

Success Story

Willow Creek Community Church

Challenge

Deliver signage, live video, and other content over a large facility, with a growth path from SD to HD media.

Solution

Employ RF as a distribution medium for AV.

Convert PC-based signage to TV channels.

Send performance video to set-back displays for handicapped.

Combine stage video with house time code to keep event performers on cue.

Control displays through the RF system with Contemporary Research technology.



Not only can we broadcast many SD and HD channels, Contemporary Research's display system controls the displays over the same RF network, dramatically reducing integration costs.

- David Cooke, Video System Director

The media staff at Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois, were charged with the task of designing media, sound and lighting systems for their new sanctuary. No small feat for a facility that would seat over 7,200 people, with supporting rehearsal, staging, overflow rooms and classrooms. Video System Director David Cooke relates, "One of our key challenges was selecting a common, practical pathway for distributing live video, digital signage, and other media resources to over 100 displays. In addition to carrying signals over long distances with little latency, the pathway had to easily migrate to full HD in the future.

"Baseband twisted-pair and Ethernet systems didn't make the cut – only RF coax met all the tests. Not only can we broadcast many SD and HD channels, Contemporary Research's display system controls the displays over the same RF network, dramatically reducing integration costs. Their software made system setup and operation a snap for our staff. We don't need to hire a custom programmer every time we make a change - meeting a core criteria for the design team. The excellent cost efficiency of RF delivery and control was also a factor. We currently distribute 18 distinct video channels of programming on our RF system throughout the campus. Adding additional channels as needed to the system is very cost effective and adding more TV monitors is also easy and inexpensive as you don't need to buy expensive displays or dedicated boxes, it's as simple as dropping a coax line to a TV with a tuner. While Willow Creek is a large community, we have the same values of stewardship as other churches - large or small."

Using RF as the common media backbone, Willow Creek meets a variety of needs. Some channels deliver signage to displays in foyers and hallways, while others provide live video from the sanctuary. Handicapped seating features seat-back video displays, allowing the member to stay connected to worship when others are standing. An event channel superimposes the house video time over a program feed, keeping actors, singers, and presenters backstage and in staging rooms in precise sync with their entry into the service.

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