

Radio World®

Buyers Guide

USER REPORT

Reprinted from Oct. 22, 2003

Stations Go Mobile With Pristine

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Back in 1999, after several years of operating older DOS-based automation systems with CD Jukeboxes, it was time for an upgrade. As computer guru for our five-station Clear Channel cluster, I was assigned the task of finding a solution. After it was determined that replacing everything with new CartWorks digital audio systems would cost considerably less than upgrading the old systems, the choice was obvious. We moved to the modern digital audio system that offered better compatibility, state of the art features, and overall easier operation.

THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW

Over the past 4 years some things have changed a bit. Our stations became part of the Inner City Broadcasting Team and CartWorks has become CDS32 (Content Delivery System) and is now part of Pristine Systems. The two digital audio companies merged last year to form a larger corporation with offices on both sides of the US. Other things remain the same. Our stations clearly continue to lead the market and the new generation CDS32 continues in the award winning, benchmark setting tradition it was borne of. CartWorks has performed great for all our stations and unlike our previous systems, support has always been second to none. So when CDS32 became available we definitely wanted to check it out. We upgraded one of our stations immediately with the others following shortly. As expected, CDS32 went right to work with very little effort.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

Why CDS32 (Content Delivery System)? Pristine's new digital audio system is much more than the traditional audio storage and delivery system, although it is an excellent one.

CDS32 allows a station to reach out to its listeners in new ways.

Not only does the system broadcast 'Pristine' quality audio, it is also capable of delivering song titles, artist names, photos, sponsor logos, etc. to the station's website in real time.



REACHING OUT

Now that over 70% of all new cars include RDS receivers, it's time to begin taking advantage of that technology as well.



CDS32 can feed an RDS encoder a steady stream of similar content. In addition, CDS32 makes it easy to implement RDS flags, like the TA flag used to tune all radios to your station for traffic announcements.

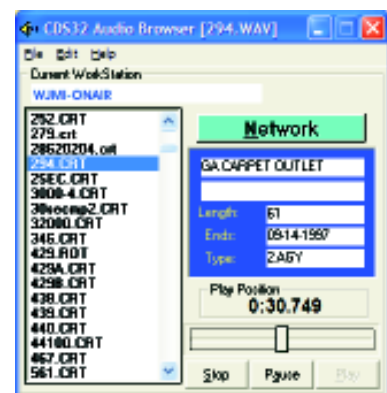
TO EACH HIS OWN

Our stations are a diverse group. One is live full time, one is jock intensive and live for half the day, two are automated Music-on-Hard-Drive, and another is satellite automated. Because CDS32 lets us go live anytime with the press of a single button, special situations, routine remote broadcasts and various weekly programs are easily accommodated. This is not the case with many of the systems we considered, some costing several times more!

CDS32 systems play virtually all commercially available music libraries or files. CDS32 plays uncompressed Wav, Mpeg Layer II & III, Dolby AC2, ADPCM, and many other formats. Pristine also includes a CD Ripper program (CDTrax) to speed up music dubbing. It has saved us countless man-hours.

We use DeltaFlex (Wicks Broadcast) for traffic and Selector for music scheduling. Both of these computers are on the computer network, so there's no floppy discs or paper logs to deal with. CDS32 reads the logs generated by each program and allows the operator to make changes to either, in real time if necessary. A comprehensive Audit Log function creates reports of what's played, what didn't, and any errors that occurred, in a variety of formats. We can also perform quick scans in advance to make certain all spots on a log are available. The General Manager and Ops Manager are very pleased because this has resulted in far fewer missed spots (\$\$\$) and fewer mistakes on the air.

Our traffic and sales departments really like the Audio Browser too. This allows them to listen to any file on the systems from their desktop PC.



CDS32's Audio Browser

CDS32 is designed to look familiar to radio operators and it does. Required training was minimal. The system is very intuitive and has a quick learning curve. Our jocks were up and running immediately with very few complications. That's not to say that the system is bare bones, it's not. Practically every useful feature available on systems costing three times as much, and more are built in. CDS32 presents them in an easier to use, logical manner. There are not multiple levels of menus and screens to drill down through just to make a simple change.

10 TIMES MORE RELIABLE

CDS32 operates under the incredibly stable Windows XP Professional operating system. Microsoft reports it as being 10 times more reliable than Windows98 Second Edition and I believe them.

IS IT LIVE, OR...

With CDS32's Vtrax Voice Tracker, our announcers actually see the music log on screen. They simply select the voice track position to record and click start. The last 15 seconds of the song before the voice track is played, as well as the song that follows the voice track, while recording. The announcer gets the feel of actually being on the air because he hears what will be playing in context. As a result, our voice tracks sound less canned, and virtually live.

A nice benefit of Vtrax is voice tracks don't have to be cut on the workstation that will be playing them. They may be recorded from any CDS32 workstation on the network. Not only does this free up rooms for other work, we can also have more than one jock cutting voice tracks for the same station simultaneously.

Another handy, standard feature of CDS32 that we take advantage of is the HotKeys. Each jock has available for immediate use, their own customized group of up to 48 buttons with beds, drops, sound effects, etc. they frequently use. Clicking on one of the buttons immediately plays what's loaded in it. HotKeys can even have it's own pot on the console so mixing is easy.

We added the external Push Button Box (PBB-24) so HotKeys can be minimized to an icon and run entirely from the button box.



PBB-24 External Push Button Box



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AUTOMATIC BACKUP

To protect our valuable music and commercial libraries, we ordered the RAID Mirrored Hard Drive option. Everything gets backed up to a second hard drive that automatically takes over if the main drive fails. We think of it as cheap insurance against a very expensive potential problem.

I also looked at touch screen monitors. They are nice, but not really necessary. When operating live assist, the majority of the time you're only dealing with a single pushbutton anyway. And by using large LCD monitors we have the option of placing them wherever we like, which is sometimes not within arms reach.



Pocket Radio Station

On the few occasions we've needed it, tech support provided quick response, and seemed to be as serious as we were about correcting the problem. Their friendly and knowledgeable 24/7 emergency response team gives us true peace of mind.

Overall, I'd have to say CDS32 is a great choice. It's very stable, easy to use, fast, and powerful enough to handle everything we've thrown at it.

Call Roger Lamb at (601) 957-1300.
Contact Pristine Systems in CA at (800)795-7234
or visit the Web site at www.pristinesys.com
** Reprint from original manuscript.*

THE ULTIMATE REMOTE CONTROL

We are also considering adding Pristine's 'Pocket Radio Station' (Winner of Radio World's Cool Stuff 2002 Award). This would allow us to operate any of our stations remotely via a PocketPC. One-man remotes, ballgames, live news coverage, etc. are now possible without having someone man the station's console.



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1-800-795-7234