SONY

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HDC User Group

Newsletter No.10

If you don't wish to receive this letter, or if you know other people who might wish to receive it, please let me know: neil.thompson@eu.sony.com
Ideas or news for future editions also gratefully received.

This issue

- Viewfinder corner
- HDC-P1
- New control panels
- 3D and 3G
- HDLA utility power
- Upgrade to 'R' series

It's been a long while since the last newsletter. Sorry about that folks. I'll try and make it more of a 'little and often' type thing! Do send me suggestions for content to remind me. Thanks to Pete at Arena for your suggestion…I'll try and incorporate it in the next issue.

Viewfinder Corner

Not so much a corner as a compound these days. We seem to have an extraordinary range of viewfinders now, which is an indication of how critically important the viewfinder has become in a high definition world. There's no single perfect viewfinder for all applications, so we do actually need to offer a range of types.

A number of new models were announced at NAB.
First up, due to start shipping in May, are these two:

HDVF-C550W	5"	LCD	HDC/HXC/HSC
DXF-C50W	5"	LCD	DXC

These are both based around the same 5" LCD panel, but the DXF is standard definition only.

Then around November:

HDVF-EL70	7"	OLED	HDC-1000
HDVF-EL75	7"	OLED	HDC/HXC/HSC

These will be the star performers. They are based on a new organic LED panel, with no lag and excellent black level performance; usually the weak points of LCD displays. Lifetime of the equivalent 7" monitor is specified at 20000 hours, so if the viewfinder is assumed to be the same, that's ten years of really hard use. The two versions have different mounting attachments for use either with the turret type mount of the HDC-1000 and HDLA cradles, or the V-lock type mount for portable camera bodies.

And to sum up the rest of the available choices:

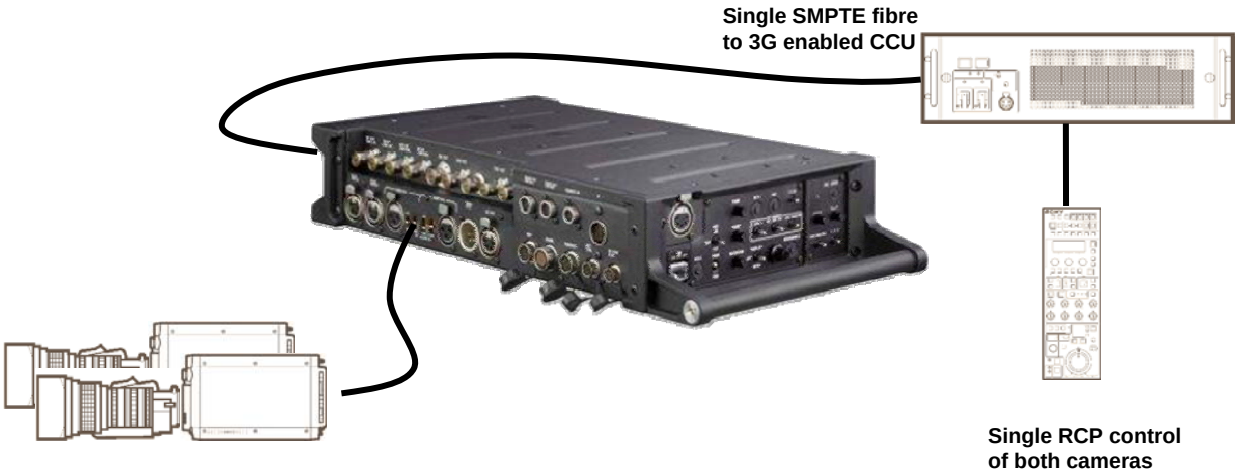
HDVF-200	2"	CRT	All HD cameras/camcorders (lower cost version of the HDVF-20A)
HDVF-20A	2"	CRT	All HD cameras/camcorders
HDVF-550	5"	CRT	HDC/HXC/HSC
HDVF-C730W	7"	LCD	HDC/HXC/HSC
HDVF-C950W	9"	LCD	HDC/HXC/HSC
HDVF-700B	7"	CRT	HDLA cradle or HDC-1000 (the 'B' means it's black.)
HDVF-EL100	11"	OLED	HDLA cradle or HDC-1000

Hopefully one of the above will suit your requirements.

HDC-P1 Update

The P1 is the ‘skinny’ box camera we’ve made, mainly for 3D type work, though it may have many other applications. It’s a proper 2/3” lens mount with the same CCD sensors as the HDC cameras (though without the plumbing for 50P capability.) What it doesn’t have of course, is a triax or fibre connector.

If you do need to connect a pair of these cameras back to an OB truck or similar, we showed at NAB a breakout type box that sits near a pair of P1 cameras, and interfaces all the necessary signals (power, HDSDI, genlock, comms, return etc.) to run a pair of cameras down a single SMPTE fibre cable. This then goes back to a standard HDCU camera control unit that has been upgraded for 3G operation, which splits your stereo pair of HD signals out from the fibre again for you.
This breakout box should be available around the end of the year.



New control panels.

Shown at NAB were a complete new set of RCPs and MSUs. Don't panic though; they all work on the current control protocol. There is no immediate plan to discontinue the RCP-750 or RCP-920.
There's a little one, a thin one and a normal one, which is the same panel size as the current RCPs.

RCP-1000

RCP-1530

RCP-1500

One new feature will be the ability to control two cameras from a single RCP in certain configurations, for instance with the breakout box mentioned above. This is part of the continuing development of new tools for 3D operation.
Both the full size panels have CCA cable connectors and Ethernet connectors, memory stick slots, and touch screens. There's a lot of configurability of menus and spare buttons, and the screen is very responsive and clear.

They start shipping in May, but back orders mean availability for new orders is around July.

