



NETGEAR keeps Ariel University's visual radio station on air

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Kol Acher 106FM is a visual radio station run by students at the Moskowitz School of Communication at Ariel University, home to approximately 17,000 students in central Israel. Across three interconnected rooms — a main studio and two dedicated podcast spaces — students learn to produce, direct, and engineer live audio and video content on professional-grade equipment. A single NETGEAR M4250 AV switch connects the entire production environment.

From antenna to algorithms

Originally launched as a licensed FM broadcaster serving the surrounding region with music, sport, comedy, and current affairs, the station gradually shifted to digital streaming as the demands of daily student-produced

programming grew. Cameras soon became part of the workflow; first a single PTZ, then several more, transforming what had always been radio into a hybrid audio and video production environment. That evolution reflects the vision of Dr. Tal Laor, Senior Lecturer and Founder & Head of the Radio & Broadcasting track at the Moskowitz School of Communication.

By the time Tom Bar Nachum joined as Technical Director two and a half years ago, the studio was genuinely hybrid. Audio was already running over IP via Dante. Video, however, remained SDI, connected via a non-NETGEAR switch. Tom, who came from a broadcast background and was deep into his CCNA studies, saw the situation clearly: half the studio was already living in an IP world. It was time to bring the other half with it.

“NETGEAR really helps people who come into this industry to get confident and tackle problems with ease. The switches handle a lot of the work and the configuration.”

Tom Bar Nachum, Technical Director
Moskowitz School of Communication, Ariel University



A playground with purpose

The setup today spans three rooms. The main studio runs five BirdDog PTZ cameras; the two dedicated podcast rooms each run three. Eighteen devices sit on the network in total, with BirdDog KBD controllers managing camera movement across all three spaces. Three VLANs allow audio and video to be routed flexibly between rooms so a podcast session can feed directly into the main studio, and the reverse is equally straightforward.

By broadcast standards, it's a modest deployment. But scale isn't the point. The studio is a teaching environment: every device is an instrument students learn to operate, every configuration decision shapes how confidently the next cohort of producers and engineers enters the industry. Tom describes it as a playground, a space where technical challenges are learning points rather than problems.

Choosing the right tool

When Tom arrived, the video side of the network was running on a recently purchased non-NETGEAR switch.

Persuading his manager to replace it so soon after that investment proved more challenging than the technology itself.

The decision came down to fit. While researching the move to full AV over IP, Tom discovered NETGEAR's dedicated AV line of managed switches and immediately recognized that they were built for AV professionals transitioning to IP, rather than for IT professionals learning AV. As someone simultaneously building IP knowledge through CCNA coursework while running a live broadcast education studio, he appreciated a switch designed to meet AV professionals where they were.

The interface that changes everything

NETGEAR AV OSTM quickly became central to how Tom manages the network. Coming from a background heavy in CLI work, Tom appreciated an interface that made complex configuration far more intuitive. The depth was still there; the friction wasn't.

In an environment where the Technical Director is simultaneously a teacher, a technician, and the first line of support, saving time on configuration is essential. Instead of manually working through parameters for each protocol and device type, Tom selects a pre-configured AV profile and the switch is ready. Time that would otherwise go to configuration goes back to teaching.

“The GUI is really easy. And the pre-programmed profile system cuts about 80% of the time since you don’t need to configure everything yourself.”

**Tom Bar Nachum, Technical Director
Moskowitz School of Communication
Ariel University**

More than a switch

Ask Tom what he values most about working with NETGEAR and the answer extends well beyond hardware. Ease of use leads the list, followed closely by support and the sense of community.

“The support I got each time I had a question was excellent. Everyone at NETGEAR was quick, professional, and always very kind.”

**Tom Bar Nachum, Technical Director
Moskowitz School of Communication
Ariel University**

On air, over IP

NETGEAR AV equipment

- NETGEAR M4250-26G4XF-PoE+

After nineteen years, Kol Acher 106FM is still doing what it was always designed to do: teach. What has changed is the technology students learn on. When Tom Bar Nachum arrived two and a half years ago, the studio was halfway into its AV over IP future. With a single NETGEAR AV switch, he helped bring it the rest of the way.



“I only have experience with medium or small AV over IP projects, but I’d encourage everyone to choose NETGEAR. It’s the go-to and as plug-and-play as this type of technology can be. That’s why I switched from the non-NETGEAR switch.”

**Tom Bar Nachum, Technical Director
Moskowitz School of Communication
Ariel University**



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