



Major US Television Network Chooses Episode Engine for high-volume Web and Mobile Encoding

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Background

The Digital Media Group for a major US television network provides content to the network’s website and to mobile video providers, including Verizon V CAST, Cingular, SmartVideo, Helio, GoTV, etc. Full television episodes, recaps of TV series and original content are among the types of content being prepared and delivered to these outlets each day. Because of varying requirements for each, the Digital Media Group encodes and delivers approximately 600 files a day.

Telestream spoke to the Los Angeles-based post-production and operations manager, who advised, “Over the past few years, our volume has grown from a single person on an Avid to a group of editors working on Final Cut Pro. We wanted a Mac-based encoding solution that would enable the individual user to set up encoding profiles and tweak the resulting encoded files, plus we also needed a shared network encoder without requiring a system administrator.”

Selecting a solution

After evaluating several solutions, Telestream’s Episode Engine server-based software was selected. Users can configure the Episode Engine system to meet expanding workflow needs. For example, multiple clients can be configured to access media in a central server or a clustered server network. Clients and servers can easily be added as workflow or volume requirements increase.

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Other Mac-based solutions were evaluated, including Autodesk Cleaner, Sorenson Squeeze and Apple Compressor, however results indicated that these applications either weren’t as flexible as Episode Engine or format support was limited to natively encoding only to QuickTime formats. The Digital Media Group needed these plus the ability to reliably encode high quality Flash, Windows Media, and other formats without third party additions.

Episode setup & workflow

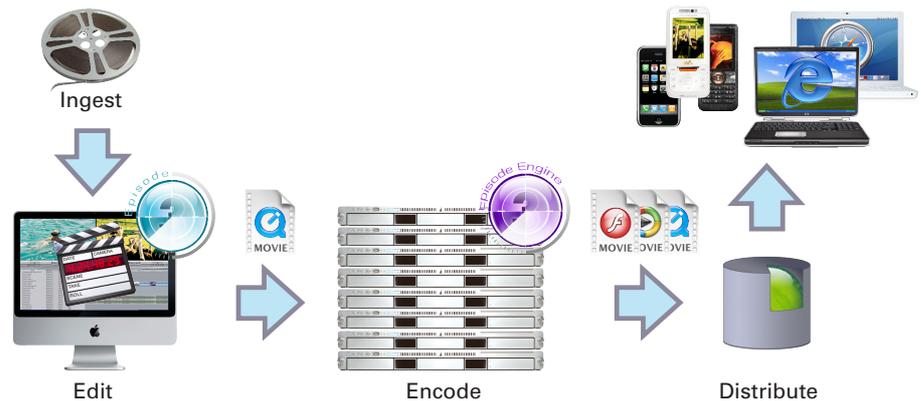
Initially installed just over a year ago, the Digital Media Group has 6 Episode Pro client licenses with Flash 8 running on Apple Quad G5 workstations running Final Cut Pro. The workstations are connected via an Apple Xsan network to a cluster of eight Apple Xserves running Episode Engine Pro software with the Flash 8 server option.

Offering extensive video and audio format support, Episode is used to build the individual Web and mobile encoding profiles, which are all very different. Any user can create a folder on the Episode Engine server and drop an encoding profile into it for anyone else to use. Once encoding profiles are created, they are submitted along with the media to

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watch folders. Episode Engine monitors these hot folders, and once files are delivered, content is automatically pulled to the servers for immediate processing.



Results

95% of the Digital Media Group’s encoding is done through the Episode Engine servers. Encoding is faster, less expensive and easier to manage, and it provides the all-Mac-based workflow they wanted. Since most media is now done in HD, the ability to handle standard definition (SD) and high definition (HD) just as easily is important.

The post-production and operations manager appreciates the support he receives from the Episode team, which he says is “fantastic and very responsive.” He also notes that the development team in Sweden appreciates product input from him. He concludes, “Episode provides reliable, high quality, consistent output, so we don’t have to check the files. Since 600 files are encoded and delivered to destinations each day, Episode Engine is a must!” Final proof of Episode encoding output results: The Digital Media Group won an Emmy award for delivery of high-quality video to the masses over the Internet.