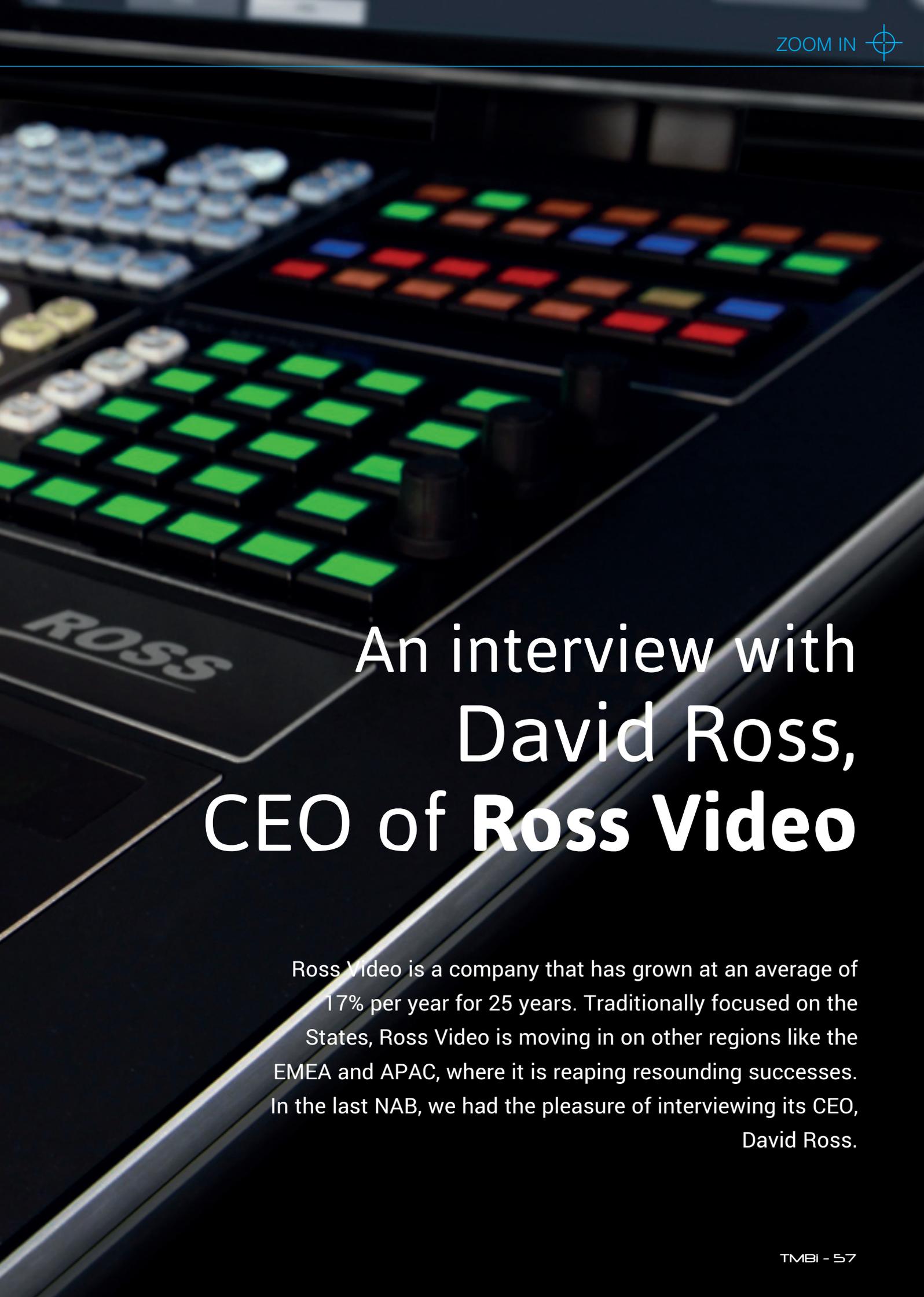


ROSS

Production Technology Experts



An interview with David Ross, CEO of Ross Video

Ross Video is a company that has grown at an average of 17% per year for 25 years. Traditionally focused on the States, Ross Video is moving in on other regions like the EMEA and APAC, where it is reaping resounding successes. In the last NAB, we had the pleasure of interviewing its CEO, David Ross.

Why did Ross Video associate with NewTek and NDI protocol? It took everyone by surprise.

Yes, many were surprised that we did this. There were two reasons behind this move. The first was that we wanted to be in all the video standards possible. We are a company that does HD, 3G, 4K over 12G, 4K over Quad-link and also, IP with SMPTE 2110, etc. We are members of AIMS, and we were also at ASPEN with Evertz right from the beginning. Now we find that there is a new video standard gaining visibility and it's called NDI, which again, is different to everything else. So, we thought it would be a good idea to learn more about this format and form part of it. The second reason was the launch of our integrated Graphite system, perfect for these environments. There is also a growing need within the NewTek and NDI ecosystem, which is that users need to work with graphics, from the simplest of forms to the most complex ones. So, we decided to incorporate NDI into our Xpression system in order to cover these graphic needs. And speaking of



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Graphite -which is another alternative to the NewTek equipment- by incorporating NDI, if a user prefers to work with Ross Video, they can switch from one system to another with no problem whatsoever; it just depends on their requirements. Many people cannot afford to work over IP without compressing with expensive routers and all that infrastructure that comes with it, but NDI works with a compression that permits working at a much more contained cost.

