

RIEDEL

THE COMMUNICATIONS PEOPLE

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RIEDEL THE CLEAR CUT WINNER AT PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

Burbank, CA (November 9, 2004) – The Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) has entrusted the communications of all Presidential debates since 1988 to Laurence Estrin of Best Audio for good reason; Estrin uses only the best equipment and he delivers flawlessly. So when it was time to configure the complex communications and audio systems for the fiercely fought 2004 Presidential and Vice Presidential debates, Estrin chose Riedel Communications' all digital Artist S fiber based network for intercom applications and the primary transport of audio.

"The Artist nodes and fiber were at the heart of the communication matrix," said Estrin. "With all the audio and communications riding on Riedel's fiber backbone, we experienced an exceptionally flexible structure from which to operate"

Reliability was crucial! The events, aired live nationally and internationally on all the major networks and cable news outlets, could sway the outcome of one of the bitterest battles for the White House in recent history. The first debate alone reached in excess of 80 million viewers. With no room for error, Estrin worked with equipment vendor On Stage Audio and their senior engineer for the debates, Kelly Epperson, as well as David Brand – general manager of Riedel Communications in the United States. The system centered around Riedel's Artist S and its dual redundant fiber topology. The feature, unique to Riedel's Artist intercoms, ensured continuity regardless of a signal interruption on any cable. Estrin also had the fibers run in a diverse path configuration to further guarantee the signal integrity.

"The Riedel system performed exceptionally well," stated Martin Slutsky, Executive Producer The 2004 Presidential Debates. "Having not used the system prior to the debates I had my concerns, but they were very quickly allayed. There are numerous attributes of the Riedel system that make it stand out. Such things as the intuitiveness of the design, the flexibility and ability to make instant changes on the fly..... the sound quality is wonderful with the volume controls next to the buttons it's dynamite."

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“The beauty of the Artist system is its dual redundant fiber. The nodes are networked together with fiber and are additionally enhanced by running cables in different directions,” Estrin added. “Not only is Riedel’s Artist system reliable, it has tremendous flexibility. Every live event is dynamic in nature. Production changes are unexpected and frequent. The Artist allows us the flexibility to easily adjust routing and add or delete circuits as needed.”

Artist S is a powerful matrix platform for intercom and the routing of analog and digital audio. The system consists of a fiber based network backbone providing a decentralized infrastructure for live audio and talkback applications. Matrix sizes range from 8 X 8 up to 512 X 512 with stand-alone versions available for 24 and 32 intercom ports per mainframe. Hot-swappable modular construction adds to the system’s reliability as does its redundant power supplies. Ease of operation is achieved with intuitive configuration software, logic functions, ability to connect directly to other AES equipment without sample rate converters, error management including GPI alarms and pop-up windows, and TCP/IP data routing between frames. Control panels are connected to the matrix frames entirely digitally using either 75 ohm coax cable or CAT5 computer cable. 4-wire ports can be analog or AES/EBU. (this is strictly boiler plate – it can be adjusted to fit the particular system if you wish)

The complex matrix used for the debates networked four key areas: back stage, FOH (Front of House), the media center, and the Production Pool TV truck. In addition, all the candidate’s microphones and the infamous buzzer audio were carried digitally on the system’s single mode fiber. The back stage node made all microphone feeds available to the other nodes **and** was monitored by Pete Erskine of Best Audio via computer to ensure the integrity of the material was not compromised.

From the FOH position the signals were ingested into a mixer and transported to the main PA input and the radio pool feed while the Artist made the complete mix available on the fiber. The media center node primarily served as a receptacle for FOH and pool feeds which were mixed and then distributed to the White House communications agency, the CATV, press PA system, and press mult feeds, making signals available to approximately 2500 reporters. The node located at the Production Pool TV Truck was responsible for distribution of the candidate’s microphones to the Network video and audio pool broadcasters. Feeds were received by the Artist, mixed and made available for multiple satellite uplinks.

The heightened sensitivity of the event required unflinching control and safeguards including an electronic switch specifically created for the Executive Producer within the Artist system to ensure security of the candidate’s microphone feeds prior to the actual broadcast. Additional elements were added into the back stage node as well, including the penalty buzzer, back up mixer systems and a pre-debate line identifier.

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All communication panels located in the back stage control booth were also on the same Artist fiber allowing the producer, executive producer, timer, line producer and candidate coordinator to talk to one another as well as others involved in the production. Other intercom stations included the FOH mix location and the TV truck where several methods of communication resided, all easily interfaced via the Riedel system.

Riedel designs, manufactures and distributes the most sophisticated radio and intercom technology for customers worldwide in the broadcast, pro-audio, event, sports and theatre industries. The products reflect today's leading-edge technologies that expand conventional concepts into tomorrow's applications. The Company was founded in 1987 and today employs over 100 people spread over 5 locations in Europe and North America. For more information: www.riedel.net

For more information regarding Best Audio please visit: www.bestaudio.com

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