

ABC57



Company:

WBND (ABC57) (www.abc57.com) is the ABC affiliated television station located in South Bend, Indiana. The station is owned by Weigel Broadcasting Co.

Situation:

The local newscast that was offered to viewers of ABC57 was produced by its sister station located in Milwaukee. Airing for only 11 minutes per day at 11pm, station management decided they wanted to open a newsroom at the station in South Bend to provide more localized news for their viewers. This decision was made in October of 2010, with the goal of having the first broadcast air in April 2011.

Business Challenge:

The management of ABC57 was tasked with building a newsroom from the ground up - including purchasing a facility, building the infrastructure, buying the equipment necessary for live broadcasting and hiring/training staff - all within a six month timeframe. When time, budget and manpower restricted many options, LiveU was retained as a technology vendor to assist with successfully getting live newscasts on the air.

Solutions:

- ABC57 contracted with LiveU initially to provide two of its flagship LU60 backpack units.
- The station's "multimedia journalists" are provided with a camera, laptop and backpack to take both live-shots for newscasts, as well as shoot in the field in HD, and use the file transfer feature on the backpacks to feed the video back to the station for editing prior to broadcast.
- Though the station now has a live truck with microwave and satellite uplink, operating it is costly so it is only used when absolutely necessary as a "safety net."



Results:

- The station is airing 2.5 hours of live newscasts per day: 6-7am, 6-6:30pm, 7-7:30pm and 11-11:30pm.
- Because of their success with the LiveU product, ABC57 now has four of the LU60 backpacks.
- The ease of use of the LiveU product enables the station to reduce staffing costs, allowing budgetary savings. Approx. 90% of the station's live shots are broadcast from the field by just one person – the multimedia journalist.
- By not using a traditional satellite truck, the need to have both a photojournalist and engineer out in the field with a reporter to set up a shot and get it back to the station is not necessary.
 - At a recent local news conference, ABC57 was able to deploy just one person to cover the event live.
 - The station's market competitors, in contrast, had teams of three people covering the same event.
 - The Notre Dame women's basketball team was playing in Indianapolis in the Final Four on the day of the station's launch in April 2011. ABC57 sent two multimedia journalists, each with a camera, laptop and one backpack unit to share. The team successfully provided two stories per broadcast, whereas the station's competitors, each sending a team of three with a traditional satellite truck, provided just one story.
- The flexibility and resiliency of the backpacks allow the multimedia journalists to broadcast live from virtually anywhere.
 - ABC57 has broadcast live from an airplane*, helicopter**, speeding train***
 - Ferris wheel and cab of a snowplow.
 - With the station serving as the media sponsor of an annual local festival, ABC57 successfully field anchored a newscast utilizing three LiveU units: one for each anchor, and one for the meteorologist.
- Though only on the air for less than a year, the station is showing growth in both Nielsen and Rentrack numbers. In the July ratings book, ABC57 tied with WDNV-TV, a longtime powerhouse in the market in the A18-34 demo.

As a result of its work with LiveU, ABC57 has created an efficient, flexible and budget-conscious newsroom operation that provides the viewers in South Bend, Indiana with timely, well-rounded 24/7 news coverage.

* www.youtube.com/watch?v=T595ec_t9Q4

** www.youtube.com/watch?v=JA_zRmqxln0&feature=youtu.be

*** www.youtube.com/watch?v=il66Xi6UA-s

Customer Thoughts:

From the beginning, our mission was to be a nimble organization. Our goals are to act quickly with breaking news, and to cover stories live, from more places with more people. We are accomplishing that with LiveU.

We've been able to cover dangerous storms live from a car, we've covered important government meetings from inside city hall without the hassle of pulling cable, and we've been live on the sidelines of Notre Dame football games. When you think about it, this type of technology changes a viewer's perspective of the news.

(Aaron Ramey, News Director, ABC57 News)