

An ICON rides the Korean Wave

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Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) is the largest broadcast station in Korea, and KBS Sound Forum is the company's department responsible for all of their TV post production needs. Recently KBS Sound Forum installed a Digidesign 48-fader ICON D-Control system into their Seoul facility consisting of a Pro Tools HD3 Accel DSP mix engine, a surround panner, three 192 I/Os, one SYNC I/O, and an AVoption V10 hosted on a Microsoft XP platform. This is the first ICON installation into a Korea broadcast station, and the first Korea broadcast facility to embrace this state-of-the-art technology system. As a leader of the Korea broadcast community, it is envisaged that this will not be the last.

With over 30 years audio production experience each, KBS Sound Forum Dubbing Directors' Lee Sang Bong and Yang Se Kyun have operated many consoles and used many systems including both analogue and digital. With so much experience and such a demanding workload servicing the post production needs of the nation's largest Broadcaster, both Directors' chose the Digidesign ICON system to accommodate and enhance their workflow structure now and into the future.

"The digital console integrates seamlessly with the AVID workstations AVoption|V10, providing the stable and reliable workflow to accommodate our busy schedule." Lee Sang Bong says. "We know by using Pro Tools that we are using the industry standard in digital audio."

KBS Sound Forum is responsible for most of the TV drama produced in Korea. With such a demanding schedule, it is the workflow the Director's have established that ensures high quality productions such as Seoul 1945 (the story of the Korean War), Spring Waltz and Drama City can still be achieved within the tight time frames given.

"Digidesign provides the best solution for a broadcast system," Lee Sang Bong says. "It is also the most cost-effective."

In KBS, video editors send the final copies to KBS Sound Forum either on Beta tape or as Avid or QuickTime files. The mixing engineers then either synchronize Pro Tools with the Beta tape or bring the Avid or QuickTime files into Pro Tools by creating a movie track for recording, editing, dubbing and mixing.

"Speed is critical when you have such a demanding schedule with high quality expectations," Yang Se Kyun says. "ICON offers us a quick and flexible workflow that delivers product of the highest quality demanded by our audiences".

It is not just the Korean audience that Yang Se Kyun is referring to. KBS produces and delivers numerous Korean TV productions right across Asia. These productions, particularly TV dramas, have attracted a large audience in Japan, China and other parts of the region, and form part of what is now referred to as the 'Korean Wave'.

The Korean Wave is a recent phenomenon regarding the insatiable demand across Asia for high quality Korean TV dramas and movies and music delivered in 5.1 surround on DVD. This began with the KBS produced TV drama Winter Sonata, which was particularly popular in Japan, and has followed with other KBS productions Autumn In My Heart and Sorry, I Love You.

The Korea Wave has encouraged Korea broadcasters, filmmakers, producers and musicians to plan a large number of projects to meet this demand. There has also been a significant increase in the number of projects undertaken by non-Korea based companies wanting to work together with Korea talent and technicians.

"Our mixing engineers produce high quality 5.1 surround mix DVD's to keep pace with the recent Korean Wave," Lee Sang Bong says. "KBS Sound Forum staff is working so hard, and the Digidesign ICON is a great asset under such pressure."

To enable this huge amount of film and video to be produced in surround and distributed quickly, KBS Sound Forum were impressed by the surround panner option available with the ICON. They believe that it is the easiest way to mix in the surround format, particularly with Pro Tools powerful automation features.

"Features such as touch screen, custom assignment and joysticks to control plug-ins parameters are of tremendous benefit," Yang Se Kyun says. "We can't imagine any surround mixing without the ICON surround panner."

"The surround panner option for the ICON system is the perfect tool for us to achieve the best result quickly and effectively." Lee Sang Bong says.

The ability to customise faders on the ICON was another feature that the Directors' were keen to explore. The benefit of being able to directly access any channel they want, when they want, particularly when working on a large project was very appealing.

"If you work a large or complex sessions, it is often difficult to remember the track order or other information. But we don't need to be worry about that because of the custom faders," Yang Se Kyun says. "The more complex your session, the more valuable custom faders are, and the greater their merit."

