

Solution in Spotlight: NewTek TriCaster™ TCXD850

Go-to-Market Premise: NewTek releases the latest generation of its TriCaster™ live video production appliance, further extending its brand of low-cost gear for generating broadcast-quality output into the world of high-definition video. Building upon the foundation of its first HD appliance introduced in 2009 –TriCaster TCXD300 – the new model significantly expands the scope and flexibility of simplified video production.

Key Features & Capabilities: The design metaphor for NewTek TriCaster TCXD850 borrows and builds upon the company's successful long-running TriCaster product line. The appliance is a video control room in a box, taking a wide array of video inputs and enabling users to switch between live and pre-recorded video feeds that can be woven together in video programming produced and distributed on a real-time basis. TriCaster TCXD850 is fully capable of creating live video content that rival- and even exceeds- the production values of television programming developed by local major market television stations. Key features of note for the TriCaster TCXD850 model include the following:



High-Definition Support: With eight inputs capable of handling high-definition video feeds, the new version of TriCaster more than doubles the input capacity of the company's first foray into the HD field – the TriCaster TCXD300, an appliance introduced in late 2009 that can handle three HD video feeds simultaneously. TriCaster TCXD850 supports end-to-end video production in the 1080i high-definition video format. The system simplifies the process of straddling the worlds of high-definition and standard video inputs. Software in the appliance automatically scales content to be optimized for use in the video output format selected by the producer. As a result, the edges of video shot in a 16 x 9 aspect ratio are trimmed at the edges when presented in the form of a standard 4 x 3 aspect ratio output. Similarly, content shot in the standard 4 x 3 configuration is automatically bracketed by black on-screen bars when integrated into a high-definition video output designed for a 16 x 9 aspect ratio.

Enhanced Management of Video Production Assets: As with the case with the TriCaster TCXD300, the TriCaster TCXD850 features more robust capabilities than previous TriCaster models for managing pre-recorded videos and still images that can be woven into a live broadcast. Producers have the option of rolling in a single video or a string of pre-loaded video clips into a presentation at the click of a button. Likewise, new picture-in-picture capabilities allow a live presenter to be featured in a small corner while describing another video that plays in a larger portion of the screen.

Expanded Array of Switchable Inputs: As has been the case with previous versions of TriCaster, producers can easily select and switch between multiple video inputs with the click of a computer mouse. Overall, directors can switch between 22 channels of video and graphic input – a significant expansion from the 13 switchable input channels incorporated into the TriCaster TCXD300. Pre-defined on-screen visual effects can be applied to the video inputs to enable graceful transitions and/or fades between different video shots. Overall, the system offers five players that can help in the integration of video playback, titles and still shots. On-screen graphics also can be imported directly to TriCaster from a PC or Mac via network, USB, or eSATA.



Working with Virtual Sets: One of TriCaster’s historic strong suits has been its versatility in supporting the application of “virtual set” backgrounds to presenters shot against a “green screen” backdrop. As is the case with any video editing program, producers can use TriCaster to replace the green background with an immersive, photo-real environment, often called a “virtual set.” The difference here is that TriCaster TCXD850’s 18 virtual sets can be rotated, positioned and scaled in 3D during live production. Directors have access to several live camera angles of the same set – producing a large-studio look-and-feel even in situations where the on-screen presenter is appearing against only a small green-screen background.

Updated Streaming Options: TriCaster TCXD850 provides a greater range of options for producing content that can be distributed online on a live or on-demand basis. Video programming can be encoded in the Windows Media, Silverlight or Adobe Flash formats and are optimized for a range of presentation devices, including desktop computers and mobile devices.

IMS First Look Bottom Line: The rack-mounted TriCasterTCXD850 is a worthy successor in the TriCaster product line, providing a more flexible environment capable of handling complex live video production while sustaining TriCaster’s traditional value proposition for simple, affordable production tools that create high-quality video output. The expanded channel capacity offered in the TriCaster TCXD850 makes it an ideal appliance for supporting the production of high-definition video programming in venues requiring a large number of camera inputs, such as sporting events and programs integrating video from multiple video content contributors.

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