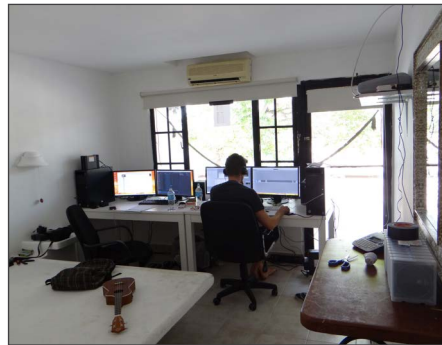# Bringing Reliability to the Unpredictability of Reality TV

Synonymous with reality TV, Endemol's 2015 production of *Wild Island* was set in a remote location off the coast of Central America. The German-produced series, supported by MoovIT production services, featured 14 ordinary citizens left to their own devices to survive on an uninhabited tropical island with no food or water for 28 days. With six cameras covering the action and antics, the production team, who were located on a neighboring island fours hours away by boat, brought an EditShare XStream EFS with integrated Flow to wrangle the 20 to 30 hours of footage they received per day.

No Downtime Mandate Met

On-location team member David Merzenich, manager at MoovIT, cites XStream EFS' high availability and no single point of failure architecture as key to keeping pace with the production's 24-hour turn on dailies and zero downtime goals. "*I was already very familiar with EditShare storage technology and put their new XStream EFS model through a test run for this particular project,*" he says. "*The high availability configuration was really ideal given the unpredictable conditions of the on-location post setup.*"

David explains the challenges they faced on location: "*Utilities such as electricity were prone to frequent outages, especially when it was high tide. The electrical grid was located at the beach's edge, and the power would come and go with the tide. Adding to the environmental stress we lived with day-to-day was knowing that replacement parts, should we need something we didn't plan for, were at least a four-day wait due to the remote location. Our production afforded no downtime, and having equipment that could survive the hostilities of weather, power outages and more was necessary.*"

Based on a distributed, parallel and fault-tolerant file system, XStream EFS is designed to manage large volumes of media, ultra-high data rates and the complexities of intense media environments, leveraging key technologies like SwiftRead to [mitigate resource contention](#).

Putting Order to the Mass Amount of Media Captured

In addition to a rock-solid shared storage foundation, the team also needed a way to corral the large amounts of content received on a daily basis. Enter EditShare Flow, a robust media asset management platform fully integrated within the EFS solution. Serving as the control layer for managing content, Flow provided the production team tools to automate the daily ingest of content from camera card to EditShare XStream EFS server. Fast-logging templates captured important details, adding metadata to content and making it easily searchable – no tying up multiple editing systems to offload footage or losing valuable editing time searching for the right shot.

"*We set up post in several hotel rooms with the EditShare XStream EFS server in the middle room and the surrounding rooms filled with Avid NLE systems,*" says David. "*We connected the entire setup via Ethernet. It required about 40 meters in total. Everyday the Wild Island cast would receive blank CF cards for their own handheld cameras, which were a mix of Canons, GoPros and Sony Action Cams. Add in 14 separate audio recorders that we had floating around, and we had lots of different files and formats to deal with back in post. But Flow really helped by automating a good deal of the ingest process and supporting a proprietary application we use for syncing audio.*"

EditShare®

Part of the ingest process required a proprietary sync tool for anything that wasn't shot with a GoPro. Each day, 14 audio clips that were approximately 12 hours in duration had to be matched with approximately 200 video clips, totalling 30 hours.

"After syncing the clips, we used the Flow Scan feature to bring the combined material into EFS," David says. *"This was a slightly different use-case scenario than the straightforward Flow Ingest that we did for GoPro captured material. Regardless, just like the straightforward Flow Ingest, Flow Scan generated a proxy file for every clip. This allowed us to log and assemble all of the proxy clips targeted for production into 'project' folders, which were reviewed by staff 6,000-plus miles away in Cologne, Germany, using the private cloud module, AirFlow to facilitate a secure remote collaboration workflow."*

Facilitating Remote Collaboration – Cutting Post Time in Half

Critical to the editorial review process was EditShare's AirFlow, which allowed production staff in Cologne, Germany to connect to the "Wild Island" storage server via the internet. The team in Germany was able to review the proxy files and, if necessary, download the high-resolution files locally, make notations and edits and then upload for the on-location team.

"AirFlow was a great add-on for us," David says. *"It allowed a lot of people located in Germany to actually watch and comment on the clips and even the sequences we created on location. There was no exporting or re-encoding, no uploading to another platform. Our media was secure. AirFlow was very simple and incredibly helpful for reviewing and getting direction on material. In the end, it was a huge time saver and allowed us to be much more creative with developing the show."*

The editors imported the AirFlow proxies into Avid Media Composer and assembled scenes and complete programs. When the shooting was over, the high-resolution storage was flown back to Germany and the Avid sequences were relinked to the high-resolution material. David explains the productivity impact of the remote collaboration workflow: *"This saved us 50 percent on the usual post-production time. It's a workflow we have tested extensively, and the amazing thing is that AirFlow supports this same kind of workflow, not only with Avid but also with other editing applications such as Premiere Pro and Final Cut Pro."*

Also assisting in the creative development onsite was EditShare's advanced project sharing capabilities. Shipped as part of the shared storage environment, EditShare project sharing allowed editors to share projects and collaborate on story development, which is key in the fast-paced productions of reality TV productions.

"The XStream EFS system really gave us the margin of safety we needed with the content," David says. *"The decision to go with the new model was the right one. We needed to know that this system would be operational, regardless of what was thrown at it. The performance was so amazing that after one of the power outages, we didn't even recognize that we forgot to power up one of the nodes. Really impressive."*

But there are two parts to the success equation for this setup. *"Flow really helped us organize the massive amount of clips we had,"* David says. *"The support for Avid and the ability to work with proxy files really made the editorial workflow so much faster."*

For more information on EditShare solutions, please visit www.editshare.com.

Equipment

EFS System:
2x MDC
4x EFS Node (32TB each)
2x Arista 7050 TX-64 Switch
Flow Databaseserver (32 TB)
Flow Worker Node
1x Flow Ingest
10x Flow Browse

Workstations for Logging:
9x HP Z440 Workstation
Avid Media Composer 7.4
1 Gig Ethernet Connection

Camera Equipment:
6x Canon XF305
9x Canon XF105
40x CF Cards (128GB/64GB)
7x GoPros
4 Sony Action Cams

Audio Equipment:
4x Zaxcom IFB 200 TC Transceiver
45x Zaxcom ZFR300 Audio Recorder
9x Zaxcom ERX2TCD Timecode Receiver
45x San Disk Ultra 16GB SD Cards

Backup/Archive:
1x Sony ODS –D55U Optical Disc Archive
30x 1,2 TB ODC 1200RE

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