

Hippotizer MX Series packs a punch for WrestleMania

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Posted on June 5, 2025



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Paradise, NV, USA - Green Hippo's new Hippotizer MX Series Media Servers were out in force for this year's WWE WrestleMania spectacular, pumping out 4K live action and pre-made content across a wealth of LED screens and strips.

Eight Hippotizer Kasai MX Media Servers - which are distributed by ACT Entertainment in North America - were at the heart of the video setup, working with 12 Hippotizer Boreal+ MK2 and two Hippotizer Karst+ MK2 Media Servers. The 2U, 10-bit video playback, robust Kasai MX Media Servers empower users to run two 4K outputs and offers Genlock for large surface displays that need more than one output.

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The Netflix live-streamed, two-night WrestleMania event took place at the 65,000-capacity Allegiant Stadium in Paradise, Nevada, just outside Las Vegas. Upstaging once again took the video helm, supplying all the Hippotizer Media Servers, system design and integration support between the design, LED vendor NEP Screenworks, content creation and programming teams, in addition to a dedicated system technician to handle all the technical setup, operation and integration on site.

“I had a demo of the new MX Series at LDI last year and was impressed by the performance

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advances and hardware upgrades,” says Tony Thompson, Project Manager at Upstaging. The Kasai MX Media Server can replace two of my Boreal+ MK2 Media Server on a show when using 4K output to HD Splitter outputs, which is great for using less rack space. The better performance and solid reliability are great as well. Green Hippo’s forward thinking on where the industry is going and now offering us the required options in the product path is paramount to us delivering successful events.”

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Inside the stadium, the team drove a monumental amount of content to LED screen, strips and ribbons, some of which was pre-made by WWE and Possible, and live action feed. More than 20 LED display areas were rigged, ranging from a YesTech 3mm Stage Fascia 11520 x 640 canvas and 10496 x 768 canvas Balcony Fascia, to Allegiant Stadium Upper Ribbons consisting of a 13344 x 448 canvas and Lower Ribbons of a 13856 x 448 canvas. There were also a range of other video elements, including Ring Skirts, LED barricades, an LED ramp, and concourse and balcony towers made from ROE Carbon 5 and Carbon 3 LED panels.

“The Kasai MX Media Servers handled all the 4K elements for the show,” Thompson continues. “The Boreal+ MK2s were on HD duty, and the Allegiant Stadium House LED Boards. “All of the Media Servers proved to be the best option then it came to reliability, flexibility, and workflow. Hippotizer’s content management system and Zookeeper is the biggest help to overcome challenges. And then the flexibility of VideoMapper allowed us to get creative to maximize physical outputs.”

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Chris Keene, WWE Media Server Programmer, comments: “The impact of the Hippotizer MX Series at WrestleMania can’t be overstated. We did massive amounts of transition work, presetting and crossfading tons of layers. With Hippotizer, it’s simple and direct. We used more layers than we would like sometimes for processing, but the Hippotizers handled the challenge without a problem.

“The thing that always impresses me most is the ability of Hippotizer Media Servers to be so solid – they’re true workhorses. We’re constantly syncing, encoding, swapping clips in the map, and all the while playback is never interrupted. At WrestleMania, we ask a lot from the Media Servers. The Hippotizers make it possible to manage the workflow by being solid and not crashing. Constantly syncing hundreds of gigs across a network of 22 media servers could be a bottleneck in the process of programming the show, instead it is what makes it possible.”

This year’s WrestleMania main event saw John Cena become a record-breaking seventeen-time world champion, with a victory over Cody Rhodes.

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