

CourtSmart Goes On The Record

With the proliferation and widespread use of digital audio/video recording systems in industries that demand a verbatim record, courtrooms have become increasingly reliant upon current technology for the critical operation of recording legal proceedings. To assist the country's

systems in session

courtrooms in maintaining the most accurate records possible, CourtSmart, a Massachusetts high-technology company, has successfully recorded millions of hours of legal proceedings throughout the U.S., Canada and Europe using its digital recording systems. The systems utilize AKG CK 80, CK 31 and C 562 CM

microphones.

"The requirements in the courtroom are rather unique," stated Andrew Treinis, president of CourtSmart. "We focus on the human speech range which is limited, in comparison to the range of an acoustic instrument. The pickup patterns and the way that speakers interact with one another make the courtroom a unique environment. AKG microphones were chosen because they outperformed all other microphones for our specific requirements, and we now use them almost exclusively in our installations."

The CourtSmart engineers, who have installed the most technically advanced audio and video recording systems in the highest courts throughout the U.S., put every piece of equipment through rigorous field tests and difficult situations to measure performance.



▲ CourtSmart's digital recording systems utilize AKG microphones.

This includes putting the equipment into live courtrooms, explains Treinis. "For a courtroom environment, bench testing or testing in a laboratory can only take you so far. So we put the competing microphones side by side in the courtrooms to test the performance range such as how much gain can we use before feedback and how natural and intelligible is the audio."

Treinis noted that one of the most important tests is the microphone's ability to "withstand physical abuse. This is a courtroom setting where some people's basic nature is going to be to grab and twist things," he said. "So the microphones have to withstand that and still perform the way we want them to. The CK 80 that we use meets all that criteria."

In 1995, Treinis created CourtSmart's fault-tolerant, database-driven recording systems after he saw a need in the industry to provide quality, reliability and support for courtrooms, law enforcement agencies, gov-

ernment agencies and wherever verbatim records are required. With the implementation of the CourtSmart system, courts can now "hear everything," Treinis noted. "The 'record' is sacrosanct—you cannot miss words or inflections."

Paul Trepanier, A/V manager of CourtSmart, agreed, "Our systems allow us to tune a courtroom to its specific requirements for the recording and capturing of the record. Using the AKG CK 80, the speech is clear, intelligible and regardless of where a person speaks from in the room, audio will be picked up."

With close to 1,000 courtrooms currently using CK 80 microphones (including the new Broward County, FL court complex that boasts 70 courtrooms and hundreds of AKG mics), Treinis also relies on AKG's support department, which includes NorEast Marketing.

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