

RapidUsers

Digital Rapids to Provide Encoding, Transcoding and Streaming Systems for NBC's Online Coverage of the Beijing Olympic Games

Digital Rapids Transcode Manager and DRC-Stream to enable NBC with top-quality encoding and streaming of online content during coverage of the Beijing Olympics, August 8-24, 2008.

Markham, Ontario and New York: Digital Rapids has been selected to provide media encoding, transcoding and streaming systems to NBC for the network's Internet coverage of the 2008 Olympic Games from Beijing, China, August 8-24. The announcement was made today by Rab Mukraj, Director of Digital Media Delivery at NBC Universal and Brick Eksten, President of Digital Rapids Corporation.

Digital Rapids' DRC-Stream encoding and streaming solutions will enable NBC Olympics' unprecedented live and on-demand online coverage of the Beijing Olympics. 2200 hours of video will be streamed live on the Internet at NBCOlympics.com, primarily encoded from video feeds into web-friendly streams through the DRC-Stream systems. Streams will be encoded in the VC-1 compression format for a viewing experience powered by Microsoft Silverlight technology. The encoded live streams will also be archived for viewers to watch on-demand. Digital Rapids Transcode Manager, the enterprise-class solution for scalable, high-volume media file transcoding, will be used to convert affiliate-provided content between compression and file formats for U.S. domestic distribution.

"We're thrilled to continue our relationship with NBC by supplying our solutions for coverage of this year's paramount event, the Beijing Olympics," said Eksten. "The nearly unlimited scope of Internet-based video lends itself perfectly to coverage of an event of this scale, and our solutions are renowned for bringing video to the web with exceptional quality and reliability. We're pleased that NBC has again placed their trust in our technology and expertise for their ground-breaking online coverage."

"Delivering an unparalleled online experience is a vital component of our unprecedented multi-platform coverage of the Beijing Olympics. The Digital Rapids encoding systems will enable an outstanding viewing experience for our online audience through superior encoded video quality and robust reliability, while providing us the workflow efficiencies needed for coverage of this magnitude." -- Rab Mukraj, Director of Digital Media Delivery at NBC Universal.

Digital Rapids' DRC-Stream encoding solutions combine powerful hardware for video and audio capture and pre-processing with the intuitive Stream software interface, delivering reliable, high-quality, multi-format media encoding and streaming for professional applications such as high-end Internet TV and IPTV. The advanced, hardware-based video processing features enable superior quality and the most efficient use of bandwidth in the compressed result. Digital Rapids Transcode Manager provides automated, distributed transcoding with centralized management and exceptional load balancing intelligence for high-volume, multi-format workflows, increasing production volume while reducing operational costs.

About NBC Olympics – NBC, "America's Olympic Network," owns the exclusive U.S. media rights to the Olympic Games, television's most powerful property, through 2012, which includes Beijing in 2008, Vancouver in 2010 and London in 2012. From August 8-24, 2008 NBC Universal will present an unprecedented 3,600 hours of coverage, highlighted by NBC in primetime with live swimming, gymnastics and beach volleyball. In August 2004, 203 million viewers watched as the networks of NBC Universal -- NBC, MSNBC, CNBC, USA, Bravo, Telemundo, and NBC's HD affiliates -- offered a then record 1,210 hours of Olympic coverage from Athens. For additional information, go to NBCOlympics.com, a year-round destination for fans of Olympic sports, featuring news, Beijing previews, athlete features, expert blogs, photos, Olympic video from the NBC archives and social tools enabling users to build communities around their favorite sports, post comments and blogs.

About Digital Rapids Corporation – Digital Rapids is a leading developer of professional hardware and software solutions for video ingest, encoding, transcoding, protection, streaming, and delivery. Digital Rapids offers solutions that scale from individual applications to enterprise and global workflows, with the proven expertise to help our customers maximize their productivity and the value of their content in the evolving digital media market. Digital Rapids products integrate seamlessly into new and existing post production, broadcast, institutional and media distribution environments, dramatically increasing the volume and quality of media produced while lowering overall costs. Digital Rapids Corporation (www.digital-rapids.com) is headquartered in Ontario, Canada with sales offices in the United States, the UK, Australia, Argentina and Hong Kong.

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www.digital-rapids.com

RapidUsers

Digital Rapids Clears Hurdles Behind Unprecedented Summer Games Streaming Experiences

Markham, Ontario: Technology from Digital Rapids – a leading developer of solutions for bringing television, video and movie content to the latest generation of viewing devices – is one of the key enablers of the unprecedented live Internet coverage of the Summer Games currently being enjoyed by U.S. audiences.

Over 2200 hours of video will be streamed live on the Internet at NBCOlympics.com, powered by Digital Rapids' encoding and streaming systems. The unprecedented scale of NBC Universal's online coverage created new challenges going far beyond typical streaming scenarios.

In the past, the live streaming of major international events typically started with the satellite transmission of a single main feed from the source location to the destination country, where that single feed would be encoded, streamed, and distributed. The content of that feed – the switching between camera angles, viewpoints, and storylines – was controlled at the source. In contrast, for the Summer Games, dozens of simultaneous live event feeds are being encoded in Beijing and streamed to the U.S. for distribution to web audiences. In doing so, NBC Universal is putting the control in the hands of the viewer, letting users watch multiple events concurrently while interactively switching between streams through a rich media experience enabled by the cross-platform Microsoft Silverlight technology.

Bringing this number of streams to audiences at high quality all starts with Digital Rapids encoding systems, which transform source video feeds into web-friendly streams. An array of Digital Rapids DRC-Stream encoding solutions is deployed in Beijing, capable of ingesting and encoding over 100 live video sources. Each source is encoded in three combinations of resolution and bit-rate, tripling the amount of encoding to be performed. The high volume of streams to be encoded in a fixed number of systems, combined with the unpredictable and varying visual nature of the content – from fast-moving events with extensive camera motion, to close-ups and wide shots with minimal movement – created numerous encoding challenges. Leveraging the inherent advantages of the DRC-Stream encoding hardware and software alongside custom development working closely with Microsoft, Digital Rapids is leaping these hurdles to enable this breakthrough online video experience.

"NBC Universal's coverage of this year's Summer Games is raising the bar for live event streaming. From the volume of live streams and the massive amount of on-demand content to the quality of the end-user experience – everything about this initiative is changing how content consumers will look at live event coverage from this point forward," said Brick Eksten, President of Digital Rapids Corporation. "Never before have live event viewers had this much control over what they watch and how they watch it, and we're ecstatic to be part of this phenomenal effort. The future of online event coverage is brighter than ever, and we look forward to our next challenge as multi-platform distribution continues to revolutionize viewing experiences."

Digital Rapids' DRC-Stream encoding solutions combine powerful hardware for video and audio capture and pre-processing with the intuitive Stream software interface, delivering reliable, high-quality, multi-format media encoding and streaming for professional applications such as high-end Internet TV and IPTV. The advanced, hardware-based video processing features enable superior quality and the most efficient use of bandwidth in the compressed result.

Beyond the United States, Digital Rapids solutions are playing key roles in the online coverage of the 2008 Summer Games worldwide, with leading broadcasters in additional countries including China, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand depending on Digital Rapids encoding, transcoding and streaming systems.

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