Final Cut Studio Solutions

Customer workflow featuring Blomeley

BLOMELEY
COMMUNICATIONS INC

The Project

Blomeley Communications is a Canada-based, award winning interactive digital media production firm with programming and applications seen globally. Blomeley worked on behalf of Bell Canada to present special video content at the Canadian Olympic House (COH) Pavilion in Beijing during the 2008 Games. COH's primary functions were to preview what people could expect to see at the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver as well as welcoming Canadian athletes, their families, sponsors, dignitaries and others. The challenge was using Final Cut Studio and Final Cut Server to edit and play back content remotely from Blomeley's offices in Ottawa, Canada.

Final Cut Server at the Games

Blomeley's on-site setup consisted primarily of a Mac Pro at the COH running Final Cut Server and Final Cut Studio. Editor/journalist, Steve Omischl, who is also the reigning Freestyle Aerial Skiing World Champion, used a Sony HVR-A1U HDV camcorder with a MacBook Pro to produce and edit content. As Omischl completed each edit, Final Cut Server automatically took over and encoded the footage to the Apple TV H.264 codec for transfer over a 10-megabit internet connection to Blomeley's offices for finishing.

"Final Cut Server was definitely a key piece of software for us," says Omischl.

He continues. "Once I completed my edit, I could just drag the project into my folder and it would be automatically converted and uploaded back to Ottawa. That allowed Blomeley to do everything remotely and avoid having to send out a whole production crew. We also didn't have to send every clip I shot over the internet, because FCS only uploads the footage I actually used in my edit."

"While Steve was out shooting during the day, we were controlling Final Cut Server via Apple Remote Desktop and handling all the playouts at the COH," says Chris Paine, Blomeley's Director of Production Operations. "The average piece was two and a half minutes. Steve even managed to stay a day ahead in his workload, which was as much a surprise to him as to us. At any time, he could take back control and modify the content to insert specific pieces, based on who was in the audience watching. The Mac Pro was connected directly to a 42" plasma screen via DVI and we also had a second NVIDIA card in there as our backup video output."

Company
Blomeley Communications, a Canada-based, award winning interactive digital media production firm with globally watched programming.

Goal
Create a remote controlled, Final Cut Server based on-site editing workflow.

Capabilities
Using Final Cut Studio and Final Cut Server, Blomeley is able to control and oversee the creation and editing of content anywhere in the world from its headquarters in Ottawa.

Solution Highlights
•Apple Remote Desktop allows Blomeley personnel to directly edit and playback material on remote Mac Pros and Mac Book Pros across the internet.

•Final Cut Server automatically handles transcoding to a variety of formats and transmission of completed edits onto remote websites.

Production Workflow
Production. Local videographers shoot footage and create rough edits and graphics using Final Cut Studio.

Editing. Blomeley editors receive rough timelines and create final edits and graphics using Final Cut Server and Remote Desktop.

Broadcast. Final Cut Server automatically sends completed projects to specified FTP and websites, while providing searchable metadata for every clip.

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Hitting the road

Blomeley's successful completion of its daily newscasts and added content during the Games with Final Cut Server led to a decision to apply the same workflow to future enterprises. "Our next project is called TruckGuysTV.com, an Internet TV site dedicated to custom, big-rig 18-wheeler trucks," says Paine. "We're setting up a Final Cut Studio suite like the one we created in Beijing at a custom truck shop in Joplin, Missouri. They have a staff videographer there who we work with directly."

Blomeley plans to integrate professionally-shot footage and user-generated content to provide an extensive array of material for the site. "We use Final Cut Server to control the metadata and we ultimately want to make video of all 10,000 or so custom trucks in North America searchable online," says Paine. "Final Cut Server also allows us to do the complex stuff that's tough for the videographer, like encoding to the different codecs, sending edits over the internet, etc. We can set everything up and control it remotely without the local editor ever having to worry about it."

Having an on-site editor working remotely has enabled Blomeley to focus on the details in ways other news outlets and web portals can't. "We shot 180 hours of a custom truck being built," says Paine. "What you'll see up there now is 4 episodes on our way to 13 1/2 total hours in a standard television episode format. We'd eventually like to put up 80 edited hours worth, say if you're building the same truck and you want to learn all of the minute details. Final Cut Server lets us easily build and accumulate all that project data. We think it's going to enable us stand out a lot more and help capitalize the site."

Opening it up

"This turned out to be a great production facility model for niche-casting content," observes Paine. "We've always wanted to marry slick TV production with medium-level ENG production and user generated content. If you can do that, you can become the go-to portal for a specific niche. It's finally opened up beyond the traditional broadcasters and there's a lot of talent out there. If we continue to embrace these big industry changes we can do nothing but benefit."

Hardware

Mac Pro
MacBook Pro
Apple Cinema HD Displays

Software

Mac OS X
Final Cut Studio 2
Final Cut Server
Apple Remote Desktop
QuickTime Pro

Useful Links

http://www.blomeley.com
http://beijing.blomeley.com/
http://www.chromeshopmafia.com
http://www.truckguystv.com