Audio Networking for Reality Television

“Competition” Reality shows are demanding increasingly complex audio, but... The budgets stay the same!
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Audio/Comm needs for a typical reality show:

- Everyone gets a wireless body pack
- Wireless feeds to handheld cameras
- Wireless IFB feeds for talent
- Story Producers require individual mixes
- Wireless comms required everyone and their brother
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- Some shows are more complicated than others:
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Inkmaster has:

- 16 Tattoo Artists
- 16 “Human Canvases”
- 4 Wireless Boom Operators
- 1 Host (plus IFB)
- 3 Judges (plus IFB)
- 8 wireless handheld cameras
- 16 Hardwired plant mics
- 4 Story Producers
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Inkmaster's totals:

- 25,000 square foot RF coverage
- 1,056 audio sources+destinations
- 68 VHF/UHF coordinated freqs (+spares)
- 63 tracks of audio (x2)
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Q: How to create multiple mixes on the fly for 8 handheld cameras?
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- A: Create a custom touch screen interface to (2) Lectrosonics ASPEN DNT Digital Audio Processors
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Q: How to interconnect audio equipment between:

- LECTROSONICS
- SOUND DEVICES
- YAMAHA
- METACORDER
- AVIOM

- Without multiple stages of A/D/D/A?
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A: DANTE Audio network makes it possible.
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Problems encountered:

- Clocking to “house sync” needs to be thought out carefully (Dante wants to be the sync master!)

- Different manufacturers' implementations of Dante require slightly different procedures (Dante controller vs. in-device routing, clocking nomenclature, no secondary, switched vs. redundant)
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Problems encountered, continued:

- Re-patching on the fly via Dante Controller caused glitch in the audio, causing us to revert to “analog” patching.
- Firmware updates done separately between audio hardware and Dante hardware
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What I'd like to see for the future:

- Take the “Network” out of “Audio Network” (eg. no worry about Primary, Secondary streams crossing – more “self aware” network)

- More troubleshooting tools – especially problem solvers that exist for MADI (eg. Headphone boxes, analyzers, etc.)
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What I'd like to see for the future, cnt'd:

- Integrated control and telemetry standards for pre-amp and wireless mic control
- More user – audio – friendly Controller
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Questions?

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BOOTH # 2738
Saturday 12:30 – Sound Supervisor Martin Kelly will discuss Inkmaster workflow