The Directors' described how they use to work without customised faders. This process involved pushing buttons continuously to go into and view some plug-in's parameters. This was time consuming and not the most efficient way to work for KBS Sound Forum. However, after they purchased the ICON system, they didn't need to do that anymore.

"We could see the plug-in's parameter to be loaded in the appropriate dedicated section, like EQ or dynamics," Lee Sang Bong says.

"Each plug-in's parameters are shown on each dedicated panel, so we can access and control them more quickly and easily than before," Yang Se Kyun says. "This makes the process of working for us so much more comfortable."

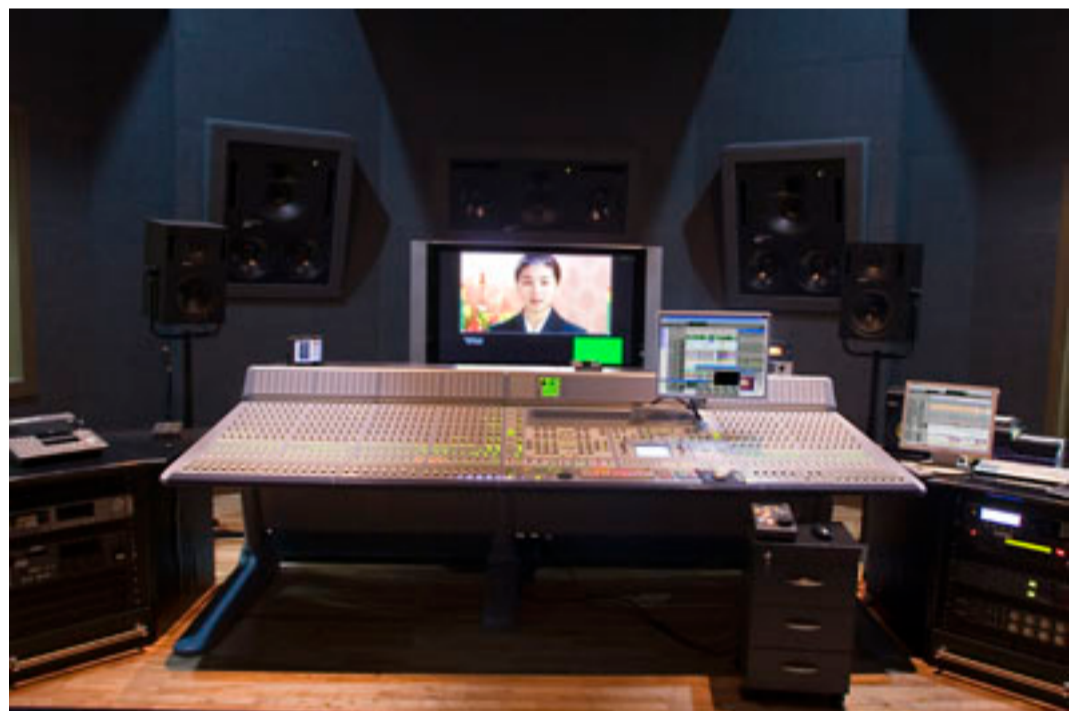
KBS Sound Forum also enjoys the benefits of the dedicated center section panels for EQ and dynamics control on the ICON.

"The EQ and dynamic panel are similar with its plug-ins appearance, so that we can easily control their parameters," Yang Se Kyun says. "We feel as though we are adjusting the real effects processor."

KBS Sound Forum use many of the plug-ins available to Pro Tools, and highlight Digidesign EQ III, Digidesign ReVibe, Focusrite D2/D3, and the Waves bundle featuring C1and C4 as the ones they use most often.

Alongside KBS Sound Forum, KBS also has Studio 1625 (Studio B) as part of their facility. Studio 1625 is also involved heavily in KBS audio post production schedule and currently houses a Pro Tools rig complete with a Pro Control work surface. The easy transferability of sessions and projects between the two studios is another feature the Directors' enjoy.

"Our schedule is such, that we sometimes need to use the two studios independently to work on individual projects, but we also need the ability to combine projects and work across both studios," Lee Sang Bong says. "With the Digidesign ICON system, we are able to move a bunch of complicated projects smoothly between the two studios which improves our workflow and speed significantly."



A 48-Fader ICON in KBS Korea