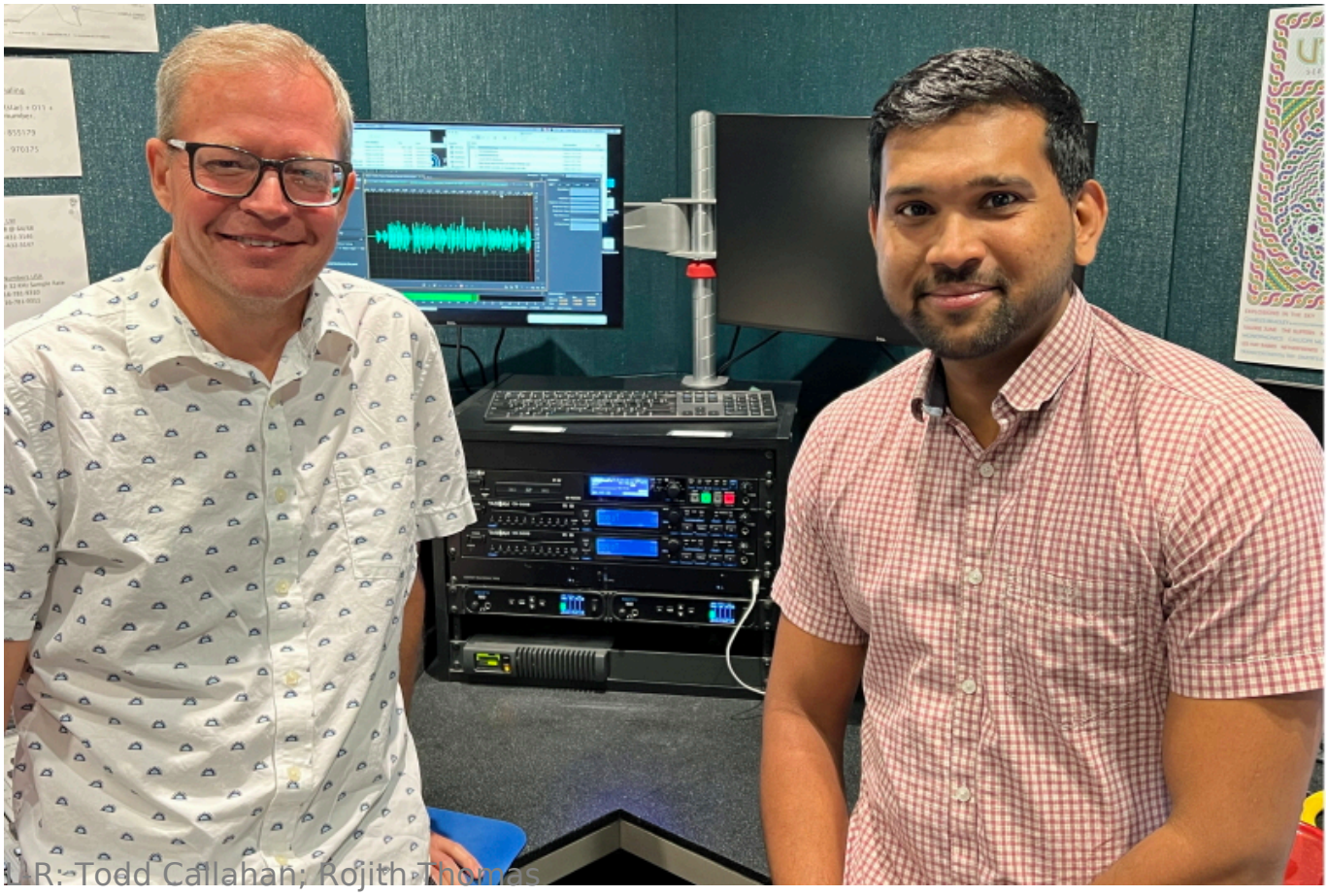
KUT Radio finds Success with TASCAM



L-R: Todd Callahan, Rojith Thomas

Each day, KUT 90.5, Austin's NPR (National Public Radio) station, and its sister station KUTX 98.9, the Austin Music Experience, strive to provide content that reflects the broad interests and tastes of the stations' Central Texas audience. With news and events changing on a moment's notice, the ability to quickly and easily capture and reproduce material for on-air use is vital to delivering content that is relevant to their listeners. To achieve this, the stations rely on the ease-of-use and rock-solid stability offered by the TASCAM SS-R250N Solid State Recorder, DA-3000 Master Recorder, and CD-500B CD Player.

KUT Radio has two primary FM stations. KUT 90.5 FM is Austin's NPR affiliate, a 24/7 news and information station, and KUTX 98.9 FM, a 24/7 AAA music station, The Austin Music Experience. KUTX airs a broad mix of genres and gives airtime to local Austin musicians and bands. There is also an FM Station at Sommerville, Texas named KXBT FM (88.1MHz) that broadcasts KUTX. Todd Callahan, Digital Platform Content Director, and Rojith Thomas, Technology Coordinator, are both tasked with supporting the studios, network, and production facilities that are used to create and provide the programming for the stations. According to Rojith Thomas, they have found success with the TASCAM equipment.

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“We installed the SS-R250N in July 2023,” Thomas reports. “We are using this TASCAM SD-card recorder in one of our production studios. It’s integrated into our Axia Livewire® network and serves as the primary backup for recording interviews and segments for our statewide news show, Texas Standard. Texas Standard is a 1-hour program airing live Monday through Friday from 10-11 AM on more than 30 radio stations across the state.”

When queried about how the SS-R250N is being used, Thomas offered the following, “For the most part, we use the SS-R250N for recording interviews. We have one unit in our Music Library for digitizing vinyl records and playback / listening to songs. In two other recording studios, we have older DA-3000 models that are used for recording two-way interviews as well as full-session musical performances by various bands.”

