

Moo TV Goes HD With Hitachi Cameras

BY CHUCK YOUNG
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NASHVILLE—Moo TV is a video production company that specializes in concert shows. We provide LED and projection surfaces, HD production systems, cameras, creative con-

USER REPORT

tent, and a lot of talented people. Our clients are primarily well-established rock and country performers, along with some corporate clients.

TIME TO TAKE THE HD PLUNGE

After losing a warehouse full of equipment (albeit some of it well worn) in a major flood in the spring of 2010—the beginning of our prime touring season—Moo TV was at a turning point. We'd long discussed upgrading to HD, which at that point really had not been a priority with many of our clients. The disaster accelerated our HD plans, and with one of our major clients soon to be in rehearsals with a new stage set design, we quickly started shopping for equipment.

The set required a display with enough resolution to actually show an HD image, so camera choice would be critical. We also wanted to standardize all of our systems so

that we could interchangeably use the same cameras, switchers and other gear on our tours.

We investigated several HD cameras and asked others in the industry (especially TV truck operators) what they used. The Hitachi Z-HD5000 camera series kept coming up and our helpful Hitachi rep arranged an extended demo. After this demo the decision to go with Hitachi was not difficult.

CAMERAS TAKE ABUSE WITHOUT COMPLAINT

Our environment is much more akin to ENG than studio work, with most of our operators working handheld cameras several hours a night, so camera weight and balance are very important to reduce operator fatigue. And I should add a confession: We are hard on equipment. Cables are trod upon all day by thousands and there are also the forklifts, concessions carts and other wheeled conveyances that take their toll. Our gear is transported in trucks and cargo planes hundreds of thousands of miles each year.

After three years of exclusively using Hitachi Z-HD5000's we're quite satisfied. We have had only had two issues during that time that



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required returns for servicing and in both instances the issues were due to abuse on our part and not a defect with the camera or accessory.

We have packaged our units with Hitachi's CU-HD500 CCUs and RU-1200JY remote control units and our engineers really like the user-friendly control capabilities the remote panels provide, as in our environment, lighting conditions change by the millisecond. We don't have the luxury of optimal, even lighting as you would in a studio environment and camera shading requires constant manipulation when you go from 300 flashing lights to a single spotlight within one verse of a song.

We also use the VF-402 viewfinders for handheld use and the VF-PBM-207 model for our standard fixed-position long lens front-of-house camera.

Moo TV is very pleased with our Hitachi Z-HD5000 camera systems. The image quality that impressed us at first glance is still there even after miles of abuse. We have also received great support and training from many departments and levels of the company and that makes the product doubly satisfying from my perspective as GM.

Chuck Young is the general manager of Moo TV and a longtime veteran of the music business. He may be contacted at chuck@mootv.com.

For additional information, contact Hitachi Kokusai Electric America, Ltd. at 516-921-7200 or visit www.hitachikokusai.us.