



The Vaddio system, featuring the PCC MatrixMIX Live Production Controller, paired with the TeleTouch 27-inch USB Touch-Screen Multiviewer for control, is shown on the right.

Arizona Church Begins Streaming, Recording with Vaddio MatrixMIX System

With its ease of use, the MatrixMIX was put through the paces on the same day following its install, after which the church's first recording was done the next Sunday.

BY ANDRES CAAMANO

For about four years, the Wil-low Hills Baptist Church has been looking to make the jump to stream and record at least a portion of their weekly worship services.

About a month ago, in mid-April, those long-held plans finally came to fruition, in large part to the installation of a system that went from zero cameras to four, while also featuring the Vaddio AV Bridge MatrixMIX Production System.

While the factor of cost for years represented a significant roadblock to the church in moving forward on such an upgrade, David Smith, the church's lead tech, noted how "someone put a bug in the ear of our pastor about live streaming, and so we went forward with it."

For the church with a membership of around 500, the focus of the project was to add on a video and camera system.

Upon determining the extent of the project, Smith deemed an integrator was neces-

sary to provide the desired level of support.

Initially Smith noted that he "looked around and did not see a complete, one-vendor solution," for such an upgrade, and added he wanted to find a local company, whereby the church chose CCS Presentations, based in Scottsdale.

The initial work with CCS began by determining the project's cost in January, after which the church had its members vote, approving the installation. The project was the integrator's first at the church, and the work was finished Friday, April 13.

Instead of waiting a couple of days before using the new system for a service, the church ran it later that Friday night. "We had a youth rally that night, and I said, 'Let's record it,' to get used to the joystick." Two days later, he notes, "We did our first recording (during a service) that Sunday, and made DVDs and gave them to the staff, to have them look at things like stage presence."

The following Sunday, the church coor-

dinated its first stream of a portion of a service, learning then that "the guy running the cameras wasn't familiar with changing the exposure," Smith says, adding, "I have since written some macros, where we can do a slow pan of the camera, or can position the rear camera."

In the first few weeks since the church has been working with the new Vaddio system, Smith noted that "we've streamed the message twice, to a content delivery network, with a link to our website, and are streaming to our Facebook page."

As Dana Halsey of CCS elaborated, (Wil-low Hills') main goal was to get their main sermon saved, and posted to the website, as well as to stream some of their recordings."

Since the church now can record its services, Smith says the church is open to possibly expanding its number of Sunday services in the future, to three. If such a service were added, the church could then replay the pastor's message (which typically runs about 30



A volunteer at Willow Hills Baptist Church in Prescott, Arizona, works on the PCC Matrix-MIX Live Production Controller recently.

minutes), with it having been recorded from a service earlier that day.

With the MatrixMIX, it allows for Willow Hills to “split things up, and put things on the front (projection) screen, and different on the back,” tells Smith. “Our camera guy can have the pastor up (on the screen) preaching, and when he switches a slide, changing that from the computer.”

As part of the install work, Halsey notes, “The cameras system is pretty straight forward, and we connected it to their existing (audio and projection) system, to their routers, projectors, to the overflow room, and the production room, where they are able to stream.” The setup included two additional long runs of HD-BaseT cabling to the church's production room, with HDMI outputs.

Since the system first went live, the only issue that has arisen during those first few weeks, requiring a return by CCS, was to replace a line transmitter that had become inoperable. As Halsey explains, “that's pretty standard, by making sure that the new equipment is speaking to the old equipment.”

The collaboration between Willow Hills and CCS has been a worthwhile one, Smith acknowledged, adding that on such a project, it is key “to get a good integrator who will work with you.” In the project's early stages, he adds, “They were willing to invest in us,

even without knowing (months before the install work began) that it was going to take off, as we hadn't budgeted for it yet.”

In time, the plan morphed into one beyond just streaming and recording. “If they have a sermon, or a show going on, they could extend that to the web, or another location,” Halsey notes.

