

**MATT FEENEY on using low cost, low data rate IP connections in field newsgathering**

As one of Australia's three major free-to-air commercial television networks, Network TEN is committed to using leading edge technologies that enable us to gather and report news as cost-effectively as possible. Case in point, we recently enhanced our field newsgathering capabilities with the Streambox ACT-L3 software-based encoding solution. In addition to our six stations in Australia, we now have Streambox deployed in our London bureau – giving our European news team a powerful and easy-to-use tool for reporting breaking news or transmitting video files back to the news room in Sydney over low cost, low data rate wireless IP connections.

Having used the Streambox solution to cover a variety of breaking news events I appreciate how superior it is to

much of the pixilated video you see on the Internet. For instance, Streambox helped our January coverage in the Middle East by providing a simple and free way to cross live into Network TEN's news bulletins for our coverage of the Israel/Gaza conflict. Based in Jerusalem, our European correspondent Danielle Isdale and camera man Dan Ghia travelled to and from the border at least twice daily – a three-to-four hour round trip – because international journalists were denied access to Gaza at the time. With Streambox running on the laptop, they reported live breaking news from the region, free from the balcony of their Jerusalem hotel (using the hotel's high-speed broadband connection) into one of Network TEN's four daily bulletins. They still did live crosses using satellite connections at the border, but



*Network TEN European correspondent, Danielle Isdale, reporting from London*

Streambox frequently offered more options depending on location. The hotel's Internet speed was fast enough for the video quality to be as good as the material that is routinely FTP'd back from London.

Streambox was used in the same manner to file stories from Italy during the L'Aquila earthquake earlier this year. An hour's drive from the quake zone, our news team filed live from the hotel in Rome, with a Rome background, using Streambox for the bulletins that fell between trips back and forth to L'Aquila. The Streambox reports from the hotel again complemented the main satellite reports from the scene.

In London, Streambox came in handy during the first few weeks of the global swine flu outbreak. An Australian woman, Kate Corbett, was isolated in her home in London after contracting the virus. Wearing masks and gloves, our news team went into her backyard, set up the laptop running the Streambox encoder with the P2

camera, and – courtesy of the wireless Internet connection in Kate's flat and her mobile phone earpiece to provide IFB – she crossed live into Network TEN's 5:00 pm bulletin. This was the first live interview with an Australian swine flu victim.

The Streambox solution has proven to be an extremely reliable and handy tool for newsgathering and reporting. It's immediate, easy to use, mobile, and very effective provided that we have decent upload speeds, and free over the Internet. I'm often pleasantly surprised by how well the video turns out. Streambox has definitely enhanced our ability to cover major global news stories and bring them back live to our viewers in Australia. ☑

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#### **CONTACTS**

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