



Dead easy DAC 2 converters for ZSE


Head of Engineering at ZSE, Kim Smith, is renowned throughout local and international broadcasting circles for his innovative and creative approach to solving technical issues. To his credit, he and his team were responsible for the design and execution of the technical requirements for the popular soap *Egoli*, and the unique breakfast programme *The Toasty Show*.

"I first saw the Datavideo DAC 2 digital analogue converters at IBC last year and followed up on the product when I saw MacroVideo's ad AV Specialist," says Smith. "We are using three DAC 2's with three edit stations in the DV suites. Currently we are running Avid DV Xpress, fed by Betacam SP machines in component, or composite signals from our central system. It is here that the Datavideo DAC 2's have come into play very successfully, particularly for NBC Discovery Kids."

Built-in templates

"DV Xpress doesn't come with a video output so there's no way of looking at video from a monitoring point of view. We needed a box both for monitoring and converting format to and from analogue video. Even though it's a real-time conversion process, it does take a little while to get the timing right. Avid had already foreseen this problem by allowing for delay parameters in their software to be adjusted. Later versions of the Avid software have got DAC 2 templates built in, but you still need to determine whether you are going to monitor directly off the computer monitors or whether you want to view off the video monitor. You can't do it simultaneously, because there is a delay between the two."

Glue for the rest of the system

"After the Discovery channel production, we integrated the DAC 2's with all our other suites tied into our central machine area. This allows us to use any of the tape formats in our central machine area. They are used on a daily basis and the DAC 2's serve as 'firewire glue' into the rest of the system. Price performance of the DAC 2 is very good. As far as an ideal successor to the DAC 2 is concerned, the DAC 30 with SDI sounds great and we look forward to putting one though it's paces." 

Vendor Comment.

We are thrilled to hear that the DAC 2 has been used in a Discovery Channel production. Datavideo provide an excellent range of value for money products. Regarding SDI, Datavideo's DAC 30 has just been unveiled at NAB. Preliminary information is that it will have SDI in and out, time code conversion (in 4:2:2), RS422 interface, built in TBC, and balanced audio in and out. It will obviously be Component, DV, YC and Composite in and out compliant.

Eric Wiese, director MacroVideo