



No second takes: NETGEAR keeps Survivor Québec on air in the jungle

When Headroom Productions set up their audio infrastructure for Survivor Québec in the remote Pearl Islands of Panama, there was no room for network failure.

Every tribal council, every immunity challenge, every reaction from the show's host had to be captured perfectly from the first time, every time. Underpinning the entire audio workflow: a Dante network running on NETGEAR M4250 AV Line switches that proved as resilient as the contestants themselves.

Television's harshest broadcast environment

Headroom Productions Inc is a Montreal-based broadcast audio specialist trusted with some of North America's most demanding live and location productions. Their work on Survivor Québec, the French-language

adaptation of the globally recognized reality format, took their team to one of the most inhospitable production environments imaginable: the Pearl Islands of Panama. Daily temperatures exceed 104°F/40°C while tides shift by more than four meters between morning and evening. And every single day, all equipment travels by speedboat between island locations.

For every challenge on Survivor, the temporary outside broadcast environment has to be constructed, commissioned, and dismantled daily. That means that the audio team must deploy systems that are fast to set up, completely reliable under pressure, and capable of surviving conditions that would compromise lesser equipment within days.

“I’m the network engineer on these productions. Switching to the M4250 switches with the NETGEAR AV OS™ has really helped me cut down on show prep time. Now almost any of my technicians, from basic to expert, can handle the setup. And with the Master GUI in NETGEAR’s Engage controller, I’m still able to fine-tune more complex configurations when needed.”

Jean-Sébastien Roy, President, Headroom Productions

A Dante network built for the field

Headroom designed their audio infrastructure around a distributed Dante network, with the switching backbone provided by NETGEAR M4250 AV Line switches. Two Turtle AV Mineola 8x8 Dante Audio Bridges were deployed at either end of the system: one in a field rack positioned close to the game area, connected back to the main system via fiber; the other in the control room, managing audio traffic through the production communication system using a Riedel Bolero intercom and a Riedel NSA network stream adapter.

The field rack handled program audio feeds, distribution to wireless transmitters, feeds for boom operators, and backup recording paths in the event of wireless system failure. This provides the production with redundancy options even in the most remote locations. Feeding into the network from the control room rack were multiple professional wireless receive platforms running simultaneously, including Shure Axient Digital, Wisycom and Sennheiser SR300 systems. They are all aggregated through the NETGEAR AV switch into the Dante network.

“Durability and resistance of the equipment is a big concern for us. We are talking 40+ degrees Celsius, tides of more than four metres in the same day, loading in and loading out every day, bumpy rides in speedboats, sand, dust, humidity and salt water.”

Roxanne, Head of Audio,
Headroom Productions



Life-changing technology for broadcast audio

Switching the show on

- M4250-10G2F-POE+
- M4250-26G4F-POE++
- M4250-40G8F-POE+

Headroom Productions’ commitment to NETGEAR AV switching runs deeper than a single production. Jean-Sébastien Roy, President of Headroom Productions, describes the company as long-standing advocates of the platform. “We were early adopters, and our approach to audio system design has been shaped by the capabilities of the NETGEAR AV switches.”



“We’ve been a power user of the NETGEAR AV line for years. We were early adopters. They were life-changing products for us. NETGEAR AV switches just make everything so much faster and easier, and I simply can’t speak highly enough of them.”

Jean-Sébastien Roy, President,
Headroom Productions



The M4250 series’ NETGEAR AV OS™ with pre-configured profiles for audio networking and its AV-optimized management interface allow production teams to deploy complex Dante networks quickly without requiring deep IT networking expertise on set. For a mobile production operating without a fixed facility, that accessibility has direct impact on both setup speed and operational confidence.

When every moment has to be captured

In hot, salty, humid conditions that tested every component of the system daily, the NETGEAR M4250 AV Line switches delivered the stable, dependable network backbone the production depended on from first setup to final wrap, day after day, across the entire Pearl Islands shoot.

“The NETGEAR AV switches ran flawlessly from the first day to the last, through the heat, the humidity, the daily set-up. That kind of reliability is non-negotiable for us.”

Jean-Sébastien Roy, President, Headroom Productions



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