will benefit. Our Grass Valley cameras prove that to be true time and time again.”

Brad Palmer, Vice President, Operations,
Mansion Mobile Television

football games (Texas A&M, Kansas State, and the University of Missouri). That’s why format flexibility is so important to Mansion Mobile’s business model and financial bottom line.

“With the LDK 8000’s 1080p native acquisition circuitry and selectable frame rates up to 1080p60, we feel that we can do anything with them,” said Palmer. “We’ve even shot TV pilots and live music concerts using the camera’s 24 psf option. When we bought the cameras, we wanted to be sure we got the most value out of them. In our minds, the LDK 8000s give us all of this and a whole lot more.”

Palmer said the quality of the picture and the signal-to-noise ratio is very critical to the types of live HD productions they help their clients complete. The enhanced S/N ratio was another big factor in their decision to buy Grass Valley LDK 8000 cameras. A low S/N means a great, artifact-free image. Internally, the camera offers three 9.2-million pixel HD-DPM+™ CCDs, 14-bit A/D sampling, and 34-bit digital signal processing. That’s why clients like the look of Mansion Mobile’s productions so much.

HD Switching to Match

ME-2 is also equipped with a Grass Valley Kalypso™ 4 M/E Video Production Center switcher, with 90 inputs, 48 outputs, and fully loaded with six Transform Engines, ClipStore options, and four aux bus panels.

“The Kalypso switcher has become the industry standard and all of our clients ask for it,” said Palmer.

Dave Goodman, Director of Engineering for Mansion Mobile, said that by supporting productions shot in 24 frames per

second, “we’ve made this truck very entertainment friendly, though we’ll continue to produce sporting events as well. We initially thought that this type of equipment, with a 24p option, would be prohibitively expensive, but the price and value is very attractive to us and what we want to accomplish with our mobile production trucks. The cameras have helped us grow our business and compete with anyone.”

The Grass Valley LDK 8000 Elite WorldCams and Kalypso switcher have now been in use for three years and Palmer said they expect to get another 10 years out of them. “The longer they last, the more value is realized and a full return on investment is assured,” said Palmer.



ABOUT GRASS VALLEY – THE PREMIER VIDEO TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS COMPANY

With a rich history serving the broadcast and professional video industries, the Grass Valley name is synonymous with innovation, leadership, and performance. With a full range of products and services supporting many of the world’s most high-profile live events, Grass Valley offers the most comprehensive portfolio of software, services and IT infrastructure. Customers deploying Grass Valley solutions include most of the world’s leading broadcast and teleproduction IT facilities, independent video professionals, as well

as emerging content creators and distributors providers of broadband, telecommunications, and transmission services. When you’re watching news, sports, or entertainment programming, whether on a TV, the web, or a mobile phone, you’re watching Grass Valley at work in the connected world.

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