

KAIROS contributes to flexible, multi-layered production of diverse programs, especially live broadcasting



CyberAgent, Inc. Chateau Ameba

System: **IT/IP Platform KAIROS**

Installation: July–November 2021 Location: Kanto

The Challenge:

Needed a robust switcher to produce programs offering all-new quality for the ABEMA video distribution service.

The Solution:

KAIROS contributes to the production of quality programming through a multi-layered approach that does not limit the number of MEs or keys, as far as the GPU permits, and various IP supports, including NDI®.

“Flexible scene composition and multi-view layouts, reviewable at a glance, enabled highly more intuitive production.”

Mr. Nobuteru Kondo
CyberAgent, Inc.

Note: Job title when the system was delivered

Background

NDI®-compatible switcher for efficient production of attractive programming

CyberAgent, Inc. is an online media, advertising and gaming businesses that operates ABEMA, a Japanese video distribution service that broadcasts programs from about 20 channels 24/7. Its Chateau Ameba production facility is equipped with nine studios that broadcast multiple channels simultaneously. In 2020, a plan was initiated to update equipment in the sub-control rooms, including the installation of a switcher compatible with NDI® to achieve video expressions for highly attractive programming.

Why they chose Panasonic

Superior visual expression for ABEMA programming

One of the requirements in updating the system was to install a new switcher that was not so different in operability from the existing switcher, but nevertheless is much more robust and capable of superior visual expression for streamed programs. In the end, KAIROS was selected for use in the eight sub-control rooms. One of the key decision points is KAIROS's flexible IP compatibility, including NDI® and SMPTE ST 2110, to support enhanced operational capability while also leveraging legacy knowhow. KAIROS is a switcher, but it also can be used like video-editing software, assuring the customer of unprecedented flexibility to greatly expand its range of production.

The future of television—enjoyment anytime, anywhere

The ABEMA offers 24-hour news, emergency/breaking reports, original dramas, reality shows, anime, sports, and more. The Chateau Ameba facility is their base for producing and distributing entertainment programs as well as live and recorded content produced daily.

- Location: 2-8-2 Jingumae, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
- URL <https://www.cyberagent.co.jp/en/>



▲ Chateau Ameba, ABEMA's production base with 9 sub-control rooms



Benefits

Layer composition and other pre-production processing with unrestricted number of MEs / keys

KAIROS allows “scene” to be created in advance using the same video processing of a conventional hardware switcher, including selection, transitions, and layer composition, with unrestricted number of MEs or keys as the GPU capacity permits. Mr. Yusuke Yagawa of BULL Co., Ltd., the operator of ABEMA programs, said, “During a broadcast, it is very convenient to be able to use scenes created in advance. Especially for live streaming, creating attractive content tend to expand the number of MEs. For example, in recent years video content incorporating screens from web conference systems has increased, so it is not uncommon for the number of scenes to reach double digits if everything is incorporated. In such cases, two switchers were deployed in the past, but KAIROS allows stacking as many scenes as the GPU can handle, without concern for the number of scenes or layers, so content can be produced with just one KAIROS system. This has made program production and operation during broadcasts much smoother. Also, the KAIROS buttons we use depends on the type of program, but cross-points on the control panel can be assigned as desired, which makes operation easier.”

Multi-view screen can be adjusted for each operator and program

The multi-view screen is output on two systems and displayed in different layouts via large monitors on the front of the switcher and mixer consoles. Mr. Nobuteru Kondo of CyberAgent says, “The layout of the multi-view screen can be freely customized, which is very efficient because switcher operators and mixer operators often prefer different layouts. For example, the switcher operator looks at the MEs and checks external content that is coming in. For the mixer, however, it is crucial to be able to see the content and it is also reassuring to visually confirm with the audio-level meter that the video is being played along with the audio. Also, the screen layout enables each person, for example, to use the main feeds displayed at the top and additional content grouped at the bottom, with lower-priority content placed in a small area at the edge. Sometimes I wonder if people need to customize layouts so extensively, but this probably is proof that each person has their own way to handle layout for each kind of program.”

In the Customer's Own Words

We were attracted by the possibility of creating new images and new productions

Initially, we naturally placed great importance on system stability. At the same time, however, we also knew that we needed to take on new challenges. KAIROS was the answer to both of these needs. However, I would be lying if I said that I wasn't worried about be the first user of this system. But despite such concerns, we were very attracted to the possibility of creating new kinds of images and effects that had not been possible before. Also, we knew from experience that Panasonic would provide us with solid support, which was another reason why we chose this system. The production environment that we have been able to build is very close to what we had been looking for. (Mr. Nobuteru Kondo) We wanted to create interesting programs with a unique switcher, so KAIROS has been a great addition as a switcher that inspires creators to take on new production challenges. After coming to rely on the system on a daily basis as well as experience its freedom of expression, excellent functionality and flexible operability, I can't imagine going back to our previous setup. (Mr. Yusuke Yagawa)



▲ Kairo Control, Kairo Creator and Multi-view screen



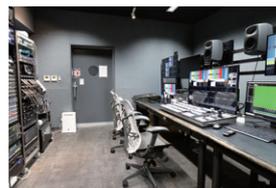
▲ Rack with Kairo Core 100 and other equipment



▲ Studio-9, where bicycle- and auto-racing programs are produced



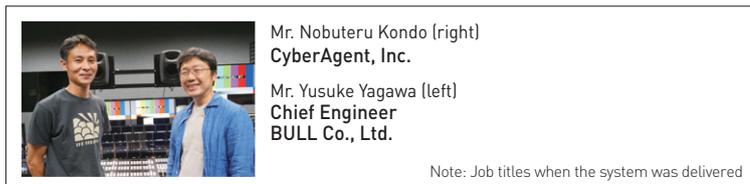
▲ Multi-view screen in front of KAIROS control panel



▲ Sub Studio-0, where various programs are produced



▲ Studio-0's white cyclorama is used for filming various programs



Mr. Nobuteru Kondo (right)
CyberAgent, Inc.

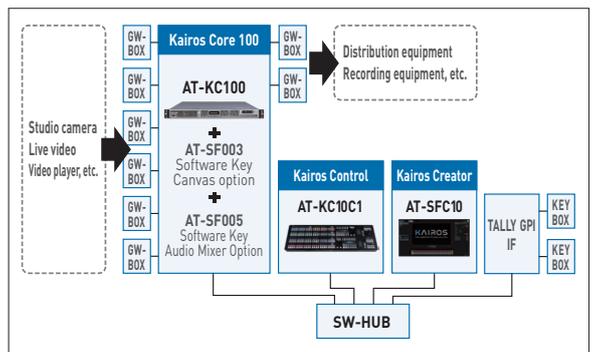
Mr. Yusuke Yagawa (left)
Chief Engineer
BULL Co., Ltd.

Note: Job titles when the system was delivered

Equipment installed

●IT/IP Platform KAIROS x8 (Delivered and began operating between July and November 2021)

System overview



NDI® is a new protocol developed by NewTek, Inc. that supports IP video production workflow. NDI® is a registered trademark of NewTek, Inc. in the United States and other countries. In this instance, NDI® is used to indicate low latency with high bandwidth NDI®.

