

Golf Channel: Covering Golf's Longest Day



Organization:

Golf Channel (www.golfchannel.com) - As the fastest-growing network on television, Golf Channel is a multimedia, golf entertainment and services company based in Orlando, Fla. The Golf Channel cable network, co-founded by Arnold Palmer in 1995 and part of the NBC Sports Group, is available in more than 120 million homes worldwide through cable, satellite and wireless companies. Golf Channel's digital platform of businesses is led by www.GolfChannel.com, a leading golf destination on the Internet, delivering unmatched coverage of the world of golf, as well as services that help the recreational player with how to play, what to play and where to play golf.

In 2007, Golf Channel embarked on its unprecedented 15-year agreement as the exclusive cable television home for the PGA Tour. Golf Channel is in partnership with PGA Tour featuring complete coverage of the season's opening Mercedes Championship, the Sony Open, the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic, and early-round coverage of the remaining FedExCup season, including the World Golf Championships, The Tour Championship and The Players Championship, the PGA Tour's crown jewel. In total, Golf Channel provides coverage of 47 PGA Tour events.

Situation:

Golf Channel and GolfChannel.com wanted to provide viewers with unprecedented live access to the PGA Qualifiers, and to devote an entire day of programming and live updates from 11 golf courses across the US in a project titled "Golf's Longest Day". The qualifiers were scheduled to take place in different locations around the USA, including San Francisco CA, Far Hills NJ, Columbus OH and Memphis TN. Nearly 800 players attempted to qualify for 58 spots available for the U.S. Open at The Olympic Club. Golf Channel describes the event as their version of Election Day, requiring live feeds from multiple locations throughout the day.

Background:

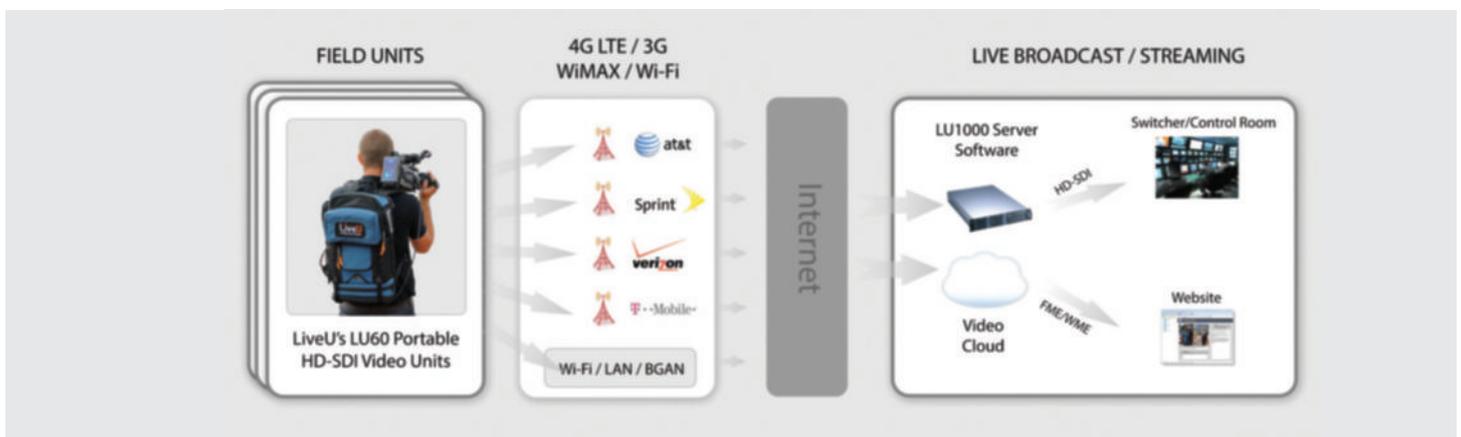
With nine locations based in different states, the Golf Channel needed a highly portable and cost-effective solution for providing real-time coverage on the day of the qualifiers. Previously, the Golf Channel used satellite trucks for live coverage, however the cost of deploying 11 satellite trucks in different locations was prohibitive, and the trucks themselves were not very flexible. LiveU cellular-bonding uplink technology was used for the first time to cover an event of this scale.

Solutions:

Multiple LiveU LU60 backpacks were deployed to transmit live video from the qualifiers to Golf Channel's TV channel and online site from 7.00am until midnight on the day of the event.

- Camera operators in nine different states used the LU60s to cover 50 reporters discussing the qualifiers, interviewing the golfers and providing real-time feedback on the results as they came in.
- All video was streamed to the same multi-server in Golf Channel's Orlando, Florida studio.
- The control room alternated between the nine different camera operators' coverage throughout the day for ongoing live coverage. Video clips and golf highlights were mixed in with the video.
- Many of the nine camera teams had used LiveU for the first time during the event, and only required brief training the day before to be up to speed.

LiveU Workflow:



Results:

The qualifiers were successfully covered live across all the locations on Golf Channel's TV channel and web site:

- Live interviews, analysis and scoring updates took place throughout the day. In addition to the 11 section sites, the network had reporters at The Olympic Club and at the U.S. Golf Association's headquarters in New Jersey.
- "Golf's Longest Day" began with an expanded, 4-hour version of "Morning Drive" from 7-11 a.m. ET. Three "Golf Central" specials covered emerging stories, interviews and live reports.
- The Golf Channel web site (GolfChannel.com) complemented the coverage with news, scoring updates and special social media content from the Golf Channel reporters covering the qualifiers.

Golf Channel repeated the project with LiveU in the subsequent two years (2012 and 2013), using LU70 units in the 2013 qualifiers with a similar workflow.



Golf Channel PGA