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BSI Op-X Is a Hit With Atlanta Fan

BY ROB JENNERS

ATLANTA — The plan was to combine Dickey Broadcasting Co.'s three sports stations into a single facility with Cumulus Media Atlanta's six stations.

USERREPORT

We had seven months to plan, budget, design, purchase, receive, install, reconfigure and move the studios, programming, sales, traffic and business offices, but the implementation was only made possible by teamwork.

PLANNING

After considering several floor plans for the consolidation, it was decided we were needed to construct one additional talk studio and to remodel five other studios to make it work.

The only way we could accomplish this was to have multipurpose studios. During the morning, most of the studios are used for morning show production. In the late morning, some of these studios change to commercial production, imaging and voice-tracking. In the evening, studios could change to pregame or network studios for Atlanta Braves baseball, Atlanta Thrashers hockey and/or Atlanta Hawks basketball on one or all of the three Dickey sports signals.

Key to making this work was the installation of WheatNet-IP audio networking and Broadcast Software International's Op-X radio automation system.

We needed to repurpose Harris Pacific Research & Engineering RMX Radiomixers from our old location. We were able to install a new Wheatstone Evolution 6 console with three WheatNet IP Blades in



A array of monitors atop the console help control programs at WCNN(AM), The Fan.

the control room for the 680 The Fan talk studio. We installed WheatNet IP Blades in two of the production rooms and three Blades in the Technical Operations Center.

This IP audio network allows any of the three Dickey Broadcasting stations to be on the air from any of these three studios or, just run in the box out of TOC with ESPN or Fox Sports programming and Op-X. WheatNet-IP together with Op-X is a powerful solution for satellite-programmed stations.

From a production standpoint, Op-X allows a much easier method of transferring files to the server and building clocks for live and automated programming.

The Op-X File Manager allows you to manage WAV files on your local PC and spots on the fileserver at the same time. Locally, you can assign spot titles, ISCI codes (if needed for commercial inventory), set beginning and ending dates and times and set segue tones.

On the fileserver, you can edit the title and dates of any audio file without having to transfer it back to the local PC. You also can transfer large groups of files simultaneously and assign audio directly into a designated rotator (or "cart") when files are transferred

to the server. These processes are much faster than systems that require "real-time" dubs or bulky file conversion.

The Op-X Clock Builder is far more intuitive than other comparable automation programs and allows simple build-out and management of hourly clocks. For stations that use automation, satellite shows can be built in the Clock Builder tool to manage closures and relays from a network satellite receiver.

This allows even complicated talk-format stations (like news or sports talk) to switch between satellites while in automation without the need for a board operator.

The Op-X Import/Merge program allows a quick, simple way to import commercial and music logs onto the Op-X fileserver. If your station's clocks match the traffic manager's export file, your entire day is pushed onto the server in just seconds. You also can edit and modify the log once it is merged to the fileserver.

Rob Jenners is production director for WCNN(AM) in Atlanta.

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