

USER REPORT

Tentel DVCPRO Tool Kit Earns Its Keep

by **Mike Marshall**
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Video Tech is an independent broadcast-professional video equipment service facility with three full-time engineers based in Tallahassee. We began in 1990, servicing both consumer and professional equipment.

Several years ago, as consumer equipment more or less became a throwaway commodity, we saw the writing on the wall and focused our attention on the professional segment of the market. Our clients are located through-out the southeast, and include network affiliates, private production facilities, and college sports and journalism programs, all together using just about any tape format imaginable.



The Tentel DVCPRO kit includes specialized test and measurement tools and an array of standard hand tools. This keeps everything in one convenient case.

On a typical day, I might begin with an on-site visit to Florida State University athletics, a DVCAM facility. Heading back to the office, I'll make another stop to grab a Beta SP camcorder from a client that's getting RF warnings. Before lunch, UPS has delivered an S-VHS deck with bad capacitors, and another client has brought in a DVCPRO deck with an audio problem.

BEST VALUE

Since we service so many different tape formats of equipment, I'm always looking for the best value for the money I spend on test equipment.

My situation is different than most engineers; I don't just have to justify the purchase to management, I have to pay for it myself! I'm looking for gear that can be used to service multiple formats, to get the most bang for the buck.

That's one reason that I've been attracted to the Tentel products over the years —

all the company's equipment is extremely flexible and well thought out.

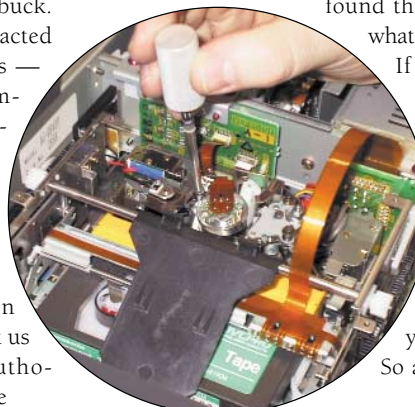
When Panasonic set us up as an authorized service center for its DVCPRO line, we were required to purchase the required tools and send our engineers to factory training. We were given the choice of buying our tool kit



The author at his bench, preparing to service a DVCPRO machine.

directly from Panasonic or Tentel.

I used the Panasonic tools during the class quite a bit, and although they were good, I found them somewhat awkward.



Making a linearity adjustment in a DVCPRO machine.

If you've done a tension adjustment with the factory jigs I'm sure you'll agree. So after some additional research, I decided

to go with the Tentel tools.

Tentel's DVCPRO tool kit comes in a sturdy hard case with a tool pallet in the lid and dividers in the bottom. All the pockets for the tools are labeled so it's easy to tell if something's missing. This has kept me from leaving tools at a client's site more than once! Some of the hand tools, like the cutters and screwdrivers, are probably

already in your regular toolbox but it's nice to have another set together in one place.

The Tentelometer included in the kit has been designed with a release button that spreads the probes to make it easier to take tape tension readings without damaging the tape. The T1188 is a redesign of the factory tool used for the critical tension regulator adjustment.

This one adjustment has probably caused the most misery to engineers servicing DVCPRO

mechanisms because the factory tool is so difficult to use, and if it's set wrong, none of the other tape path or linearity adjustments can be made correctly. Tentel's tool makes it a snap! The kit includes everything required to completely align a DVCPRO mechanism to factory specifications.

No matter what format you're working on, you are going to need the correct tools and test equipment. The Tentel DVCPRO kit has been in daily use in my shop for a year, and has easily paid for itself in time savings. We're able to repair units

faster and more reliably, saving our clients money in down time and repair costs. ■

Mike Marshall is the president of Video Tech in Tallahassee, Fla. Mike has been in broadcast video service since 1981, when he started working part time as a technician for a large video dealer during college. He can be reached at mike@dvcam.com.

For more information, contact Tentel (800-538-6894, www.tentel.com)