COVID-19 & REMOTE OPERATIONS:
PRIORITIZING YOUR NEEDS

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Responding to COVID-19 and Remote Operations

REQUIRED A THOROUGH NEEDS ANALYSIS WITHOUT TIME TO DO A NEEDS ANALYSIS

Safety of our team members and building are the top priority

GOAL: Get as many people out of the building as quickly and effectively as possible

STARTED WITH: Who can't leave?

- Master Control
- Director
- Booth Producer

How do we make it possible for *everyone* else to work remotely?

Prioritize operational needs then presentation needs

ANCHORS/REPORTERS/WEATHER:

- Started simple with TVU Anywhere on cell phones and Skype on laptops
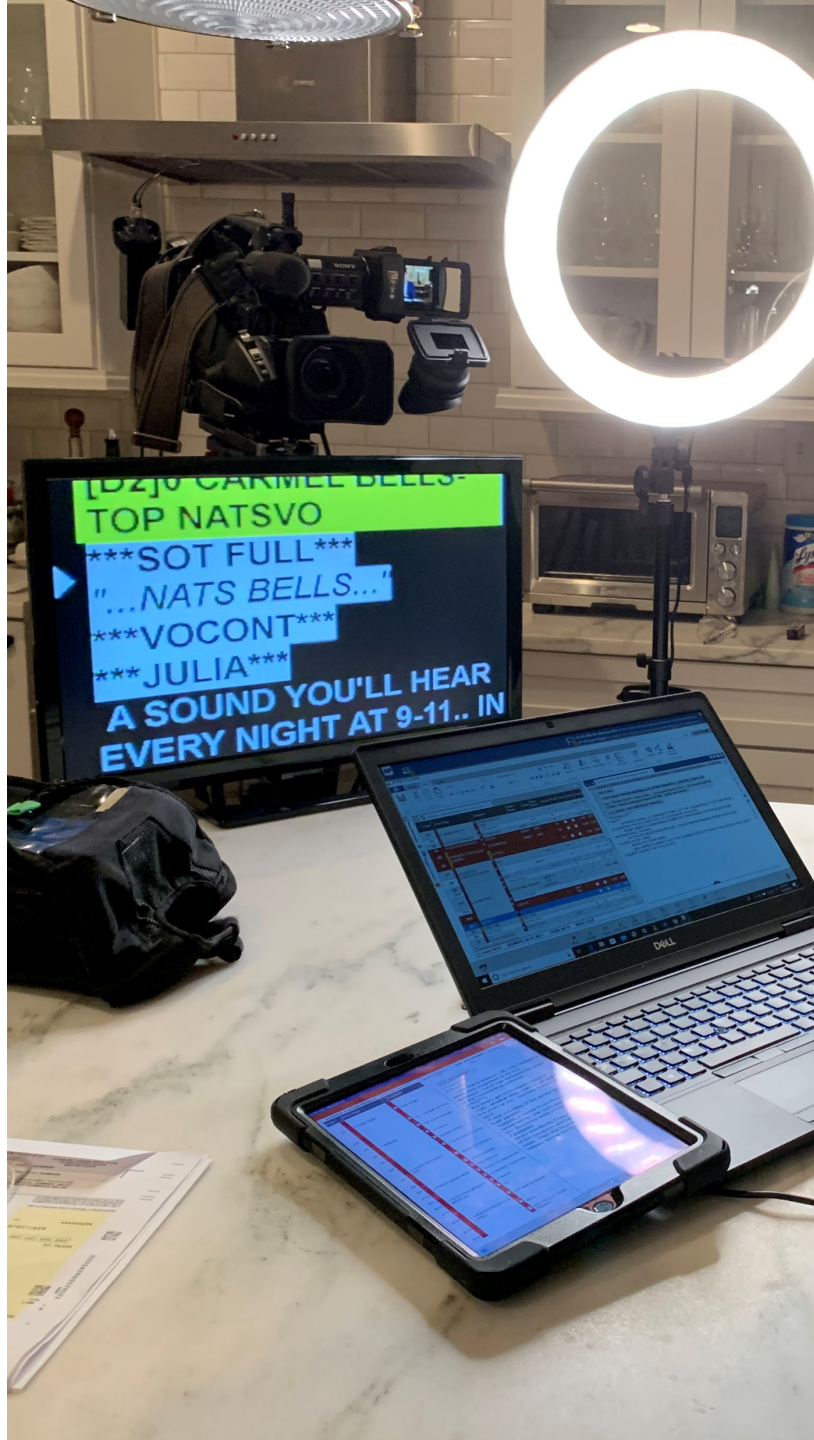- As talent allowed, dedicated setup built in their home

PRODUCTION:

- Director stays in building, utilizing automated control room
- Assistant Director codes from home, especially on longer shows (morning/evening blocks)

EDITORS/ASSIGNMENT DESK/SUPPORT:

- Sent desktop and laptop computers home for editing
- Setup Google Voice numbers for call forwarding and hunt groups

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How do we make sure anchors have what they need?

Focused on necessary items first:

- Camera
- Transmission
- Lighting
- Teleprompter
- NRCS access

Anchor KISS setup:

- Turn on camera
- Turn on TVU backpack
  - Handles transmission and return video (in this case prompter)
- Sign in to VPN for NRCS access

Weather KISS setup:

- Make Skype call to station

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Editing from home
AKA: How will that work?!