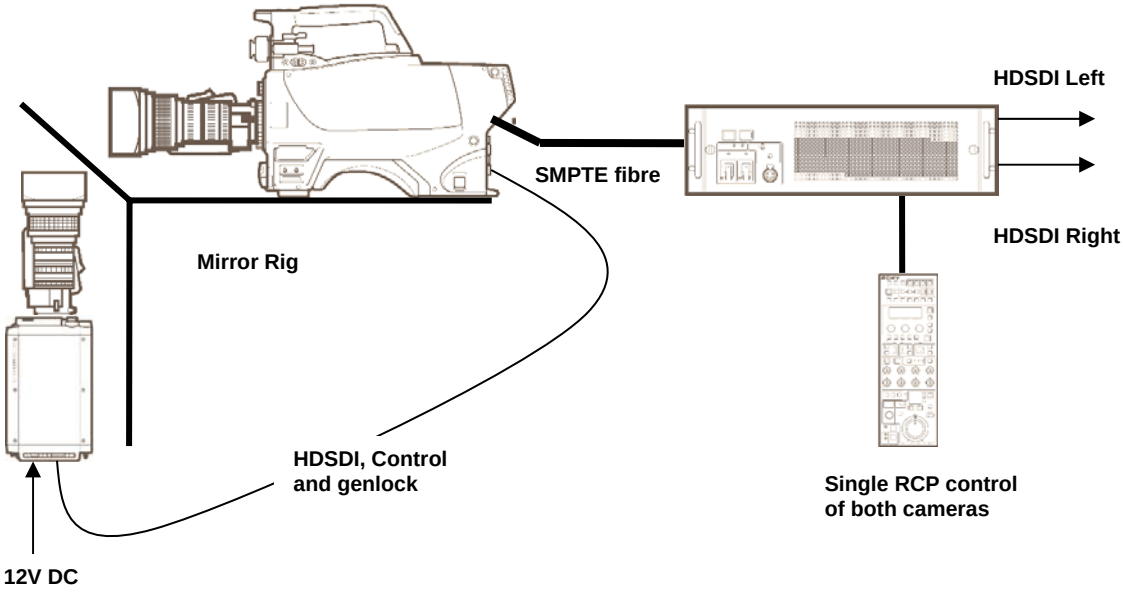
There are also new versions of the MSUs due to ship in June. The MSU-1000 is the landscape version, the MSU-1500 is the portrait layout one. Same size, same price as the current MSU-900 and MSU-950.

3G / 3D Latest

Upgrade kits for the HDC-1500, 1000 and HDCU-1500, 1000 are now available. You'll need the appropriate kit for each end, plus the connector panel for the CCU that gives you the 3G flavour BNCs. You can manage without this last item if you are working dual link, but that's unlikely.

HKCU-HB10	3G upgrade board for HDCU-1000
HKCU-HB15	3G upgrade board for HDCU-1500
HKC-HB10	3G upgrade kit for HDC-1000
HKC-HB15	3G upgrade kit for HDC-1500
HKCU-2005	3G connector panel for HDCU upgrade

This upgrade also has various benefits for those thinking of 3D applications. I've already mentioned the option of a breakout box for connecting two HDC-P1s down a single fibre into a 3G enabled CCU.
You could also for instance, add an HDC-P1 to a 3G enabled HDC-1500 channel to make a simple mirror rig system connected and controlled down a single SMPTE fibre:



You can think of 3G capability as the ability to get 2 x 1.5G HDSDI signals down a single connection, which of course comes in very handy in 3D world.

You could then process the left and right outputs from the CCU using the new MPE-200 3D processor. This can correct for various mechanical alignment errors in a mirror rig, as well as taking lens position data and correcting for differences between the lenses as they move through the zoom range (depending on lens / camera combination). The MPE-200 is a useful tool for live multi-camera productions, where it may not be possible to give 3D rigs the same TLC as you might on a movie set, especially with four or five rigs to look after on a rainy night at the rugby. It can also be used as a post tool, as you could for instance play back uncorrected material from a dual stream 3D recording on a single SRW machine. You can find more information, and a useful pdf of our 3D products here:
http://www.sony.co.uk/biz/view/ShowProduct.action?product=MPE-200&site=biz_en_GB&pageType=Overview&category=ProductionSwitchersDigitalEffects

Power from HDLA cradles.

Until recently, the utility power output of the camera cradles has only been 230V on an IEC connector, and only worked if you had the HDCU-1000 full rack width CCU attached, as this sends 230V up the fibre rather than the 180V DC of the smaller HDCU-1500.
Latest versions of the cradle will now supply 12V at up to 5A from a 4 pin XLR when running on the small or large CCUs. Enough for a prompter. Older versions can be upgraded with a new IF board, harness, and connector panel. Contact your Sony rep, or dealer, or me for details.

Upgrade to 'R' Series

It is possible to upgrade HDC non-R products for the same feature capability as the HDC-R series:

Just a software update gives you:

- ALAC (lens aberration correction, with latest lenses)

New DPR Board + Software gives you:

- ALAC
- Focus assist function (the bar graph in the viewfinder that peaks when you hit focus)
- Digital Extender for HDC-1400/1450 (2x digital zoom, loses some resolution, but doesn't lose sensitivity.)
- Chroma filter (the standard high performance chroma filter can make colour fringing more obvious)

DPR board + Software + OHB:

- 56dB S/N ratio (improved noise performance is the main 'R' benefit, but changing the Optical Head Block will be expensive)
- Focus assist function
- ALAC
- Digital Extender for HDC-1400/1450
- Chroma filter

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And finally, as they say on News at Ten, a photo of our latest top secret RCP design, as constructed by our friends at Arena. Designed to be 100% recyclable, it was described by users as 'tasty'.

More photos of unusual products and applications gratefully received.