

Case Study

Industry: Sports Broadcasting

Mandalay Baseball Properties

Project: Dayton Dragons video control room renovation

Major challenge: Major league upgrades on minor league budget



The background

The Dayton Dragons are the very successful Single-A affiliate of the Cincinnati Reds, and currently hold the longest sell-out streak in all of North American professional sports. They were even voted one of the top ten hottest tickets to get in all of professional sports in 2007 by Sports Illustrated[1]. Owned and operated by Mandalay Baseball Properties, the team continues to produce high-quality, family-friendly entertainment and provide unsurpassed customer service to a large, loyal fan base. Mandalay Creative Services, a division of Mandalay Baseball, helps meet that goal by providing in-house system design, technical integration, and production services.

The upgrade challenge

The Dragons' commitment to creating an unmatched fan experience led them to upgrade their video, audio, and control systems prior to the start of the 2014 season. The team is unique in that they produce two separate productions—an in-house and a broadcast feed—with two separate crews sharing core system components. The caveat was that the crews and components were split between two rooms: one space for each production.

Mandalay Creative's first key goal was to enable the two small but efficient teams to work across multiple systems, producing shows that would normally require big-league budgets and staffing. Their high standards also demanded no sacrifice in video quality, maximum uptime, and enterprise-grade reliability.

Also vital, the Dragons required a solution that would grow with them, providing easy and cost effective ways to add additional servers and users to the matrix routing system.

With that in mind, Mandalay Creative sought out Black Box to create an innovative and flexible digital KVM matrix solution using their DKM line of products.

The solution

Designed through a partnership between Mandalay Creative and Black Box, and installed by Alpha Video, the solution provides connectivity for up to 48 users and computers (they currently have 17 users and 24 computer stations). Users can work on the same servers simultaneously. Advanced access right management reduces conflicts and bars unauthorized access.

A mix of single- and dual-monitor user stations were configured with the option of creating larger setups in the future. All of the switching and routing can be done instantaneously with preset configurations. These can be activated with keyboard hotkeys or optional integration with third-party controller systems. The Dayton Dragons were also able to back rack all of their servers because the DKM system includes extenders that provide up to 800 feet extension over CAT5e. This allowed them to secure and cool the servers more efficiently while also creating a quieter work environment for their production team.

Summary

"The demands of producing multiple productions simultaneously each night require a control system that is flexible and bulletproof," comments Scott Rohrer, Creative Technologist with Mandalay Creative Services. "The Dragons are unique in that they produce two separate productions—in-house and broadcast—with two separate crews,

"No other solution on the market passed our test."

Scott Rohrer, Creative Technologist, Mandalay Creative Services

while sharing core system components. The solution that Black Box provided has given us major league capability on our minor league budget. Not only is the DKM system flexible and solid, the video and control quality is exactly what you'd expect if you were right next to the machine. No other solution on the market passed our test."

1. http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/multimedia/photo_gallery/0704/gallery.hottest.tickets/content.10.html
2. http://www.milb.com/news/article.jsp?ymd=20110709&content_id=21669014&vkey=pr_t459&fext=.jsp&sid=t459

