



CASE STUDY

Disguise powers stage design for Ed Sheeran's "Mathematics World Tour 2022"

In this case study, you will see how Disguise's GX 2C media server helps deliver dynamic Notch video content across the show's innovative visual canvas.



Summary

Sheeran's "Mathematics World Tour" is playing 74 stadium dates from March 2022 in London through to March 2023 in Perth, Australia in support of his latest studio album, "=" (Equals).

After encouraging Sheeran to perform in the round since 2015, Production Designer Mark Cuniffe was able to deliver an innovative stage design featuring an extensive array of Notch video content allowing everyone in-the-round to get close to Sheeran's solo performance.

Cuniffe created a cable net system to support the in-the-round show, a costly and complex engineering approach seldom used in the touring world. After making sure the logistics and the business model worked, Cuniffe used VR to show the promoters how the show would look. Much to promoters' and audiences' delight, the innovative stage design had no sightline issues and no seat kills.

Cuniffe's goal was to make Sheeran, a solo performer with a guitar, accessible to a stadium audience. Performing in the round achieved that, but fans can still be quite a distance from the stage. To combat this, Cuniffe relies on extensive use of IMAG content to help bridge that gap with Notch content driven by a Disguise GX 2C media server. With experience using both Notch and Disguise media servers on past Sheeran tours, Cuniffe was confident that they could help him deliver his vision.



The challenge

Cunniffe designed the show around a massive 360° halo video display board that moves up and down above a revolving central stage.

Six double-sided IMAG screens, shaped like guitar picks, are suspended from masts encircling the stage to give everyone in the audience a chance to see Sheeran close up. Twotrucks Productions and **Evoke Studios** designed the bold graphical content, which includes Notch effects that influence the IMAG itself.

Cunniffe's biggest challenge was networking and distributing the show's large amount of video on the processors. Latency is always a critical issue, but Cunniffe's use of the Disguise GX 2C on both Sheeran's "Divide" tour and the current "Mathematics" tour resolves this.



“I have been using Disguise media servers for over 10 years and have a strong relationship with Disguise. For me, the most important thing is the support. If a tour is going to play 30 countries and 200 shows, you need it to work and you need the support. That’s why we opted for the premium support package from Disguise, which has been a huge help and made me support Disguise products as much as I have over the past decade.”

Mark Cunniffe
Production Designer

The solution

Prior experience with Disguise media servers led Cunniffe to select the GX 2C for the tour. The GX 2C's seven 4K outputs with backups are required to reliably push a massive amount of pixels.

Thanks to Disguise's r21 software update, Cunniffe has also seen a marked appreciation in processing and frame drop. The background removal tool also works very well for certain tracks, and the AR performance of the RTX graphics cards get the job done.

Cunniffe also made use of Disguise's premium support solution, with benefits including warranties and worldwide server cover, which ensured that whatever the circumstance, the team had the necessary equipment to deliver their project on time and with confidence, anywhere in the world.



Results

After initially being unsure how Sheeran would cope with the staging requirements for an in-the-round show, Cunniffe reports that the artist nailed his performance in rehearsals.

The first live show proved that the staging worked for the audience too with fans able to see the dynamic content from every seat in the house. For Cunniffe, it felt as if the weight of the world was lifted from his shoulders. With this, a global must-see show was born.

Supporting an innovative production design in-the-round with guitar picks and IMAG screens, Disguise GX 2C delivered an array of bold visuals created by Evoke Studios in Notch – highlighting Sheeran's setlist and connecting to every fan in the stadium.

74

stadium dates

30

concerts

200

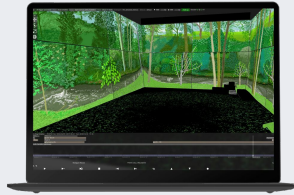
shows

1

record broken
for largest concert
in Wales




Disguise equipment used



DESIGNER


Designer is the ultimate software to visualise, design, and sequence projects at every stage, from concept all the way through to showtime.

[Find out more](#) 



GX 2C

The GX 2C media server delivered dynamic Notch video content across the show's innovative visual canvas.

[Find out more](#) 

In Partnership with

Contet: Twotrucks Productions, Evoke Studios, SHOP

Production Designer: Mark Cunniffe

Production Director and FOH Engineer: Chris Marsh

Production Manager: Helen Himmons

Assistant Designer: Matt Cromwell

Video Director: Phil Mead

Lighting Operator: Matt Jones

Video Operator: Ben Lapworth

Stage Operators: Matt Caley and Josh Schmitz



E V O K E



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Need support on your project?**

Our team will be happy to speak to you,
whatever your query.

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