



CONNECTING CITIZENS AND GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE POWER OF CANON PTZ CAMERAS

Company Name: Provincie Drenthe
Industry: Public sector services
Founded: 1841
Location: Netherlands
Services: Local government
Website: www.provincie.drenthe.nl
Products Purchased: CR-N300 (4 units)
Canon Installation Partner: dB audiovisueel

Objective

- Create an innovative studio set-up
- Streamline in-house production processes
- Maximise efficient communication from new studio
- Integrate new equipment within existing infrastructure
- Deliver professional-quality video including talk-show style information programmes and livestreams.

Challenges

- Creating a big production feel on a limited budget
- Staying connected to local community through the pandemic
- Justifying that the equipment was worth the investment in public money

Approach

As a regional province council in the Netherlands, Provincie Drenthe didn't consider themselves specialists in video content production. However due to the pandemic, they noticed a sudden need

for digital communication – which is why they decided an in-house studio would be the best way forward. The organisation's primary focus was on finding high-quality equipment at a good price, which could help them maintain two-way communication with the local population.

Scope

The key challenge for Provincie Drenthe, a local authority responsible for over 400,000 people, was to maintain channels of communication – both internally and with the local community. To do this, they decided to set up a studio that could be used for a broad range of purposes, from town hall meetings to discuss new civic projects, to live streams and Christmas shows.

Both their budget and manpower were limited: all spend had to be justified and they only had one technician to manage production. They turned to Canon to set up a flexible and easy-to-use studio with four PTZ cameras.



Results

- Pioneers in digital communication among other local government bodies
- Easy-to-use video equipment for small studio team
- Seamless and innovative production output
- High-quality production values on a limited budget added authority
- At least one video a week produced since installation
- Serve a wide range of purposes including live streams
- Creating a four-guest talk show in-house with just one studio manager

Becoming local trendsetters

“This is a trend that will go on,” says Harold de Haan, Senior Content Specialist at Provincie Drenthe in the Netherlands. Drenthe was one of the first province councils to get their content studio up and running, and it’s already paying off.

Keeping internal departments, partners, and civilians up to date with news in Drenthe is a top priority for the province council. So, when the pandemic hit and demand for digital communication increased, they realised that Canon CR-N300 PTZ cameras had both the flexibility and quality to fit their range of production needs – from hosting webinars for local businesses to running internal talk show panels.

Thanks to the PTZ cameras, Harold’s team can now broadcast live from their studio, as well as create pre-produced content. In addition, the cameras work with third-party software to make live streams more interactive and engaging. The result is a real upgrade on their two-way communication and information-sharing output.

“The Canon cameras gave us a platform full of possibilities, which we didn’t have before. I’ve never created a studio set-up like this, so it’s a first for me personally and for Provincie Drenthe,” says Harold. “Everything we do now is new to us. The PTZ cameras encourage us to experiment with new things.”

Canon

Canon quality

Due to the premium picture quality, the CR-N300s added authority and credibility to their video content.

Harold says, “We had already heard very good things, so we knew it would be the camera we wanted. We needed the best gear at a reasonable price – it had to look very professional.” Once the team tested the equipment, they were sold.

As COVID-19 took away regular social interaction, Provincie Drenthe put their new production capabilities to the test in the shape of a Christmas party for its 600 employees. “Very many people watched the show. We were very satisfied with the quality of the broadcast,” says Harold.

Not only was the quality impressive, but also the level of interactivity, which attracted a large audience tuning in from home. The CR-N300’s Real Time Messenger Protocol (RTMP) feature makes live streaming effortless.

“We stream by YouTube and then we get people to interact live using WhatsApp,” adds Studio Manager Hans Dijkstra. “We can use [third-party software] Phoenix to set a tickertape at the bottom reading out people’s messages!”

“The PTZ cameras encourage us to experiment with new things.”



Sharing and caring

The webinars they host have become very popular with the community and external organisations. Sharing knowledge and information is another way they’re able to improve their content offering.

“We noticed that when we have information to share, we attract a lot more citizens through digital,” says Harold.

Not only does that gain public trust and confidence, but it allows them to view and share high-quality content from the comfort of their own home: “I was surprised it looks so good, and the viewers’ reaction was even better.”

Harold mentioned that when they share webinars on agriculture, they’ll gain viewers who are interested in this subject. So, it’s all about listening and understanding the needs of their citizens to be able to tailor events around this.

Provincie Drenthe prides itself on staying in touch with local citizens and partners: “Government is a two-way communication,” says Harold. The PTZ cameras have become a great tool to maintain that dialogue.

The visible improvement in quality also meant they could justify the money they were investing and speak with confidence about Canon: “When we get a good level of quality, we’re able to explain why we spent this public money and convince people it was the right choice.”

Canon



“I always use the Face Tracking Auto Focus. It’s very helpful, as I have to do everything by myself.”

One man, four cameras

With just one studio manager, they needed an easy-to-use production solution – especially when managing a mix of live and pre-recorded sessions during their monthly internal talk shows.

Four units of CR-N300 cameras later, they’re now able to cover all areas of the studio usually consisting of one host and four guests.

One thing that makes their production more seamless between camera movements is the Hybrid Auto Focus, especially for one-man band, Hans: “I always use the Face Tracking Auto Focus. It’s very helpful, as I have to do everything by myself, so I haven’t got the time for that.”



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Having sole control of four cameras is no mean feat, but once again the compatibility of the CR-N300 comes to the fore. Hans uses a Skaarhoj joystick controller to manipulate all four cameras.

“Initially, I had to control the cameras with arrow keys! But now we used the Phoenix software, the stream deck software and the Skaarhoj to communicate with the cameras. It was very important that there could be communication between the companion software and the cameras.”

For Hans, however, the most important and useful feature of the Canon PTZ cameras are in fact the presets: “I’m controlling all the cameras by myself. That’s why the presets are so useful. Every camera has six, so I can change between the cameras very easily.”



“I’m proud I can do a whole TV show on my own. This camera makes everything possible.”

The future is digital

Harold knew that the future of Provincie Drenthe would be led mostly through digital communication, but it wasn’t until COVID-19 that he realised just how much their organisation would depend on it.

“Digital communication sped up seven years due to the pandemic. This created an urgency for the studio,” he says.

And as their creative knowledge grows, so does their hunger and passion for innovation – with live audience shows being a future goal for the studio.

Although Harold knows the importance of connecting through high-quality content, he’s also made sure to keep a hybrid working environment where possible, while giving Hans the freedom and flexibility to work autonomously with the Canon equipment.

Hans concludes: “I’m proud that I can do a whole TV show on my own. This camera makes everything possible.”

The Canon Solution

CR-N300 PTZ Camera

- 1/2.3 Type CMOS Sensor
- 4K UHD Image Quality
- 20x Optical Zoom with Image Stabilization
- Hybrid Auto Focus
- Multiple in-built protocols such as RTMP, ND|HX*, SRT and FreeD
- HDMI, SDI, IP and USB-C Connectivity



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Canon Inc.
Canon.com

Canon Europe
canon-europe.com

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Canon Europe Ltd
4 Roundwood
Avenue,
Stockley Park,
Uxbridge,
Middlesex
UB11 1AF UK

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