

EXPEDAT MAKES MOVING DATA FAST A REALITY

EndemolShine Australia

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– Ben Trinder,

Technical Manager
Post Production
Endemol Shine

When production house Endemol Shine Australia needed to replace a sneakernet and move massive media files quickly, the engineering team counted on ExpeDat for accelerated data transfer.

Overview

Endemol Shine Australia (ESA) is based in Sydney with a team focused on television and digital production for top-rated reality shows. As the country's largest producer of reality TV, they create some of the most popular programming on Australian free-to-air networks and pay TV channels. Founded in 2011 and now owned by Banjay, the firm is a one-stop shop for TV production from development to the studio to post-production and ultimately, distribution.

Challenges

The biggest production challenges for Endemol Shine Australia are the geographic distance between sites and the size of the media files that need to be moved. For example, one show is shot in Melbourne and then goes to post-production in Sydney. The two cities are just over 700 kilometers (or about 440 miles) apart. So, the challenge for the ESA engineering team is to get the footage from one location to the other quickly and efficiently. This is no easy feat given that eight cameras are rolling all day, every day for the shooting of each of the show's 62 episodes.

Solution

Back in 2014, the engineering group led by Ben Trinder, Technical Manager for Post Production, was initially tasked with finding a technology solution to simplify and speed the movement of extremely large media files from Brisbane to Sydney, about 730 kilometers (or about 455 miles) apart. The new reality show would begin shooting in two weeks, so time was limited to find, evaluate and install a solution. On top of that, each episode would air within seven days of the shoot. This meant that the engineering team would have only 8 hours each night – between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. – to transfer the half to one terabyte (TB) media files over the network between the two cities.

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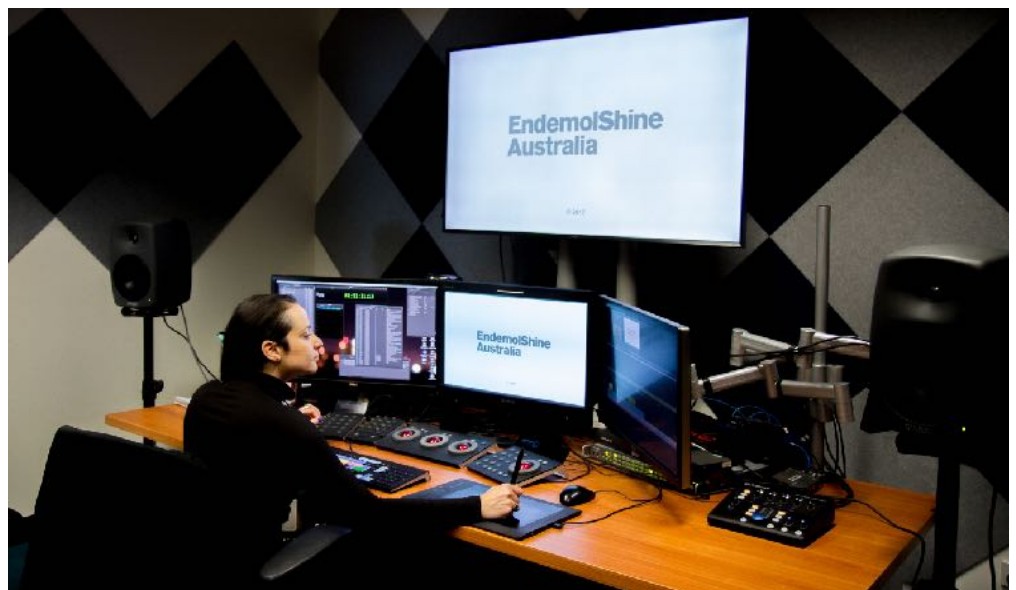
Ben and his team set out to find accelerated data transfer software and came across Data Expedition, Inc.® (DEI®). They downloaded a trial license of ExpeDat™, which is based on DEI’s proprietary Multipurpose Transaction Protocol® (MTP™/IP). MTP/IP’s “intelligence” automatically adapts to network variability without human guidance and maximizes available bandwidth, while minimizing the time and effort required for data transport itself.

With one license of ExpeDat installed over a rented high-speed network connection, the team began moving up to one TB of media files every day. With some help from DEI support, the engineering team tuned the network parameters to move the massive raw media files even more efficiently and faster.

“When we started the search for a solution, we thought, ‘How are we possibly going to get this much footage from Brisbane to Sydney fast enough?’” commented Ben. “We installed ExpeDat and it just worked. We use it for every season of this reality show now and expanded to using it for one of our hugely popular reality cooking shows.”

The reality cooking show that requires ExpeDat is the example described earlier, requiring massive media files to be moved from Melbourne to Sydney. According to Ben, “This is likely the biggest quantity of media files we ship from one location to another because there are 62 episodes in every season. We used to courier hard drives between locations, but there was just too much, and it was not at all practical.”

Now, when the camera operators in Melbourne finish shooting, data wranglers collect the memory cards and upload the video on local ExpeDat servers. An automated process set up by the engineering team then downloads the files to Sydney where assistant editors begin guiding the media files through the post-production workflow.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ExpeDat is simple and reliable.
- Overcomes geography and file size challenges.
- It just worked.

In 2016, ESA added a dedicated network between Melbourne and Sydney. With this in place, they began using ExpeDat for this show – a “direct replacement for a traditional ‘sneakernet’ workflow,” commented Ben. ExpeDat continues to move between a half and one TB per day, continually for four months of shooting each year.

Currently, these two shows are shot and produced across Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney. ESA transfers the media files from both shows over one of the network paths at alternate times, making the timing of transfers even more critical. There’s not a minute to waste to ensure that both shows begin post-production on time each day.

When Ben and his team originally looked for a technology solution to their geographic and file size challenges, they also considered IBM’s Aspera. The team already used Aspera software in specific aspects of the post-production workflow, as required by outside firms. “Aspera didn’t fit the bill for us. It has overly complex pricing models and overly complex implementation for our needs. It’s endlessly complicated and expensive,” said Ben. “ExpeDat is a rock solid, simple solution. The simple pricing, the very simple interface, with the performance we needed just kind of ticked all the boxes.”

ESA currently has four licenses of ExpeDat running over two networks and continues to successfully move the firm’s high volume of massive media files each day. Ben added that another benefit of using ExpeDat is that it works consistently without intervention from the engineering team. This is particularly important because, “Most of our transfers happen at crazy hours of the night when I don’t want to provide support.”

ExpeDat overcomes both challenges – geography and file size – and keeps Endemol Shine Australia on track to produce the reality TV shows that have brought them great success.

About Data Expedition, Inc.

Data Expedition, Inc.® (DEI®) is the creator of the world’s only data transport software that instantly adapts to fully utilize any network path, maximizing the throughput of existing network infrastructure. Since 2000, DEI has provided data transport solutions to the world’s largest companies across nearly every continent and industry. The company’s patented MTPTM/IP technology uses unique flow-control and error recovery algorithms to achieve high-network efficiency across all IP networks. Companies using DEI’s solutions can automatically transport data as fast as the underlying infrastructure will allow without human intervention at a fraction of the cost of other solutions. For more information or to download a FREE trial of ExpeDat for the cloud, please visit www.DataExpedition.com.

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Additional Contacts:

info@DataExpedition.com
www.DataExpedition.com
+1 617-500-0002