

USER REPORT

Antex Boosts System Into Orbit

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REEDSPORT, Ore. CBSI's step-ahead automation system, Digital Universe, was designed to work with a range of audio cards and did not require specialized hardware.

However, that does not mean we are not picky when it comes to the audio cards we routinely recommend or configure into our systems.

Our wish list was a long one. A stable Windows NT driver and full compatibility with Windows Multimedia were essential to our success.

Size mattered in terms of giving our customers more choices about PC hardware. Simple connectivity and setup were important. And we were looking for a family of cards, so that we could offer our customers as much flexibility as possible in putting together a system tailored to their needs.

We tested many cards, with mixed results. We found a good match to our wish list, as well as a strong and cooperative partnership, with **Antex Electronics** and its range of audio cards, specifically the LX-44.

We started out specifying the Antex SC2000 and have since begun to phase in the LX-44, where appropriate, for the installation.

One factor that has been helpful, especially working with these multiple cards, has been that all the Antex cards use a universal driver setup disk — simply identify which card you have installed, and you're there.

The small footprint of the LX-44 also is a big plus for us.

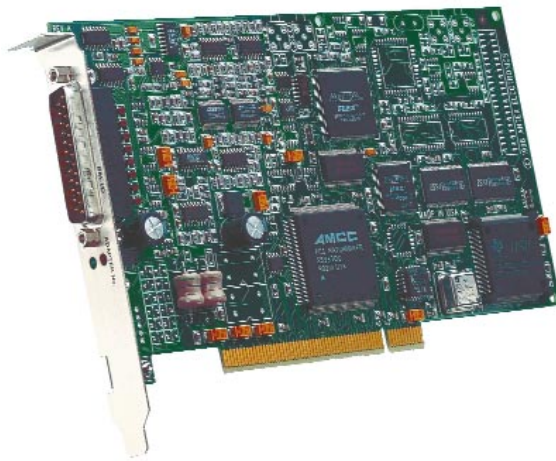
Space is at a premium just about everywhere within a station, especially in on-air and production areas. Because this compact card requires only a PCI slot, we don't have to restrict our customers to industrial-strength, rackmount PCs capable of accommodating ISA cards, as some manufacturers

do. We can opt for the more standard, and probably more operator-friendly, PC.

We have found the external hookups of the LX-44 are just as flexible. There is a straightforward connection for an octopus cable on the rear panel or, for more complex installations, Antex can provide a separate, rackmount breakout box for all the XLR connections. Either way, the results are tidy and efficient.

Another motivating factor was the elusive balance between cost and quality we were looking for in an audio card.

The SC2000 had performed admirably



Antex LX-44

for us. However, many of our clients did not necessarily need an elaborately equipped audio card with SMPTE time code and so forth. The Digital Universe's uncompressed audio foundation was all they needed.

For those clients, the LX-44 was a wonderful find. It gives us lots of bang for the buck. A further bonus, one that benefits us directly and our customers indirectly, is that we don't have to concern ourselves with compression algorithms that are immaterial to our system. Digital Universe doesn't need them, and with this card, we don't have to pass the extra costs onward to our clients.

With some manufacturers, what you save in cost you lose in poor customer service. That is far from the case with Antex. John Lechuga in our purchasing depart-

ment reported that the Antex staff has been courteous and attentive to our needs, regardless of whether the concern was a price negotiation, a return, a shipping question or an international issue.

"They're always willing to assist us when troubleshooting a sound card and, should one fail, cordial and expedient in sending out an overnight replacement," said Lechuga.

"Antex is one of the few companies in existence today that is seamless to our customers. They complement CBSI by offering quality sound card products, supporting us in all aspects of our needs and being downright friendly. You can detect a smile when holding a conversation with them."

Final answer

It comes down to one issue — how does the result sound to the end users, our clients' listeners?

The feedback has been unilaterally positive on this front. Many individuals to whom we have demonstrated the unit commented that Digital Universe is the best-sounding system they've heard.

An engineer at one of our Rocky Mountain stations reported back to us that their listeners were actually calling in to say, "You sound so much better! Did you get some new equipment or something?"

Of course, we like to think that Digital Universe's uncompressed audio makes the difference but, like a good idea that hits a roadblock, the best-sounding audio can fall apart at the output stage unless the audio card carrying it is rock-solid.

So here is credit where credit is due. Our own product may be in orbit, but it probably wouldn't be nearly as smooth a ride were it not powered, underneath it all, by Antex audio cards.

For more information contact Antex Electronics in California at (310) 532-3092, fax (310) 532-8509 or visit the Web site at www.antex.com

Antex Electronics

The Broadcaster BX-12e Adapter by **Antex Electronics** is a new digital audio solution with features designed for broadcast automation.

The BX-12e builds on Antex's Broadcaster series of digital audio adapters, which include the Broadcaster BX-12 and the BX-8, a companion model to the BX-12 featuring multitrack analog and digital outputs with MPEG Layer I/II decoding.

The BX-12e's key feature is its ability to play back MPEG files with up to four independent and adjustable sample rates. By adjusting each sample rate, the user can achieve dynamic time-scale modification under software control.

Users can fine-tune an audio track for replay under a preprogrammed time frame. DSP software-based sample rate conversion allows files to be converted to a common AES word clock for interface to digital consoles.

Features include 20-bit A/D and D/A converters, four stereo analog channels for playback and MPEG Layer I/II compression. Available as an option, analog outputs can be upgraded in the field to AES/EBU digital.

The BX-12e is designed for digital

broadcasting systems engaged in radio automation applications, providing support for on-air playback and assist, satellite distribution and storecasting.

The BX-12e list price is \$2,395. It ships complete with software drivers for Windows 95/98/NT. An advanced software developer's kit is available at no charge from the Antex Web site. Professional-grade XLR connectors are available optionally as a 12-inch cable set.



For more information contact Antex Electronics Corp. in California at (800) 338-4231, fax (310) 532-8509 or visit the Web site www.antex.com