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Unanimous election success for Trilogy

Trilogy Communications, a world leader in broadcast intercom completes another successful election campaign with the BBC. Building on extremely positive results during the 2009 US Presidential election, where sites either side of the Atlantic were linked using Trilogy's Mercury IP Intercom, the focus this time switched to the UK County Council and European Parliament elections which took place in early June 2009.



Pictured left:-

Barry Spencer, General Manager demonstrates the type of Trilogy intercom used by the BBC at the presentation of the 2009 Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade to Trilogy by the Queen's Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire on 4th September 2009

Trilogy engineers installed and configured a solution consisting of a number of large matrix intercoms linked together to provide comprehensive communications to all of the studios and other locations involved in the election coverage. The nature of the election process means that there are many sites, all of which could report results at any time. This makes it difficult to plan a running order and so communications takes on a critical role.

During normal operations eight Trilogy Commander systems operate throughout the news studios and are linked back to the SCAR (Spur Central Apparatus Room) which routes all audio/video feeds. For the duration of the elections the SCAR is aided by a temporary extension referred to as the Hub. Having combined the audio and video in the SCAR, all of the individual feeds are passed as packages into the Hub. In the Hub operators monitor all of the sources identifying which locations will soon have something worthy of inclusion in the broadcast. In addition, within Studio N9, the primary location for the broadcast, analysts examine incoming data and results looking for trends and predictions that can be put forward for inclusion in the programming.

The BBC has a significant number of Trilogy's Commander systems. These include a 6 frame, 576 port system installed permanently in the SCAR aided, for the duration of the elections, by two 96 port Commander systems temporarily situated in the Hub. The Commander systems are installed to provide instant, high quality audio communications between N9, the SCAR, the Hub and also studios N8 and N6 which were broadcasting BBC World and BBC News 24 respectively. BBC World and BBC News 24 were also opting in and out of the output feed from studio N9. All three studios were equipped with 96 port Commander systems delivering complete flexibility in all aspects of the election coverage.

Incoming feeds to the SCAR included a significant number of OB trucks and numerous regional studios. Another important feed to the SCAR was Jeremy Vine, the election coverage stalwart, who was located away from Television Centre in a 'state of the art' virtual studio which allowed for whatever on-screen graphics the director required.

Trilogy's range of intercom equipment is well known for delivering robust, highest quality communications and has built up an enviable reputation within the broadcast industry. Indeed these Trilogy systems have been facilitating election programming since 1999 when the SCAR was initially equipped with its own dedicated Commander system. This system carries out all of the talkback functions of the SCAR during everyday operation and is then only supplemented during elections.

Background Information

Trilogy has supplied audio communications equipment to customers in more than seventy countries since 1986. The company was originally formed to design and build video and audio infrastructure equipment for the television and radio broadcast market. It continues to serve this market but now also offers its products to a wide array of customers in defence, emergency management, training and simulation, oil and gas, gaming, and other industries.

Trilogy counts some of the world's best known names among its customer base. These include BBC, ITV, CBS, Hearst-Argyle, Fox TV Poland, Radio France, Arqiva, Star TV, Times TV, Qatar TV, Reuters and many others.

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