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Markey's Relies on Roland's VR-50HD Video Switcher

Rental and staging firm deploys multifaceted video switcher across the USA

Los Angeles, CA, June 27, 2017 — Audiovisual rental and staging firms that can claim well over 50 years of continuous service are a tiny fraction of the market. Markey's Rental & Staging, a comprehensive audiovisual communications company providing event rental & staging, in-house support services for convention centers and hotels, on-site corporate services, production services and more, is in that elite few. Begun by Mrs. Martelle "Marty" Markey in 1959 as a 16mm film rental company, the Indianapolis, Indiana-based firm is now employee-owned, with branch offices in five states. Markey's boasts the capability to provide audiovisual services in any hotel, convention center or other meeting venue anywhere in the United States. To provide flexibility, lower necessity for outboard format converters, simplify set-up and reduce footprint and weight of event gear packages, Markey's has purchased 14 Roland Professional A/V VR-50HD video switchers in the past six months.

"We were looking at small switchers, looking for something that was really compact," shares Adam Rife, Project Manager for Markey's. The ideal switcher for the company's needs would be something, "that could do your HDMI, also possibly VGA – that still had both analog and digital worlds inside of it – and also with the nice component of actually having audio as well." Markey's General Manager pointed his team toward the Roland V-1HD, which led Rife to the VR-50HD. "I said, 'This seems like more of what we would actually use for our small mini-general sessions, small breakout room sessions, or where we need something on a smaller-scale basis – where we don't want to have an audio and a video person on a show. For when we have one PC with a couple microphones, or when we need a device that has a little more inputs, and then also has capabilities of doing four or five microphones as well. You can use a couple wired mics and a couple wireless mics because each channel has its own equalizer. The VR-50HD seemed like it would work better and fit more of our needs for our small-scale shows. And it's worked out perfectly. Across our company we now have 18. We have them at our in-house hotels and our warehouse locations." The hotel list that Rife is free to mention includes the JW Marriott in Indianapolis and in Austin, Texas and the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown, among other hotels.

Roland's VR-50HD is a 12-input, 4-channel video plus still channel multi-format switcher. It supports 3G/HD/SD SDI, HDMI, RGB/Component and composite video inputs up to 1080p (on 3G SDI), with internal scalers to perform automatic conversion to the optimal resolution. Its integral, 12-channel digital audio mixer has analog input on TRS/XLR combo jacks (four mic/line inputs), four line 1/4-inch TRS and four RCA jacks. Stereo analog outs feed XLRs, RCAs and headphones. Audio can be extracted from SDI and HDMI inputs and embedded for output with delay. The mixer features eight input faders (four mono and four stereo) and a stereo master out fader. Video effects include four-layer compositing of PinP (Picture-in-Picture), PinP/Key and Still. An 800 x 480 pixel, seven-inch, touch LCD monitor is built-in with external Multiview available on an HDMI output. HDCP support is included on HDMI inputs. USB 3.0 video/audio output is available for web streaming and recording (up to 1080p uncompressed).

As for the signal flow for a typical production, "We usually have an HD camera that will be used with SDI," Rife explains. "We'll have a couple computers using the HDMI inputs for graphics and video playback. We'll also have another PC with HDMI. And then a couple of microphones possibly coming into it as well, or use the four channels that merge the video/audio from your input over HDMI or SDI into your video channel as well as using it as a playback audio device. We've done productions with robotic cameras where we've brought in three robotic cameras and a PC input a well. The switcher's aux output is used for recording devices that can take an HDMI or SDI. Using the aux to a recording device allows the audio to be embedded over HDMI and SDI."

While Rife started out as an audio specialist, video became a part of his skill set. With that background and seven years of experience at Markey's, he's well qualified to review the application of the Roland VR-50HD within the company's productions. "It's an all-around great piece of equipment when we have small-to-medium general sessions. It allows for one person to control the microphones and control the inputs, it's a perfect device. Having the layering capabilities with PinP, PinP/key and Stills is an added bonus. It's very robust."

A plethora of I/O options and built-in scaling is another key for Rife. "Having the option of four HDMI or four SDI inputs gives you a great range of inputs to choose from. If you look at devices other people make, they might give you nine SDIs but then one HDMI input, and then require a bunch of converter boxes. We don't need to do that with the VR-50HD, it's all in there. It automatically finds your video resolution. Also it's nice having the VGA inputs as well. It's made things easy. Roland does a great job with audio, and having that built-in has been a great added component of the device – it's not just video, it's audio as well."

Markey's keeps its VR-50HDs busy, says Rife. "We're a nationwide company, we travel everywhere, we do road shows across the country and the VR-50HDs go out. We were just in Denver and we had seven of these at the Denver Convention Center with an arthroscopic organization with a bunch of breakout rooms. At every single site, we'll use them. We even had a company call us asking if we had the VR-50HD, so we rented the switcher to them – it's a known switcher by many companies. Lately we've been using the USB 3.0 port to stream to Facebook Live with no issues at all."

As Markey's Rental & Staging is well on its way to its second 50 years, you'd expect that they know how to adapt to changing times and chose gear that maintains their record of success. The Roland Professional A/V VR-50HD being a case in point. "It has everything you really need," Rife concludes. "That was the key selling point."

For more about Markey's Rental & Staging, visit www.markeys.com/. To learn more about the VR-50HD, visit <https://proav.roland.com/global/products/vr-50hd/>.

About Roland Professional A/V

Roland's professional A/V division is dedicated to providing solutions in support of audio and video professionals demanding excellence in both performance and functionality. Through the development and support of video and audio products, we endeavor to improve workflow and maximize creative possibilities in a variety of markets including [Broadcast](#), [Corporate](#), [Education](#), [Legal](#), [Live Production](#), [Sports](#), [Theater](#), [Theme Park](#), [Videography](#), [Visual Performance](#) and [Worship](#). Roland is headquartered in Los Angeles, California. For more information: <http://proav.roland.com>.