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City Cable 14 Buys Nine Hitachi DK-Z50 HDTV Cameras and PT-101 Pan/Tilt Systems for Government Access Channel Serving Fort Collins, CO

WOODBURY, NEW YORK, March 9, 2011 – The City of Fort Collins—the largest city in Larimer County, Colorado—acquired nine Hitachi DK-Z50 multi-format HDTV high-performance special applications cameras as well as Hitachi PT-101 camera control systems (with integrated Eagle pan/tilt capability).

All nine cameras are dedicated to local HD programming for City Cable 14. City Cable 14 acquired the Hitachi DK-Z50 cameras in two orders—handled by Hitachi dealer RIA Corporation in Colorado Springs, CO—with five installed in November 2010 and four in January 2011. The camera systems, which replaced older Hitachi analog cameras, were purchased as part of City Cable 14's gradual migration to full HDTV production.

“We’ve been long-time Hitachi customers,” said Carson Hamlin, Cable TV Manager, City of Fort Collins, CO. “We choose our cameras based on reliability, picture quality, price, and ease of use. The combination of high-quality HDTV cameras and precision robotics is critical to our operation since we must maintain high TV production standards with a minimal staff. The right equipment helps maximize our tight operating budget.”

Two of the DK-Z50s reside in City Cable 14's TV studio facility, which is a fully functional studio equipped with robotic and traditional cameras, Blackmagic Design production switcher, and head-end transmission equipment. Four DK-Z50s are stationed in the nearby Larimer County Building's public meeting room (linked to the main studio by a fiber cable run). A Broadcast Pix Granite 1080p HD production switcher is used to switch the cameras. While the Granite has integrated camera control capability, the technical directors (TDs)—Justine Millward and Ann McHaffey—use the Hitachi PT-101's camera control panel because of its familiar interface.

The TDs act as a “one-man-band,” handling all of the production tasks associated with each show, including remote pan/tilt/zoom control of multiple Hitachi DK-Z50 cameras using the Hitachi PT-101’s control panel, as well as switching, graphics, and audio.

In keeping with City Cable 14’s charter, the programs are designed to inform City of Fort Collins and Larimer County residents and help create a more vibrant, unified community. Three of the nine DK-Z50 cameras are dedicated to City Cable 14’s “HD studio-in-a-box” flypack based on a NewTek Tricaster HD switcher. A TD can take this fly-pack into the community to cover issues and events of interest to local residents.

City Cable 14’s channel lineup is a mix of live and taped shows including: “City at a Glance,” a conversation with the City of Fort Collins’ city manager; “Studio 14,” a discussion of local public affairs; as well as coverage of the City of Fort Collins’ City Council and Planning and Zoning Board meetings and Larimer County Land Use and Planning Commission meetings. The video programs are also streamed live as well as on demand at City Cable 14’s website.

The Hitachi DK-Z50 was designed for remote observation, graphics production, and stereo 3D camera rigs, among other special HDTV applications. The compact camera’s technical specifications include: three 2/3-inch, 1-million pixel CCDs with 14-bit A/D converters, high light sensitivity, low vertical smear, a signal to noise ratio of >58dB, and 800 TV lines of 1080i HD-SDI resolution. Display Devices Inc., based in Arvada, CO, manufactures the PT-101 pan/tilt system which offers a high-precision pan/tilt range of 358-degrees, a pan/tilt speed of 0-20 degrees per second (variable), and a Windows-based camera controls menu.

“The combination of high-quality HDTV cameras and precision robotics is critical to our operation since we must maintain high TV production standards with a minimal staff,” Hamlin said. “The Hitachi DK-Z50 and PT-101 systems give us the quality and performance we need very cost-effectively, which helps maximize our tight operating budget.”

City Cable 14 is an inter-governmental access channel produced by the City of Fort Collins on behalf of the City of Fort Collins and Larimer County, CO, - Through a non-exclusive cable franchise agreement (effective 2006-2015) between Fort Collins, CO and Comcast Corporation’s local subsidiary, City Cable 14 is carried in SDTV on all Comcast cable systems reaching many of Larimer County’s 275,000 residents.

About Hitachi

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Hitachi Kokusai Electric America, Ltd. designs, manufactures and markets video cameras, digital transmission, processing and recording devices for the broadcast television, cable, video production, and industrial vision markets. For more information, please call (516) 921-7200 or visit Hitachi's web site at <http://www.hitachikokusai.us> . Hitachi Kokusai Electric, Inc. (TSE, OSE: 6756), is a Hitachi, Ltd. (NYSE: HIT) group company.

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Editor's Note: Color product photographs are available upon request.

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