



EditShare Goes to Epic Proportions for Blockbuster Movie “Australia”

“Australia,” the latest film from producer/director Baz Luhrmann is currently being filmed “Down Under” and it’s already creating a tidal wave of interest. With a stellar cast including Nicole Kidman, Hugh Jackman, and many other Aussie actors, the film is a 1930s Oz version of “Gone with the Wind”.

Luhrmann has been filming across the country capturing a spectacular, complex and dramatic canvas for this long-awaited epic. The sheer scale of the project presented many challenges. For the post production crew, the need for a shared storage solution that would protect their media while supporting six or more simultaneous editing suites was critical. To make the challenge more interesting, the crew wanted to edit the entire feature, which is shot in 35 mm

film then transferred to High Definition, in the high quality HD format. Film production company Cutting Edge met the challenge head-on with EditShare’s media storage solutions for collaborative workflows.

THE CHALLENGE

Michael Burton, Managing Director of Cutting Edge, explained that the storage requirements for a film transferred entirely in HD are enormous. “It’s so much better when the cutting room is with

the director on location so you can see how things are coming together,” says Burton, “but they also needed to regularly synchronise the material with their main production facility, both as a safety backup, but also for workflow where back-end operations such as sound synching and DVD viewing copies could be performed on the same media without interrupting the editors.”

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THE SOLUTION

Cutting Edge provided a set of EditShare units to support "Australia." Initially a 5U rack unit with 18TB of storage would travel with the crew and a separate 5RU EditShare with 18TB was deployed at the main production offices at Cutting Edge facilities at the Fox Studios Entertainment Quarter in Sydney. EditShare systems are Networked Attached Storage (NAS) devices that are highly optimised for video editing – both in their hardware and their software. Unlike standard SAN devices, EditShare technology supports file level sharing – allowing multiple editors to write to the same volume simultaneously. Regardless of application or platform – source material, work in progress and finished packages are shared and instantly available to all users on the EditShare network. The rules-driven workflow ensures that no data is ever overwritten or accidentally destroyed. Burton said that EditShare's seamless integration with Avid was an important factor in the decision to use EditShare.

THE WORKFLOW

The traveling EditShare has already seen action in Darwin, Bowen, Kununurra and other locales. The onsite crew would digitise the daily rushes in Avid DNxHD at 115Mbps and 185Mbps and store them in the EditShare. Immediately, editors could begin working simultaneously on the six Avid Media Composers connected to the EditShare. A 10 Gigabit Ethernet network provided more than adequate bandwidth.

When shooting in one location was complete, the team synched the material from the traveling unit with the EditShare in Sydney. Burton says, "EditShare's unique Sync feature made the whole process very easy, saving a lot of time. Within a matter of hours, the systems were perfectly matched."

The storage needs for all the HD content were so significant that midway through the project Cutting Edge increased capacity of both EditShares. "On any other shared storage editing system, adding storage or reconfiguring hardware midway through a project is a heartstopping experience; not with EditShare," says Burton. For ease of transportation, they connected an additional 5RU with 9TB storage

via 10 Gigabit Ethernet to the existing traveling unit. The studio-based system was changed to an 8RU with additional discs totaling 30TB. "We simply added the extra storage and away they went," Burton explained. "No disruption of the cutting processes in any way." He observed that the crew was relieved and pleased. "With other systems you often have disastrous results when adding or moving storage. With EditShare, it was quick and easy."

THE BENEFITS

EditShare easily met the stringent requirements of the film's editorial team and provided a truly collaborative environment. Burton says many factors came into play: the seamless integration with Avid Media Composers, the simple Gigabit installation, media protection with RAID5 configuration, easy synchronisation and uncomplicated expandability. All told, he says, the benefits in time, productivity and efficiency are considerable. "There's no question that the EditShare collaborative workflow, bandwidth, and media protection delivered the best balance of performance, data safety and cost-per-Terabyte."



“Australia” is scheduled for release in late 2008.

ABOUT CUTTING EDGE

Cutting Edge is a full service post production company serving Australia and international markets. Its portfolio includes a diverse client base across broadcast, advertising, feature film production, new media and digital signage.

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 Michael Burton, Managing Director of Cutting Edge

SPECIFICATIONS

Cutting Edge EQ, Sydney:

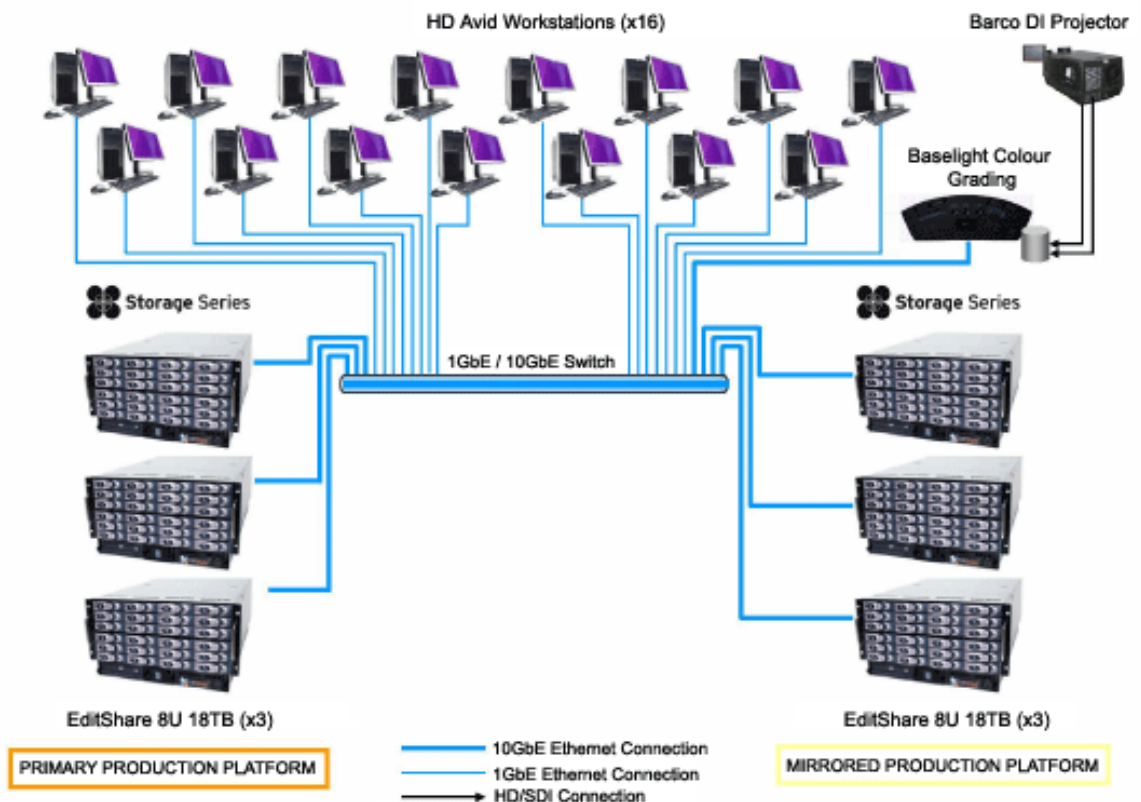
One 8RU – Rack Unit –30TB
 EditShare on a 10 Gigabit network backbone

EditShare 5U, 9TB on Gigabit Ethernet Network

Both EditShare home and away units each connected with six or more Avid Media Composer Adrenalines working in Avid DNxHD supported by a 10 Gigabit Ethernet network.

On Location:

2 x 5RU – Rack Units (18TB and 9TB) combined via 10 Gigabit network connection for a total of 27TB



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