

EQUIPMENT REVIEW

EDITAPE 3670

A J-STANDARD F -111 ?
OR ECONOMIC AND EFFICIENT EDITING
FOR PORTA-PAK USERS ?

It all seems to have begun back in June 1972. If only Leo H. O'Donnell knew what he had started. He was the Canadian bloke who got up at a SMPTE Montreal/Ottawa Section Meeting and delivered his paper with the title 'Modifications to Videotape Recording Equipment to Provide an Improve Method of Editing ½ inch Recordings'.

Come 1974 and all seemed set for 'OZ' to once more reap the benefits of North American Technological development. The bright boys around the Film & Television Board/Video Access Project got out their airmail stickers, and City Video National Resource Centre started warming up its soldering irons.

It all appeared a bit too easy. The search for a high quality ½ inch editing system that is both fool proof and simple to operate has been a bit like the search for the Holy Grail of low cost video.

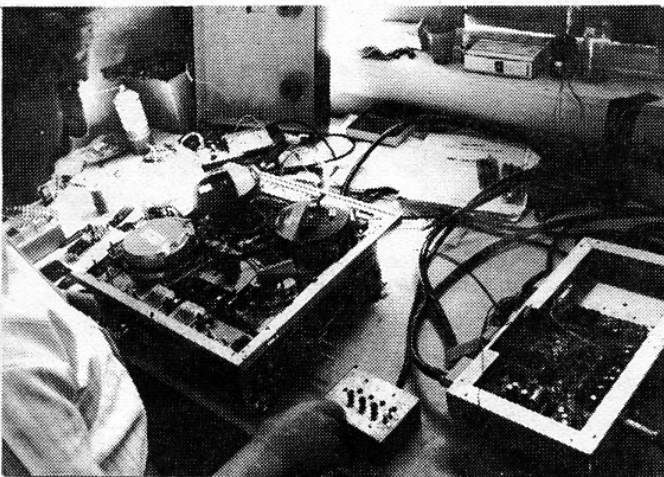
Porta-pak users would love to have it. Manufacturers have so far scorned it in favour of alternative, and no doubt, they think, more profitable systems.

Up at City Video modifications turned to 'Master Plans' to 'Master-Master Plans'. Technicians came and went—about six have worked on it so far, each leaving behind their mark in the way of a piece of clever, or not so clever, electronic trickery—one is fondly referred to as just 'the Relay Man'.

No-one seems quite sure how much it has cost so far, but the final production unit and modifications will probably work out around doubling the price of a commercial unit.

When last seen, just before the elections, Ron Morris and Peter Barwell were still hard at work on the prototype amidst a maze of wires and sweating heat.

As Ron put it "I think we're on the home straight now".



RON MORRIS WITH THE PROTOTYPE EDITAPE 3670
AT CITY VIDEO

We asked Peter Barwell to tell us how it all worked, and we reprint his 'Progress Report—3670 A.D.' with kind permission from City Video Newsletter No. 1.

"After a year or more of waiting the 3670 modification is slowly staggering to its feet and the prototype could be said to be in the crawling stage. The delay is mainly due to the information received from the Canadians, who should be praised for their incredible control over the forces that govern electronics. Having re-modified the modification for the seventh time we reached the conclusion that we should find out what was meant to occur and design towards eventually discarding the circuit diagrams and other information received. At present we are having several printed circuit boards designed which will eliminate foraging through spaghetti-like arrangements of wires (usually detaching a few in process) to find what point or component one is looking for.

We hope to be mass producing the 'EDITAPE 3670' at the start of the New Year.



PUSH BUTTON CONTROL UNIT FOR PRODUCTION
MODELS

The finished product will be operated by the central unit which initiates various functions in the 'interface unit'. The interface unit, being the centre of the whole creation, is connected to both VTR's and control unit. To do an edit (both assemble and insert) one finds the point on both VTR's, then presses the 'reverse' button. Both machines roll back (at the forward speed) for 5.7 seconds and stop. After the stop light goes out, the EDIT machine is placed in RECORD (the 'stop' function disabling the machines) and the PLAYBACK machine is put into PLAY. The FORWARD function is pushed and both machines roll forward. After 4 seconds audio erase operates; after a further 1.7 seconds, video erase, audio head and video heads operate. The video is initiated at the beginning of the first frame after the 1.7 second delay; thereby giving a clear edit.

The interface unit achieves these wonders by use of several timers and an interval switching unit and many, many relay contacts.

All previous functions such as VIDEO ONLY and AUDIO ONLY are retained and simplified, i.e., there is no need to judge audio delay on audio only and there is no need to hold the edit button down in video only. When the interface unit is disconnected from the VTR's they return to normal operation.

EQUIPMENT REVIEW – EDITAPE 3670

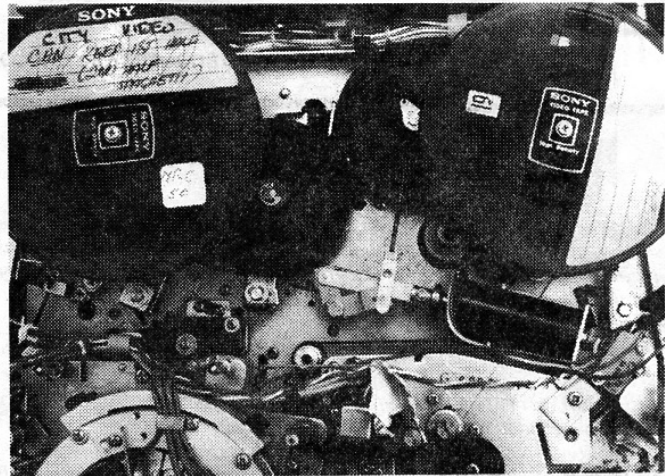
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The only disadvantage with this system is that the INSERT edits will have to be fairly short or else a picture roll might result out of the edit. This is due to the fact that the central track is erased and replaced with a new one which may not bear any resemblance to the previous track. Theoretically it could also be due to tape stretch, mains fluctuations, etc.. This is unfortunate but understandable as the equipment falls below professional standards in its original design.

The modifications will upgrade editing on the 3670's and should remove the frustrations and laboriousness from the whole process.

(Any blame should be laid at the feet of Peter Barwell, Aerial and Ron Miller – who only recently bought into this deal and wishes he'd stayed in N.Z.).

Peter Barwell



A MODIFIED 3670 SHOWING THE ADDITIONAL SOLENOID OPERATED IDLER WHEEL FOR REVERSE DRIVE

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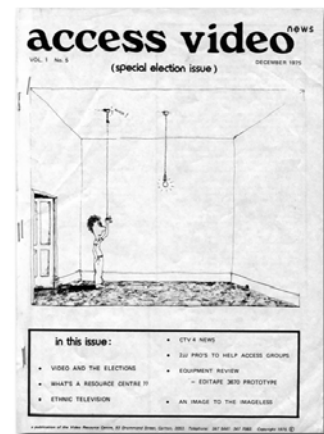
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