

Advance Technology Delivers Software-Centric SOLUTION

With a client's IT department opposed to hardware-heavy configuration, integrator turns to Hiperwall for the 4 x 24-foot video wall. **By Tom LeBlanc**



BEST MISSION CRITICAL PROJECT: FAIRPOINT COMMUNICATIONS

3 INTEGRATOR TAKEAWAYS:

1. Clients' IT decision-makers often want software (not hardware) based solutions.
2. IT trained AV designers probably closed this \$355,000 deal.
3. Design build for the 4 x 24-foot video wall took only two weeks.

3 END USER TAKEAWAYS:

1. If one integrator won't offer a software-based alternative, the next might.
2. Spending time articulating complex needs to an integrator can lead to a simpler solution.
3. The largest integration firms aren't necessarily the most nimble.

EQUIPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- > Crestron automation
- > Hiperwall video wall configuration

It's one thing for your firm to come up in a prospective customer's Google search. While that's an increasingly critical accomplishment, it's even more vital to actually be able to discuss and deliver the solution they're seeking.

What Manchester, N.H.-based FairPoint Communications was seeking for its network operations center (NOC) was not necessarily what a traditional integration firm provides. It's a good thing Scarborough, Maine-based Advance Technology isn't necessarily a traditional integration firm.

An inquiry that arose from a simple Google search led to a series of conversations between the telecom provider's IT department and the integrator's AV design team and ultimately to a \$355,000 project, says Advance Technology AV manager Jay White.

The six-figure contract could have been landed by a number of other (larger) integration firms, points out White, but those firms weren't saying things that the IT-centric decision-makers wanted to hear.

The heart of the project is a video wall. The folks at FairPoint were frustrated that the solutions pitched to them by integration firms were too hardware-heavy. "That's all our competition was recommending to them," White recalls.

"These are big companies. These are very worthy competitors."

White and his team recognized that a software-based video wall tool would be more palatable for the decision-making team. Advance Technology had recently used Hiperwall's software-based video wall configuration tool. White says it came down to taking the time to understanding the application this communications company wanted for its NOC and appreciating their IT mindset.

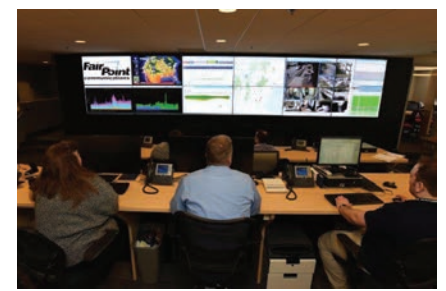
"They want to buy software. They want expandability," he says, adding that the FairPoint team was impressed with the ability to see data generated by computers in their offices in other regions. "It's all over the network. It's a slam dunk."

FairPoint serves data and voice communications customers in 17 states so there is a lot to manage from its NOC, which serves to provide critical monitoring and real-time viewing of the communications network infrastructure.

The communications company sought a video wall for its Manchester office on which it can proactively assess network discrepancies and monitor live streams from video surveillance cameras. Operators need the ability to quickly change and move through the information being viewed in order to address or avoid problems. "In the event of a crisis on the network, they needed the ability to immediately ascertain and identify points of failure and provide the ability to quickly troubleshoot and remedy the situation," says Advance Technology business development supervisor Kristina Johnson.



FairPoint Communications' 4 x 24-foot video wall is powered by Hiperwall's software configuration tool and automated by Crestron.



FairPoint wanted a video wall array and associated control that can dynamically switch to predetermined wall display environments such as standard, day-to-day operations and other foreseen scenarios. The need to change content quickly was addressed with Advance Technology's control software programming of an

display flexibility FairPoint desired. The plan is for FairPoint to eventually expand the mission-critical application and Advance Technology says that step will be made easier because of the software-based processing architecture. While the upfront planning and specification for the initial project took about four months,

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installed Crestron user interface. It created custom one-button presets for the configurations needed by FairPoint and provided ability to save and recall presets for on the fly customization.

During the review stage, FairPoint checked out two separate video displays in two distinct areas of its building, ultimately deciding it was more better to have a single, larger, 2 x 6 unit (height x width) configuration measuring 4 x 24 feet. Advance used Hiperwall's software to deliver that

Advance says the final design-build was accomplished in two weeks.

What turned out to be a lucrative project for Advance Technology that is resulting in a happy, return customer was made possible by the firm's ability to effectively consult with the client's IT department, notes president Rob Simopoulos. That, he says, is an increasingly common scenario. "The IT person is vetting out the integrator. If [we] can't speak at the same level as the IT person, we'll be done pretty quickly." **CI**