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Raycom Sports' New HD Mobile Unit Off to Roaring Start

Posted By [Brandon Costa](#), Associate Editor On September 23, 2011 @ 12:59 pm In [Insider](#) | [No Comments](#)

When Charles Moye, technical operations manager at Raycom Sports, was assigned the task of heading up development of a brand-new HD production truck, he knew he wanted to learn from the best. So, while renting HD units from Game Creek, NCP, and others during the college basketball season last winter, he made himself the most observant person in the room.



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Primarily used for Raycom ACC Network broadcasts, HD1 will handle regional sports for which Raycom is contracted to produce and will be available for rental.

"We certainly were taking a close look and trying to learn as much as we could from those companies," says Moye, who has also worked with two SD trucks that Raycom rolled out in the late 1990s. "We put a lot of thought into it, and, with the budget that we had, we tried to do the most that we could. But, to have that experience and to come from that background and to have the chance to build an HD truck, it was pretty exciting."

The 53-ft. expando unit, simply called HD1, made its debut on Sept. 3 at the ACC Network's Football Game of the Week between Appalachian State and Virginia Tech, and the top-of-the-line unit hit the ground running.

"When you have this much new equipment, you really don't know [how well it's going to perform] until you get it out there," says Moye. "But we have had a very smooth start."

Under the Hood

One of the advantages of building a truck from scratch is customizing a layout that is suited to your media brand's production philosophy. However, Moye adds that, in order to be able to farm the unit out to other media companies, some selfless decisions were made.

"Sure, for most of the year, we are working on our own shows," he said. "However, we need the outside revenue to help pay for this thing. So, with that in mind, you've got to build a truck that can handle the equipment needs of an ESPN or a Fox and some of the other companies that we work for. So we had to not only consider our needs, but we had to consider theirs."

HD1, which can operate on fiber or triax, is loaded to the gills as it is equipped with an Evertz EQX HD router and a Grass Valley Kayenne HD production switcher with 72 inputs, 36 outputs, four M/E panels, six keyers per M/E, eight channels of DVE, 6 GB of StillStore, two chroma keyers, and a Lance TDC100 controller.

The truck also features a Calrec Omega audio console, a bevy of EVS replay systems, and a Chyron Duet HyperX3 HD/SD system for graphics. A virtual monitor wall is driven by the Evertz VIPX routing and multi-image display system and boasts 288 multiviewer outputs.

During broadcasts, Raycom Sports now has the ability to deploy a total of 32 cameras, including nine Sony HDC 1550R multifformat cameras with 10 various Canon lenses, six of which are 86 x 9.3 with stabilization.

In the booth, broadcasters will have use of a Codi Telestrator with a 14-in. monitor as well as four LCD monitors and eight color monitors.

Cross-Country Construction Process

The development and construction of HD1 took place in three cities over the course of eight months, beginning after the truck was commissioned by parent company Raycom Media in December.

The journey began in the small village of Sanbury, an Ohio town of a little over 4,000 people just outside of Columbus. There, Gerling & Associates built the trailer. After the trailer was rack-ready and contained all of the essential pieces from consoles to air-conditioning, the unit was moved to San Jose, CA, where Duane Yoslov, senior VP of sales and operations, and the team at Diversified Systems handled the truck's integration.

It was then brought back for a once-over in its home base of Charlotte, NC, in late August, and, despite construction's being completed just a week prior to the opening of college football season, the Raycom Sports team is pleased with the two broadcasts it has handled thus far.

"It has exceeded expectations," says Frank Kay, director of media relations at Raycom Sports. "Our crew finds it really easy to use."

In Prime Position

With the growth of conference channels and the spike in live content on regional sports networks, the supply of HD mobile units can, at times, struggle to keep up with demand of live event coverage.

Now, with HD1, Raycom Sports has made the investment into their unit to allow for both flexibility and piece of mind.

"Anytime you have your own truck, you've got a little more control when you're trying to cover all of these games and when there just aren't enough HD trucks available," says Moye, adding that Raycom hopes to build a second HD unit at an undisclosed date. "Having your own [truck] gives you the ability to move it around, and that's a big advantage."

The truck is booked to cover the ACC Network's football game of the week through December. It will then immediately move to a fully loaded slate of ACC basketball games in the winter.

The unit will also give Raycom Sports and the ACC a major leg up as the conference continues to expand, with Syracuse and Pittsburgh joining the ranks in 2014 and Connecticut rumored to also be interested in making the leap as well.

Says Kay, "We guarantee that the ACC Network is in the forefront of technology for years to come with this truck."



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The 53-ft. expando unit is equipped with nine Sony 1500 HD camera positions, has an Everts VIPX routing and multi-image display system throughout, and can operate on fiber or triax.

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