



Ground-breaking PTZ camera use on Ed Sheeran Global Mathematics Tour

Panasonic PTZ cameras bring fans closer to Ed Sheeran's Global Stadium Tour

Picture credit: Nick Lepoutre

Challenge

To bring the audience closer to the action of Ed Sheeran's 360-degree stage global tour using only PTZ cameras.

Solution

12 Panasonic AW-UE150 4K PTZ cameras and seven AW-RP150 remote camera controllers with Panasonic enhanced firmware.

“ Before we began this tour, people would have said that using a PTZ camera as your main lens on a stadium show was insane, but I am very keen on pushing new technology and seeing where its limits are. We are doing that with the Panasonic PTZ cameras on this tour and there is no doubt that they are more than up to the task and are helping to deliver an incredible experience for the fans. ”

Phil Mead - Tour Video Director, Colonel Tom Touring



Pop music icon Ed Sheeran is used to breaking new ground in the music industry and his latest +==, ' Tour is no different. Fans see Ed perform in a new 360-degree production set-up, surrounded by the crowd in each stadium, with Panasonic PTZ cameras operated remotely to bring the audience closer to the action. Tour video director Phil Mead believes it's the first time PTZ cameras have been used exclusively in a global stadium tour thanks to the innovative capabilities of the Panasonic PTZ cameras.

"With the in-the-round stage design, we couldn't have anything to obscure the crowd's view," explained Phil, from Colonel Tom Touring, the video production company supporting the Tour. "A tour like this would typically use traditional cameras with operators but they would have been too intrusive and that wasn't an option."

The video production team was recommended to look at Panasonic AW-UE150 PTZ cameras by its partner the CVP Group, one of the leading Broadcast and Professional video solutions providers in the UK and Europe. After a demonstration, the team were convinced that solely using Panasonic PTZ cameras would work.

"We were immediately impressed by the incredible picture quality, the size of the cameras and their versatility," said Phil. "Another great benefit was the ability to use the crop function. It means that a single camera and operator, can achieve two shots - a full body shot and a close-up."

The AW-UE150 is part of Panasonic's comprehensive professional PTZ camera line-up. Featuring a 1-type MOS large sensor, the next generation PTZ camera supports high-quality 4K 50p/60p video, features a 75.1 degree viewing angle, 20x optical zoom and supports versatile outputs, including 12G-SDI, HDMI, optical fibre and IP. Simultaneous 4K/HD operation makes the PTZ camera ideal for those looking to future-proof their system.

There are 12 Panasonic PTZ cameras used in the tour set-up; six on the masts that support the whole steel structure, four at each corner of the stage and two on the large screens above. Images are fed back over fibre to the remote broadcast truck, equipped with production switchers, up to 300 metres away.

The cameras are controlled using seven of Panasonic's AW-RP150 remote camera controllers, with a large touchscreen display for easy use, a joystick for one-handed operation and simplified PTZ camera presets and tracing memory. The team consists of six operators overseen by Tour Video System Engineer Bob Larkin and the Video Director. Using the IP-based system, with video signal routing over SDI, Bob can quickly tag into any camera.

Ahead of the tour, Panasonic worked closely with the production team to enhance the system's firmware to increase the number of controllers that could be used together with the cameras up to nine.

"The fact that we have an IP-based network means that each element in the system is easy to integrate," said Phil. "For me, it is also a dream to be in the remote broadcasting truck because directing from the heart of a 360-degree show can be very difficult and distracting."

Now well into the first leg of the minimum three-year global tour, Bob said the cameras have been thoroughly tested and are performing brilliantly. "In terms of picture quality and resolution, these are the best-looking cameras I have ever used. You couldn't ask for a better picture and capability from a camera of this size."

Phil added that the build quality of the Panasonic cameras had also impressed. "Ed is an incredibly mobile performer, making up to 200 laps of the stage during a show. The cameras are constantly panning and tilting and exposed to vibration. Two are used on rails. Tracking and capturing that level of movement can be challenging but the cameras continue to perform as well as the day they first came out of the box."

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