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[Convergent Design Announces the World's First CompactFlash-based HD Field Recorder](#)



The Flash XDR prototype - front view

The Flash XDR

As high-definition is becoming more and more popular with the consumers, an increasingly higher number of manufacturers come up with all sorts of solutions for playing back or recording HD content. However, while the number of products from the first category is quite large, the same can't be said about the second group and that's one of the reasons why the people over at Convergent Design developed the Flash XDR, a device they tout to be the world's first CompactFlash-based HD Field Recorder. The Flash XDR features HD-SDI (with embedded audio and time-code), 1394, LTC (time-code) and ASI (MPEG2 over SDI) I/O, 4-Channel AES inputs as well as two CompactFlash card slots in a lightweight, battery-powered box. The innovative design utilizes scalable HD MPEG2 compression to capture video at HDV, XDCAM HD, or 50 Mbps 4:2:2 data-rates. By utilizing MPEG2 encoder / decoder technology combined with CompactFlash storage, Convergent Design has substantially reduced the weight (2 kg), power (8 watts), size (127x89x165 mm), noise (no fans) and cost compared to disk-drive or tape based recorders. The low-power, compact design makes it easy to carry Flash XDR on any shoot and enjoy a full-day of battery-powered operation. The rugged, all solid-state construction allows use in extreme conditions, (such as helicopters, back-packs and race-cars), where traditional disk or tape based systems would fail. Flash XDR writes video footage to CompactFlash in either QuickTime or .m2t file formats. When one of the two hot-swappable Compactflash cards is filled, Flash XDR automatically starts recording to the 2nd card. Editors can then eject the first card, quickly transfer the video (using the Firewire-800 reader) and edit while continuing to shoot. The laptop can thus be efficiently used as an editing tool, avoiding the lengthy ingest from the old Firewire direct-to-laptop capture method. However, the device doesn't limit the user to the HDV data-rates. Thus, the recorder allows users to dial down the compression and select XDCAM HD (35 Mbps) or 50Mbps 4:2:2 (422P@HL), full-raster 1920x1080 / 1280x720p video with up to 4-channels of uncompressed 16-bit 48Khz audio. In addition to the standard 1080i/p and 720p formats, it can also utilize 1080p23.98, a very good solution especially for digital cinematography. The Sony MPEG2 CODEC employed in Flash XDR enables selectable bit-rates, so users can match the rate to the job requirements. Moreover, the non-proprietary, industry-standard MPEG2 grants them a wider range of editing and transmission options. The device will be available this autumn for around 5000 US dollars, a price tag that clearly defines the product's target market segment: pro or semi-pro movie makers. We are just a few, but there are many of you, Softpedia users, out there. That's why we thought it would be a good idea to create an email address for you to help us a little in finding gadgets we missed. Interesting links are bound to be posted with recognition going mainly to those who submit. The address is .