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Professional Communications Systems Completes Broward Educational Communications Network (BECON) Phase I

BECON (Broward Educational Communications Network) – Multi-Stage Project for Broward County, Florida School District

TAMPA, Fla., May 20, 2003 -- Professional Communications Systems, Inc. (PCS), a leading broadcast and audiovisual integration company, has announced the completion of phase one of a multi-stage project for the Broward County, Florida School District. The Broward Educational Communications Network, or BECON, is part of the school board of Broward County, the fifth-largest school district in the country.

The digital video storage system designed and installed for the school district by PCS is comprised of a Sony DMS-B150L PetaSite® Storage System and five MAV-70 MPEG-2 Video Servers, an Avalon Intelligent Data Manager, and Florical Automation Systems.

The two inputs of one MAV-70 server are set up as ingest stations, where media content is recorded digitally under the control of Florical's MediaMaster. This content, which can originate from taped sources as well as from live location programming or satellite feeds, can then be transferred under the control of the Avalon Data Manager to the PetaSite for storage on DTF tapes, each with a 50-hour video capacity (at 8 Megabits). The digitized programming can then be moved back into any of the servers for a scheduled program play-out, under the control of Florical's Airboss.

The video system is used to feed the school district's eight ITFS and two open air channels, one analog and one digital, serving the district's 240 schools.

Broward County Broadcast and Schools Engineer Manager Andy Furlong, who oversees the school district's video production and programming services, is extremely pleased with the new digital retrieval and storage system. "It's like we went from the stone age to the space age," said Furlong.

R. A. "Tony" Stephens, Vice President and General Manager of PCS, agreed the system is a giant leap forward. "We can't overstate the efficiency and ease of operation this system brings to the day-to-day task of program retrieval, storage and distribution. Its tremendous storage capacity and automation features, along with the excellent quality of digital video, greatly increases the capabilities of the Broward's video programming and production operation to serve the district's students and teachers."

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According to Furlong, the system is working perfectly. For now, the television system feeds a regular schedule of programs but Mr. Furlong and PCS have already started working on Phase two of the project, which will add a Virage media asset management system, EMC near lien disc storage and low resolution browser capability.

When all stages of the project are completed, a teacher in any Broward County District classroom will be able to search and view low-resolution thumbnails of available programs, and retrieve a program for immediate payout or schedule it for viewing at a later time.

Professional Communications Systems is a leading audiovisual and broadcast systems integrator specializing in design, engineering, facilities planning, project management and training. PCS sells, services and supports equipment from leading manufacturers, enabling the company to deliver systems that seamlessly integrate audio, video, display and systems controls. PCS, a division of Media General, Inc. is headquartered in Tampa, Florida with regional offices in Orlando, Jacksonville, Pensacola, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami and Albany, GA.

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