

Nat Geo Solves Workflow Problems with Matrox MXO2

Martin Nieto, producer of National Geographic's City Chase Series, is a happy man. He and his team have just completed the first episode of the second season – on time and on budget – thanks in part to Matrox MXO2.

Production problems plagued us during the first season of the City Chase series filmed in Rome,” said Martin. “We used Panasonic AJ-HDX900 DVCPRO HD camcorders for interviews and stationary shots and smaller, lighter, less expensive HDV camcorders for action shots on the move from ATVs and helicopters. To edit the show, we used DVCPRO HD sequences in Final Cut Pro but required a lot of rendering time to conform the action shots to DVCPRO HD. I estimate that about 20% of our editors’ time was wasted just waiting for renders, which was very frustrating for them and very costly for NatGeo.”

“When it came time to start on the second season – City Chase Marrakech – I was determined to find a better ingest and editing workflow. While searching for a video card that could help us, I was pleased to discover the Matrox MXO2 input/output device that looked like the perfect complement to our Final Cut Pro editing system.”



“My goal was to digitize all the HDV action shots directly to DVCPRO HD while on location in Morocco then avoid rendering during the editing stage back at the studio in Montreal.”

“The Matrox MXO2 surpassed all our expectations. It’s small, lightweight, and easily portable so we could start to work onsite while in Morocco. We simply played the footage out of the camcorder as component video and balanced analog audio to the MXO2, which digitized it to Final Cut Pro for encoding to DVCPRO

HD in real time. Back home in the post suite, we literally did not lose a single minute of an editor’s time to conform footage in post-production. The time we would have spent rendering was put to much better use creating more compelling shows with higher production values, which was certainly more rewarding for the editors.”

“We were so impressed with the end quality of the captured images we opted to use the Matrox MXO2 to digitize past footage of the City Chase Series and another series currently in production.”

City Chase Marrakech is getting rave reviews from the network and is set to air on National Geographic Channel International in over a hundred countries.

“Understanding the MXO2, setting it up, and actually using it was fast and easy. The full range of input and output connections on the MXO2 sealed the deal for us, making it a must-have product for our company. The Matrox MXO2 worked so well for us on the Marrakech project that I will feel comfortable using even more HDV footage in the next episode, which we will begin filming soon in Rio,” concluded Martin.





About City Chase

City Chase is the largest "Urban Adventure" race series in the world. It requires participants to exhibit teamwork, resourcefulness, determination and the ability to make decisions on the fly as they search for ChasePoints scattered in unknown locations throughout the city. Each City Chase event starts with teams of two receiving a clue sheet detailing a variety of physical, intellectual and humorous challenges, designed to push comfort zones. The challenges are designed to test Mind, Body and Spirit. To conquer this 4-6 hour urban event, 2-person teams run, walk and use public transit to navigate their way throughout the city, while calling family and friends for help, accessing the Internet, and even employing assistance of total strangers. The first team to complete the required ChasePoints and cross the finish line wins.

About National Geographic Channels International

National Geographic Channels International (NGCI) invites viewers to re-think the way they see television—and the world—with smart, innovative programming. A business enterprise owned by National Geographic Television (NGT) and FOX Entertainment Group, NGCI contributes to the National Geographic Society's commitment to exploration, conservation and education through its five channels: National Geographic Channel, National Geographic Channel HD, Nat Geo Wild, Nat Geo Adventure and Nat Geo Music.

Globally, National Geographic Channel (including NGC U.S. which is a joint venture of NGT and Fox Cable Networks Group) is available in 270 million homes in 166 countries and 34 languages.