

CASE STUDY, MARCH 2003

Banyen Books & Sound



Audio on Demand via Barcode Interface

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Banyen Books & Sound wanted a 4 Channel Audio on Demand system for their new store that would work using a simple Barcode-scan interface and buttons for navigating.

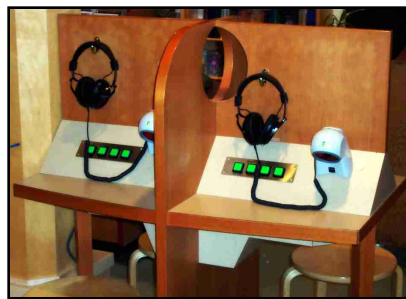
Allowing customers to preview CD's has long been proven to increase CD sales. Banyen previously had a cassette based listening stations, where customers could preview cassette copies of CD's from Banyen's large selection of titles. This system had several drawbacks, such as only having one copy of each album (meaning only one customer at a time could listen to it), having to take the time to copy every CD to cassette, and having to maintain behind-the-counter shelf space for hundreds of cassette tapes.

Banyen wanted to save time, money and shelf space by allowing their customers to scan the CDs of their choice. They could listen to tracks in their entirety or navigate through the them by fast-forwarding, rewinding or skipping tracks.

PROJECT DETAILS

The system was built around Visual Circuits' ReelTime 4 Card, ideal for demanding, high-end multimedia applications. This card is capable of decoding upto 4 MPEG Audio and Video Streams simultaneously. All CD tracks were converted to a series of high quality MPEG audio files and stored in a custom audio server with 480 Gigabytes of hard drive storage, which is mirrored for data redundancy.

The system allows up to 4 listeners at a time to sample any song from Banyen's music library, instantly. Customers select their CD's, put on the headphones, and scan the CD's barcode under the scanner. Large, heavy-duty push-buttons allow the customer to skip to the next track or go back to the previous one, or fast-forward or rewind within a track. A friendly female voice greets customers to the system, and offers audio feedback if an album or track is not available for listening.



The system also plugs in to the store's house audio system giving Banyen instant access to their entire music library for playback within the store.

ABOUT BANYEN

Banyen is located in Vancouver, British Columbia and is the largest independent book store in Western Canada. Banyen has more than 27,000 books, CDs, tapes and videos related to conscious living,

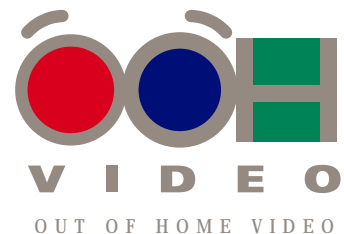


"Our new Audio on Demand System is truly incredible and offers many benefits and conveniences over the cassette system we used to have."

*Kolin Lynworth, President
Banyen Books & Sound*

ADVANTAGES OVER OTHER AUDIO PREVIEW SYSTEMS

Because more than one Visual Circuits MPEG decoder card can be installed in one system, there is opportunity for easy future expansion of the number of listening stations to 8, 12, 16 or more. The Banyen custom audio server system is far superior to CD or tape based player systems, as any number of listeners can listen to the same track simultaneously, from any station. All audio playback and navigation is instant, unlike tape based systems. The only limit to the number of albums that can be stored in the system is based on how much hard drive space is available and additional hard drive capacity is easy and inexpensive to add.



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