- Experimented with Remote Desktop Protocol and TeamViewer
  - Too much latency for news editing, inability to do fine editing quickly
  - Works for promotion and sales bag-and-tags
- Focused on employees with access to +200 Mbps connections
  - Cautious about those with cable modems, looked for fiber connectivity
- Pull video from station network over VPN
- Send back to station as MP4 to be transcoded for playout
  - Either automatically (Bitcentral Precis) or using RDP
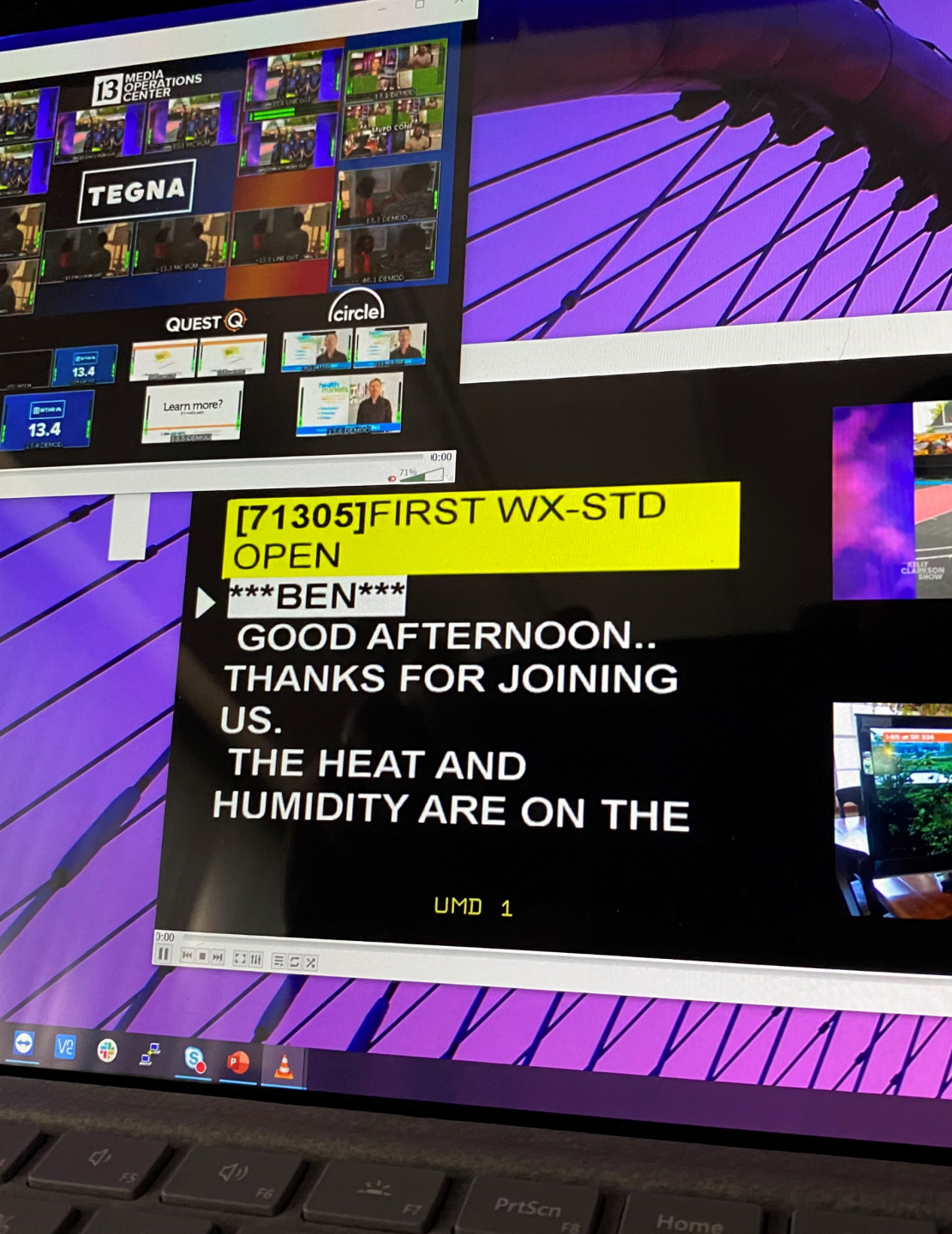
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What will impact the viewer's experience?

Fullscreen weather graphics get boring

Doublebox of graphics and weathercaster doesn't work for all talent

- Chuck Lofton uses TeamViewer to build his weather graphics in a Baron Lynx system

- Hooked up HDMI from his laptop to a 36" TV

- Weather graphics in monitor are just a second TeamViewer session

- Allows Chuck to turn and interact with his graphics

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Look for ways to improve, but don't force what's not needed

- ✓ H.265 streams built in-house using ffmpeg and Blackmagic Decklink Duo cards provide high-quality, low-latency streams to remote crews
- ✗ Dedicated H.265 streaming boxes purchased for producers to see multiviews at home
- ✓ Remote router control allows digital desk to manage framesyncs and streaming destinations from home, without calling Master Control
- ✗ Remove all producers from building and booth from home
- ✓ VoIP vendor offers soft phone option to enable better call tracking for desk team working at home

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