Initially, when the church opted to go with PTZ cameras, Smith was somewhat reticent, remembering his issues a couple decades ago after installing PTZs at another church.

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Upon getting a closer look at Vaddio's current line of PTZs, though, Willow Hills selected a pair of Vaddio RoboSHOT 30s, and two RoboSHOT 12s for their camera needs. To help arrive at that decision, noted Smith, was a visit to a church east of Phoenix, which had an identical camera setup including RoboSHOT 30s, and some other older Vaddio



An up close view of the AV Bridge MatrixMIX, which was recently part of an installation at Willow Hills Baptist Church in Prescott, Arizona.

gear, offering a window to what could be achieved with that extent of an upgrade.

In selecting those specific camera models, Smith said it was in large part due to how well the cameras handled latency. “I was concerned about real-time latency with the cameras, and it's minimal. That's how I got into the HD-Base-T line, to minimize the degree of latency.”

With the new setup at Willow Hills, Smith found some of the most significant benefits included having a 27-inch TeleTouch touchscreen for control, along with the PTZ controller, which all ties into the brains of the system of the Bridge AVMatrixMIX, the interconnects to the production room, shielded category 6 cables, and the distribution amps. By going with a Cat-6 connection, Smith added, “that future proofs us, if we ever want to do 4K.”

Among the system's most notable features include presets, color keying, as well as picture and picture. In addition, Halsey said, “we did a few presets for them, to get them honed where they wanted them, such as to keep track of the pastor as he is walking across the stage, as well as some adjustments to the camera speed.”

For Smith, the new system configuration is “very nice. It allows us to see our four cameras, our slides and bottom thirds. If a pastor wants to read a passage from the Bible, we can throw that up on the screen, and the congregation can also see a full-size slide on that screen.” In addition, “we can superimpose the song lyrics on the screen,” either serving as a confidence monitor, or “squish (the text) down to lower thirds.”

As Halsey explained, the church was looking for “something very easy to use, as they depend on a lot of volunteers from their con-

gregation. It can be customized by having one guy dive in with the presets, who knows the system. For others, (it can be configured) where you hit a button and you are good, and you don't have to do a lot of training on it."

When seeking the right solution for a system in their worship space, Smith relayed to CCS that "I wanted to do lower thirds, and wanted to keep it as simple as possible. The Vaddio could do lower thirds and color keying in its sleep." For Halsey, offering the Vaddio system was a logical choice since "cost-wise, it is very competitive, and Vaddio is one of the best customer service companies. We have had engineers test (the MatrixMIX) out, and had installed it in a couple of auditoriums and a couple other churches. It is very clear to set up."

In all, the install took a couple of days to complete, paired with some training. "The longest part was putting up the surface mount channeling for the cabling," Smith says. "After that, it went together very quickly." Once installed, training began, which as Halsey explained was "more in depth (with Smith), and then with the team, to bring them up to speed. It began with in-field training on the basics, with a few presets, and then we followed up with additional training, and took it to the next level." Areas covered during the initial training included adding words across the screen, scrolling, along with sending computer and camera images. Subsequent training then delved into creating additional macros and presets, and how to design a more customized system.

Since the work was done in less than a week, there were no resulting cancellations or delays of any services.

With the new configuration, Willow Hills finds that to have it work well, a requirement of four people is needed, an increase nonetheless from the single person needed prior to the upgrade, who then was then responsible for running sound, lights and lyrics. Those responsibilities have grown to where volunteers are now needed in the production room, handling the feed, putting the feed into an overflow room, as well as handling recording and streaming.

With the new system in place, Smith said that based on initial expectations leading up to the installation, that they have been fully met, and that "we have not run into anything that we have not been able to resolve." **WF**



Willow Hills Baptist Church lead tech David Smith works on a Behringer X32 console in the production room, while watching the various views from the four Vaddio PTZ cameras being used in the worship space.

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