

# Technology With Class

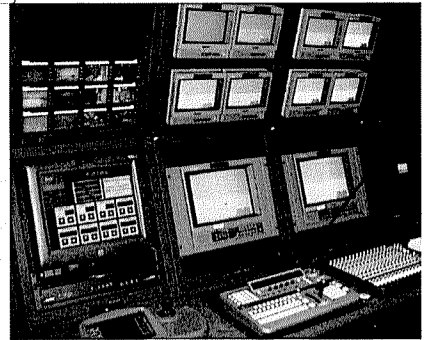
by Travis McGee

**O**n April 23, 2003, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill opened the doors of its new Biomolecular Research Building, an 8-story, 225,000-square-foot facility containing research labs and numerous departments of various scientific disciplines. A significant

chunk of the construction budget (\$1.2 million, to be exact) was put towards the design and installation of an intricate audio/video system for the facility's two large lecture halls. "Because it's a medical school, where every detail is that much more crucial, the main goal was providing a system that was going to produce medical-type quality for a

teaching environment," said Kim Butler, project manager for United Technical Service, a presentation, video and supporting network provider out of Cumming, GA. UTS, with the guidance of Atlanta, GA-based consultant Newcomb and Boyd, installed the building's AV components.

From the project's inception, the AV



▲ At the University of North Carolina's Chapel Hill's new Biomolecular Research Building, the main goal was providing a system that was going to produce top-quality for a teaching environment.

team faced the challenge of coordinating the technology between the two lecture halls, which seat 600 and 300, respectively. "Not many people want to link a 600-plus-seat and a 300-plus-seat auditorium together interactively," said Kris Kuipers, senior associate for Newcomb and Boyd. "Things discussed earlier in the design process were audio from every seat, but due to budget, it came down to a more traditional town-hall style, with roving wireless mics. But they did want voice lift for the audience because the rooms are so big. There are no operators, so we had to keep all that automated."

For display purposes, Sanyo PLC-UF10 projectors were used side by side to create dual images, which was controlled by AMX. Extron switchers, QSC 302V amplifiers, Sony DFS700A switchers and Symetrix Symnet with CobraNet digital signal processing is all enclosed in Middle Atlantic WRK-44-32 equipment racks.



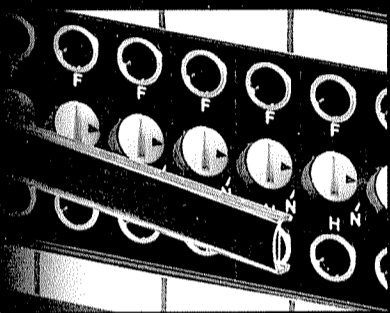
Additionally, Middle Atlantic SRS2-8 slide-out enclosure systems are used for equipment that requires front-access doors for service. The auditoriums are rigged with Atlas Sound MS-43E and EAW 997041 loudspeakers, with Shure wireless microphones and Sony transmitters, along with Fostex 6301BEAV monitors.

With versatility in mind, audioconferencing capabilities were installed in the form of an ASPI EF1210-TEC-P system with transmission echo cancellation. "They go streaming out on the Web with a lot of things," Kuiper noted. "There's audio to the lobbies so they can overflow."

According to Kuiper, maintaining the usability of a system without sacrificing any versatility translated into a complex control code, requiring considerable preparation on the part of the consultant and contractor. "The intent was that each space would be fully autonomous, but at the same time, any signal could go anywhere. UTS was real helpful, suggesting solutions rather than coming up with problems."

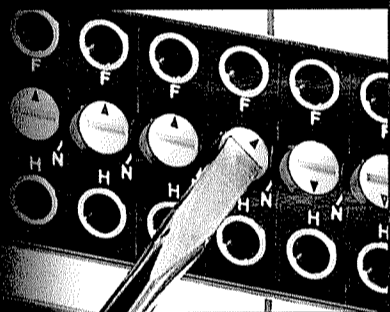
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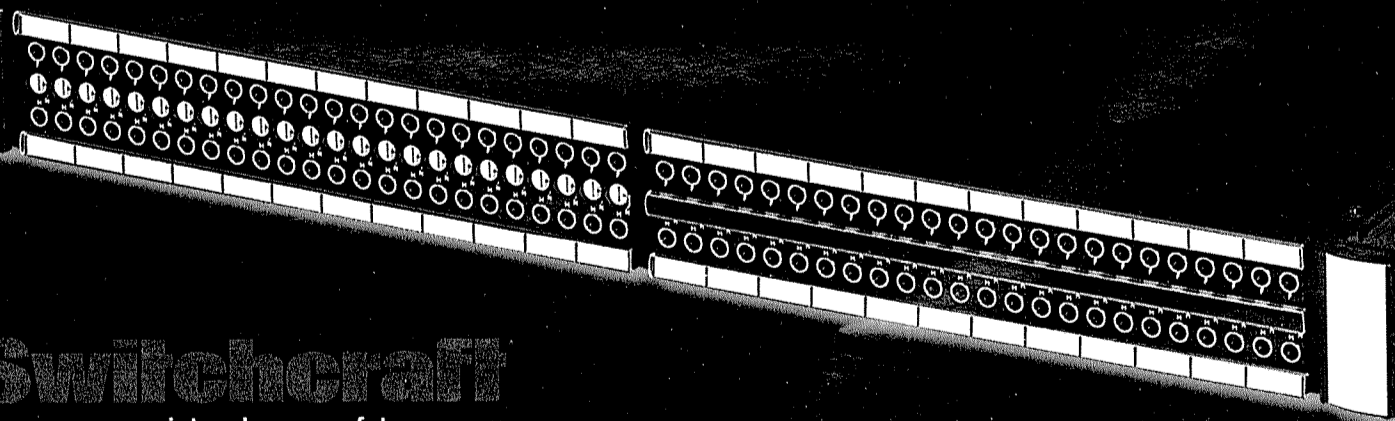
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