“We also have a couple of TASCAM SS-R250N systems in our Technical Operations Center running as 24/7 backup music sources for our KUTX FM and HD channels,” Thomas added. “If, for some reason, we encounter a DJ issue or a technical outage, we have silence detectors in place to switch from our live programming to the TASCAM SD-card players, which are programmed with appropriate music for each channel. The TASCAM players are constantly on repeat of a 100-song playlist. We’re also planning to add another SS-R250N at a distant FM transmitter site (KXBT FM-88.1, Somerville, Texas) as a backup source because it’s an hour and a half away from our studio.”

While the TASCAM SS-R250N and DA-3000 have various control options, Thomas reports that technical directors and board operators in the studios manually control them directly from the front panel, though other TASCAM gear is accessed remotely. “We also have 16 TASCAM CD-500B players, he notes. “There's a pair in each of our 4 edit bays, our production studios, another in the Texas Standard studio, and in the broadcast booths for KUT and KUTX. Hosts in the booths can control the TASCAM CD players through the on-air consoles via GPIO/Serial commands.”

As for the functions of the SS-R250N and DA-3000 recorders that are of vital importance, Callahan pointed to their operational ease. “For Texas Standard, the ability to quickly record an interview and play it back for broadcast - even if there’s not enough time for the automation system to process it - is vital to our workflow,” he explained. “The redundancy the TASCAM recorders provide for all our studios assures our producers that we have a valid backup if something else glitches.”

Callahan also notes that TASCAM customer and technical support services are very much appreciated. “To be honest, we haven’t had much need for technical assistance,” he said. “However, a while back we needed support with the pinouts for some of the products, and we got the information we needed promptly.”

Prior to shifting his attention back to the business of the day, Callahan offered these parting thoughts, “Based on all our experiences with existing TASCAM gear, we

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knew the integration of the TASCAM SS-R250N would be seamless, and it was. It was as easy as plug, play, and record. I should also add that we are planning to add another SS-R250N soon!”

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