



Network News Face-Lift

COMPETITION FOR RATINGS AMONG NEWS PROGRAMS IS FIERCE. The continued success of 24-hour cable news programs has broadcast news vying for viewers for their 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. slots. To stay in the running, WNBC News Channel 4 in New York hired McCann Systems to update its set and provide technical upgrades. The small studio, 6B at Rockefeller Center, is the former home of *Saturday Night Live*.

For the feature set—the area behind the primetime anchors—the McCann Systems team designed and fabricated a one-of-a-kind 26'x7' seamless, concave rear projection screen in

its Edison, N.J., facility. The screen boasts a 3,900x768 pixel density across a solid, seamless area formed by a single piece of ridged screen material. Images from four Christie Digital projectors run through a Visual Circuits PC-based MPEG-2 player and a Crestron control system, are blended, and then are corrected for geometry using hardware from Panoram Technologies of Sun Valley, Calif. The McCann team overcame the challenge posed by the studio's small size with a mirror system. The system folds the light path of the projectors by using short throw lenses and mirror bounce sleds.

—Beck Finley