

Magewell Debuts Streaming Decoder

Written by Frederick Douglas
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Magewell expands beyond video capture and playout cards as it presents a first standalone hardware-based encoder at the 2018 NAB Show-- the Ultra Stream HDMI.



The company says the encoder is designed for users wanting to stream but have limited technical knowledge. Initial configuration comes over network or Bluetooth connectivity and app, and once encoding and destination parameters are set (such as entering Facebook or YouTube keys) recording and live streaming can be started or stopped with the physical buttons or app.

It natively streams to Twitch, YouTube and Facebook Live, as well as custom-specified RTMP servers. Streams can be output to multiple target services simultaneously, and the smartphone app allows monitoring through a real-time video preview. The Ultra Stream HDMI captures, encodes and streams video up to 1080p via HDMI from sources such as video cameras, players and game consoles. It also supports 4K HDMI inputs at 60fps with 4:3:0 colour subsampling, down-converting them automatically to HD (H.264) for recording and streaming.

An analog microphone input allows for embedded HDMI audio, with a headphone output for monitoring. HDMI loop-through connectivity enables source signals to be sent simultaneously to a monitor or projector without need for an HDMI splitter.

The Ultra Stream HDMI can also record video as MP4 to a directly-connected USB drive or paired smartphone. Footage can be recorded in a loop or embedded storage within the unit for subsequent previewing and downloading. The unit supports H.264 video compression and AAC audio, with HEVC encoding and recording planned for a future update. Users can specify two distinct combinations of resolution, frame rate and bitrate, enabling simultaneous recording and streaming with different parameters, and the app can capture still frames.

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The unit is compact at just 94.2mm square with a height of 28.5mm. Connectivity comes through RJ45 ethernet and wifi.

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