In your opinion, when will we witness the disappearance of SDI?

Perhaps in 25 years' time. The reason I say this is the following: Devoncroft held a meeting in this last NAB,

which I attended. They showed a great pie chart with who had adopted 4K resolution, who was in 3G, who was in HD, who was in SD and finally, who was still working in analogue format. This information had been collected from companies located all over the world, which means it includes countries from continents like Africa, Europe, America... With all this information on the table, a question was posed... What is the percentage of companies that still have SD resolution or continue to work in analogue on a global level? The answer was 40%. I nearly fell off my chair! It is funny because, if we look at the messages released by the marketing departments, anyone would believe that everything will immediately be IP 2110 without compression, but we are not at that stage yet. Far from it. The Broadcast industry still has a long way to go. We are really witnessing the very first movements. Some companies are beginning to use high resolution or an IP infrastructure, others are adopting HD resolution, and many others are still working with SD or even in analogue mode. Many have not even jumped on the digital

transition train yet. This is why I believe that the death of SDI, considering 12G as SDI as well, will happen in 25 years or more. If you attempt to do a fast transition and you only have a handful of employees, a couple of cameras, and that's about it, do you really need a Cisco router working on 2110? I honestly believe it would be too much of an investment. This is why sometimes it is hard for people to get that type of capacity in their installation, especially nowadays. I think SDI is simple and fail-safe. I would also like to clarify that I believe that IP has come to stay. As an industry, we are spending millions of dollars to develop a technology for SMPTE 2110, we are exhibiting first-class products on the stand, and we bought a company with this purpose also, so I would not want to be misunderstood. I believe in IP technology, but at the same time, I don't think SDI is going away any time soon.

You have not stopped growing in the past 25 years. What is your secret?

Growing non-stop for 25 years is not a matter of doing one thing right. It is more a matter of not doing

loads of things wrong! I mean, if I set goals too high, if I follow bad policies, if I don't have a committed workforce that on top of that doesn't work well in a team, if I don't have good personnel... Then I would fail. If you try to move too fast... That will ruin you. If you decide to run with venture capital companies in your business, because you want more of a fast-paced action, they will sell you, and you will have to start all over again. If you don't choose the most appropriate technologies, you'll soon be dead. If you advance too fast when implementing new technologies, committing to IP and nothing more, you'll be dead in no time. If you move above or under the market level, and you do so too quickly, you'll be dead, because you'll lose your client base before you even get a client base. If you change your leadership time and time again, a new CEO

every two years, changes in management... You will also be dead, because nobody will have a clue about whom you are representing. These are some of the things that may kill you and must be avoided.

What are your expectations for this year?

One of my expectations for this year is the following: We have been growing on average 17% per year during the past 25 years. We have not experienced a descent so far, and I really do not expect -or hope- the company to grow any faster. If we grew by 50% all of a sudden, I would be asking myself "Why? This wasn't in the plan". So, my expectations are to stick with 17% more business than last year and continue with the plan, the decisions we have taken and the research that is necessary to invest in marketing and

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the companies we have purchased. I would like to reach new consumers who do not yet know who we are. There is an amazing number of potential clients out there who do not yet use Ross Video, and it is precisely there where we are going to focus our efforts. There are others who already trust in us, and I want them to be happy with what we have done with them until now. We have not forgotten about them and we care for them too. In fact, we do not usually lose clients. Attracting clients is a slow process, but once we achieve it, they are usually satisfied with what we do. The interesting thing is that, on a global level, a country in which for some reason we do not have a good representation is Korea. And Korea is making a beeline for UHD. They have decided to skip IP and instead, they want to work on Quad-link and 12G in their infrastructure. We have only just sorted out representation that has presented the brand there, and they have come to the realisation that we have many products that can cover their needs. They were under the impression that we were a mixer company and they did not know our entire catalogue. They have been pleasantly

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surprised at everything Ross Video can offer them, with all our solutions.

In that respect, Ross Video is well known in the States, but what sort of growth do you expect to see in Europe and the rest of the world?

Our growth in the States is good. The American market is one of a kind, based on the fact that they have more broadcasters than any other. They clearly have the biggest stadiums, the largest screens and the greatest

productions than any other place.

In terms of education, they have first-class equipment in the schools, which is something I have not seen anywhere else. It is a country where large corporations are doing so much high-quality video. Another important sphere is



churches. Even though it might sound incredible for other regions, churches are making some of the most impressive productions that can be seen in the US. Stadiums are also equipped with top-notch equipment. It is an incredible market that does not cease to grow, and we grow with it.

Having said that, we are convinced that most of our growth will end up coming from outside, from other parts of the world. We are investing a lot of effort in regions such as EMEA and APAC, where we have offices, and we are incorporating resources. We would like Ross Video to be

well known and for people to be aware of the catalogue of solutions we can offer. As I said before, attracting clients is not an easy process, but once you're there, it is not often that a client will stop working with us, as their degree of satisfaction is so high.