

Social Networking and Live Streaming

GTC WORKSHOP - Kingston University, London



WORDS: Bill Shepherd

Fifty members of the Guild of Television Cameramen (GTC) gathered at Kingston University in west London on Sunday 27th October for a seminar on Social Networking and Live Streaming. Participants also included media students and lecturers from Kingston University.

The one-day seminar, organised by GTC events officer Clive North, kicked off with GTC Social Media Officer, James Milligan, talking about the professional applications of social networking that are relevant to GTC members. James is a keen cameraman

and also a student at Lancaster University. A product of the digital era, he is an avid user of social media. He encouraged members to use what he referred to as the 'big three' online services: Twitter - a social networking and micro blogging service; Facebook - a social networking service that connects friends and family but used by businesses too and LinkedIn - a networking service for people in professional occupations.

More than five hundred members follow the GTC twitter feed at twitter.com/GTC_TV and James hoped

more members will become enthusiastic Twitter users after his lecture. He encouraged members to create their own Twitter user account in order to benefit professionally from timely news tweets which can be particularly useful for outside broadcast cameramen. Interestingly, GTC sponsor Sony UK has 90,000 followers and IBC had 12,000 followers, two organizations that the GTC is associated with.

The afternoon session was handed over to Quicklink Video Distribution Services Limited, a UK company that provides software and

hardware IP solutions for transmitting live and edited video news reports. The sales director, Bethan Hill, spoke about how to use Quicklink encoders and connectivity for IP streaming. Richard Reece, now the CEO but previously the technical director, helped to unravel the technical jargon during the informative questions and answers session.

The audience was keen to hear about the Merlin Backpack, a lightweight solution designed for mobility and flexibility that transmits high quality broadcast media streaming from remote locations. Features



Workshop speakers Steve Ryder of Stryder TV, GTC Social Media Officer, James Milligan, and Bethan Hill of Quicklink

of the system were highlighted, which include single touch transmission, end-to-end latency of only one second, and their proprietary high-gain antenna system in order to maximize signal strength.

Participants heard also about the Mini Merlin, which is a compact version of the technology available in both SDI and HDMI versions and offers also IP web-based playout.

The benefits of Quicklink's new generation of Ka band satellites were explained, which are now widely available and offer 10 times the capacity of the traditional Ku band.

Lastly, and the most interesting product from my personal point of view, was Quicklink's iPhone live app which enables journalists in the field to stream live footage, using WiFi or 3G. The seminar

ended with GTC member, Steve Ryder of Stryder TV talking about his professional experience of live streaming. He gave a personal account of how he has been using the technology over recent years, using a fully equipped transit van as a mobile broadcasting unit. He explained how simple the technology is to use, and outlined scenarios where he has used it: for example, in Afghanistan and at sport stadiums and at news events in the UK. He then led delegates outside to his mobile broadcasting unit and gave a hands-on demonstration of the equipment. Finally, Quicklink did a live broadcast using 'store and forward' integrated with file catylist direct. A fitting end to a highly informative and interesting one-day seminar.





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Student report from the GTC workshop at Edge Hill University

Anyone wanting to further their knowledge of industry practice and technology, within broadcasting, would have been interested in attending the GTC event at Edge Hill University's brand new, industry standard facility. The meeting offered the chance to introduce yourself to people within the industry who have an incredible wealth of knowledge. Having no ties within the industry myself and, knowing how important contacts are to help you gain a foothold, it was invaluable for both myself and all the other students who attended. It was great to be able to speak to GTC members and benefit from their time and get their contact details. I really enjoyed the mutual enjoyment of talking to someone with the same amount of passion for the medium and who could spend an age



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talking about lenses or cameras with a total stranger and share knowledge and experiences. The opportunities to promote yourself within the social media arena were fascinating and well worth developing. All the satellite sessions opened up a whole new way of distributing content at really competitive prices. Now the challenge for me and my fellow students is to determine how we are going to exploit this technology. I would welcome more opportunities like this event taking place within the university environment and I know I will be joining The GTC sometime soon.

Philip Curtis
Year 2 Film and Television



estuaryTV

Grimsby's Estuary TV is first of new local TV stations

The UK's first TV station under the banner of the government's local TV project launched on November 26. Estuary TV is going out to viewers in Grimsby, North Lincolnshire and East Yorkshire.

The local TV project will see another 18 stations arrive next spring. A total of 50 are planned across the country. Estuary TV will air a mix of local news, sport and magazine programming. It has eight full time

staff and will broadcast to 350,000 homes. The station has been running on Virgin cable under the name Channel 7 for 15 years.

The local TV stations have been allocated the channel eight slot on Freeview in England.

Applications for a further 28 local TV services are currently being considered by Ofcom.

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