



Edinburgh Napier University centralises production with EditShare

Journalism students merge talent with technology in state-of-the-art media center

The Journalism Department at Edinburgh Napier University in Scotland offers a challenging mix of theoretical and practical knowledge for career training in all aspects of journalism. Traditional coursework is supplemented with specialty workshops and hands-on training in professionally equipped newsrooms and studios. Both the undergraduate and graduate programs have professional accreditation from the British Journalism Training Council. Napier has strong ties to the media industry and many students receive professional job placements.

THE CHALLENGE

Each year Napier's journalism courses attract close to 300 students. They source and report news stories and produce studio

broadcasts emulating professional news environments. Many news organisations now expect journalists to produce for different media platforms - including print, radio, TV and Internet. To meet the increased demand for production skills, Napier decided to incorporate recent technology advances at its production facilities. Robert McCann, technical project manager for the Journalism Department, was tasked with converting the tape-based broadcast facility to a totally tapeless environment. "We have a well established program and it's important to keep it relevant by offering state-of-the-art tools and technologies that prepare students for what's happening in the real world," says McCann.

THE SOLUTION

Napier wanted to add centralised media storage and upgrade to a new vision mixer. Working with Stuart Currie from professional broadcast integrator CVP Mitcorp Systems, Napier purchased an EditShare Storage Series system with 18TB of storage to serve as the production hub of Napier's tapeless workflow. EditShare media sharing systems are Networked Attached Storage (NAS) devices with hardware and software that are highly optimised for video editing. Designed for the industry's leading editing and compositing products from Avid, Apple, Adobe, Autodesk, Digidesign, and Sony, EditShare allows all connected workstations to capture, access and share in real time a common pool of media files. 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.

EditShare relies on cost-effective Gigabit Ethernet for connectivity, making it very simple to install and offering an immediate return on investment. Beyond media sharing, EditShare is also the only solution for true project sharing for Avid and Final Cut Pro editing workgroups within a single system.

THE WORKFLOW

The EditShare 5 RU is the central repository for the department's media - including studio-produced video and field content ingested into any of the 13 Apple Final Cut Pro suites; audio clips from the 20 PCs running Burli radio newsroom software and Audacity audio editors; and video feeds from the Reuters news service. To ensure

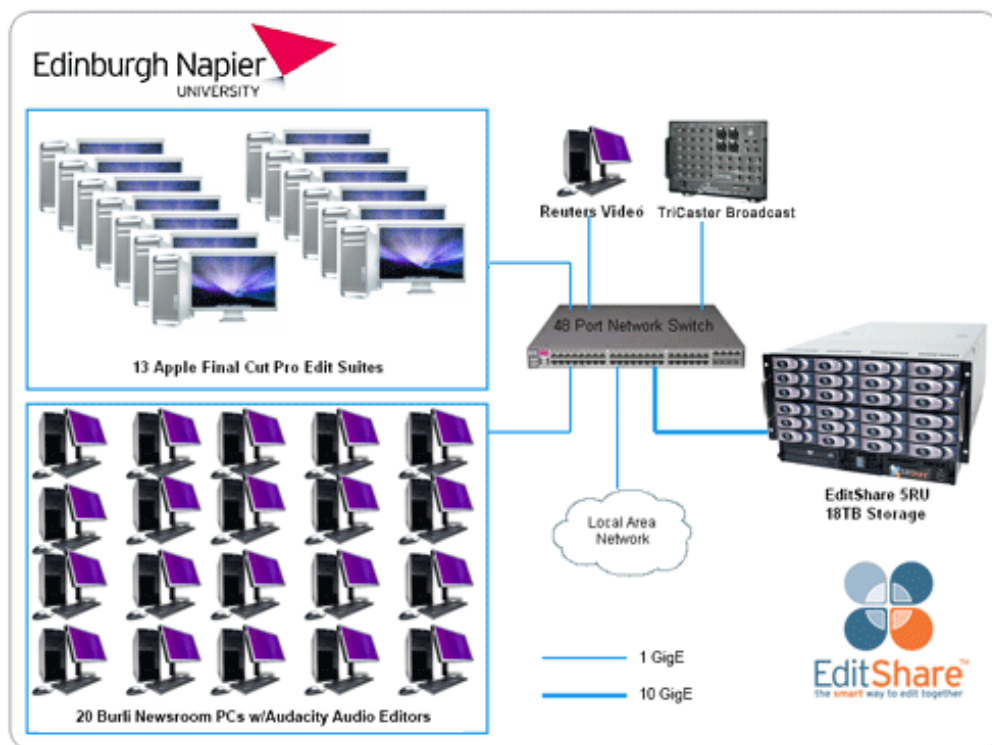
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immediate access to content even during high volume peak times, the EditShare is connected to the network switch via 10-Gigabit Ethernet. Prior to EditShare, students stored their projects on local machines which limited their ability to work on a project to when that particular machine was available," says McCann. "Sometimes they wouldn't remember which machine they'd worked on to find their media. With EditShare each student saves

to his personal mediaspace with access to it from any edit suite. They can better manage their work, time and media. It's much simpler for everyone."

Students practice editing by locating video in a shared folder, making cuts and then saving them to their personal workspaces. Lecturers may be given permissions to these personal workspaces so they can critique student projects. The rights and permissions structure in EditShare protects the media - allowing access to specific content and workspaces by only authorised users. More advanced students ingest and edit studio and field video which they can finish and store to their individual mediaspaces. At the end of a semester, it's quite easy for students to produce portfolio showreels.

Several days a week students work to strict deadlines by reporting and editing packages for a 15 minute newscast. "It's like night and day in terms of the way we used to work and the time we now save," says McCann. "When we used tape, I'd have to dub off each student's report to a master reel before each newscast - about 10 stories. It was difficult to rearrange or add things at the last minute.



Now, with digital transfers and all suites connected to EditShare, we can work right up to airtime – no dubbing required.” The NewTek TriCaster Broadcast mixer added further benefit. “It’s connected to the EditShare. We can reorder the playlist right up to the last moment and TriCaster reads the files directly from the EditShare,” adds McCann.

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THE BENEFITS

“We added a lot of efficiencies. Our news days run a lot smoother with EditShare,” McCann observes. “It saves a lot of time because we don’t have to physically move media from place to place. We operate like a fully-

fledged newsroom.” It’s also easier for students to work on assignments because they can use any workstation. As system administrator McCann appreciates the ease of setting up the user accounts and mediaspaces noting, “It just takes a few seconds to give everyone a protected space.”

The EditShare RAID5 configuration provides cost-effective media protection. Even if a drive fails, the data is never lost and can be easily recovered. Napier will add new production courses to its roster soon. With EditShare’s cross platform versatility, there’s no worry about including different editing or compositing products. EditShare has no seat license fees so more users can be added at no extra cost. Thanks to EditShare’s Extreme Scalable Architecture (ESA), it will be easy to expand storage capacity as needed.

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SPECIFICATIONS

EditShare 5 RU with 18TB storage
connected via 10 Gigabit Ethernet to 48-port switch

Also connected to switch via 1 Gigabit Ethernet:

13 x Apple Final Cut Pro edit suites
20 x PCs with Burli Radio Newsroom and Audacity Audio software
1 Reuters Video News Service
1 NewTek TriCaster Broadcast mixer
Local Area Network

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