

MIG Puts its New UDC to Work on High-Profile Events

Multi Image Group (MIG), a Full-Service Corporate Communications, Creative and Technology Event Production Company based in Boca Raton, Florida, put its new High Resolution Systems UDC (Universal Device Controller) through the paces on high-profile shows “right out of the gate,” says MIG director of video engineering, Seth Tours.

“We had been working with High Resolution Systems for the last decade on Vista Spyder rentals,” notes Tours. “We purchased UDC about six months ago, and the first show we used it on was huge.”

He praises UDC for its flexibility and versatility. The ability to have the user interface available on a variety of platforms is extremely helpful, he says. “The record operator may not have room for UDC on a laptop so we have it on his iPad. Others may prefer it on their iPhone or Android. It’s cool how you can change platforms.”

Tours also likes UDC’s user-friendly operation. “I jumped into it with one hour of basic instruction,” he reports. “I began to attack the advanced features on my own with some tutelage from Sales Engineer Drew Taylor over the phone.”

MIG’s UDC made its debut at the Nissan National Dealer Meeting at the Aria Resort in Las Vegas where it controlled 12 Christie projectors, three Grass Valley DDRs, multiple Blackmagic routers, eight AJA Ki Pro recorders and two Playback Pros.

“UDC is so versatile: We couldn’t have done what we did at the meeting without it,” says Tours. “There was widescreen video projection at the back of the stage from two stacks of blended projectors. At one point in the show, when Nissan started to play their commercial reel, they didn’t want it to overlap the blend area so we stopped one set of projectors and started to use a third stack we set up in the center. To do that cleanly, you don’t want the unused projectors to have their shutters open because there would still be some brightness to the black. But we were able to use UDC to control all 12 projectors in the room, pushing a button to close the shutters on some projectors and open them on others. No other device could have done that with one button push.”

The UDC interface running on Apple iPad and iPhone made it simple for the operator to control the eight Ki Pro recorders, Tours explains. “He could start all eight record decks, rewind them, play them. He had simultaneous control of all eight from one set of buttons – it was incredibly handy.”

UDC was also able to build a macro for the router to switch from a main Vista Spyder X20 system to a spare if needed. “We never had to use the spare, but UDC made it easy to do so if something happened to the main Spyder,” he says. “By using UDC on his iPad interface, the Spyder operator could switch from the main system to the back up with one button push and we’d be off to the races in two seconds.”

MIG also deployed UDC at a big incentive event for a financial services company at the Biltmore in Phoenix. “They also wanted to control Ki Pro recorders,” says Tours. “They needed to be able to stop and start four decks at certain points in the show: By truncating the amount of material recorded, they could reduce file size when they edited the show afterward. The only problem was the record operator was also shading three handheld cameras. He barely had time to do both. So we put UDC on his iPhone, and he just had to glance away to start and stop the Ki Pros.”

Both shows used UDC’s scheduling feature to warm up the projectors in advance of arriving on the scene, he notes. “So when the operators arrived, the projectors were ready for alignment. When you’re dealing with 12 projectors having them ready for you is a big deal.”

Tours also likes the “awesome” new controller groups feature which enables customers to build multiple versions of the same page in their control system, specify them as a controller group and have different resolutions and aspect ratios automatically available for a range of control devices as needed.

“High Resolution Systems has always allowed us to be in the forefront of technology,” says Tours. “Every time we roll out UDC we get more and more ideas how to use it. It controls everything – or just give High Resolution Systems a day and it will!”