



The EditShare VICE

Known for its diverse range of original online content, VICE (www.vice.com), founded in 1994 by media superstars Shane Smith, Gavin McInnes and Suroosh Alvi, originally started out as a punk magazine covering music and culture. In 2006, the company expanded its media distribution to include online content – a move met by unprecedented enthusiasm on the internet.

With a knack for landing top writers and producing thought-provoking and often provocative content that has caught the attention of the ever-elusive millennial generation, VICE quickly grew into a multibillion dollar global media conglomerate featuring a vast network of digital channels, TV and film production studios, not to mention a book publishing company, record label and world class creative agency. Today, VICE has offices in 36 countries with its Berlin, Germany, office being a major hub for investigative journalism and creative content production.

"VICE owns 12 online channels. Here in Germany, we develop content for eight of the channels, as well as for VICE.com," comments Andreas Schneider, head of post production for VICE Germany. *"In addition to the channels, which include VICE, Motherboard (technology), THUMP (electronic dance), Noisy (music), Munchies (food), VICE Sports, The Creators Project (arts) and i-D*

(video fashion), we also develop digital content for Virtue Worldwide, VICE's creative agency, that is designed for marquee clients like Lufthansa, Adidas, Anheuser-Busch, Johnson & Johnson and BMW."

Many large media companies have struggled to strike a balance between online and traditional distribution vehicles, but VICE has found the magic formula for off-the-chart ratings and growing audiences across the board. The demand for its fresh programming has had a direct impact on resources too. VICE's Berlin office alone has gone from 90 people to 140 in a matter of 12 months.

The explosive growth means that content production is constantly on full speed with turnaround timelines that are often just as fast. Understanding the throughput and infrastructure required for such extreme resource growth and content development, head of VICE post production, Andreas Schneider, set in motion an infrastructure and fast-turn workflow to manage both the production and resource demands. Putting his confidence in EditShare's shared storage and archive platform, which features 96TB of online shared storage, and two Ark Tape backups, Andreas deployed the highly collaborative and scalable storage solution to support his growing pool of Adobe Premiere Pro CC editors.

"Each VICE office uses their own system for production, but there is a single database used company-wide to access the master media assets," states Andreas. "Because there are so many variables with regards to production and because we share the final packages across the company, we have a strict post workflow using only EditShare as the storage infrastructure and Adobe Premiere for editing. This allows us to work with virtually any format that comes our way. It also allows us to share projects and better collaborate thanks to EditShare file project sharing capabilities, which is a must when we have such fast turn times."

In addition to its own channels, VICE Germany produces the popular *VICE Reports* series, shown on RTL2. Andreas explains, *"For RTL2 VICE Reports, we produce content for a full 60-minute show. A news show format, it always contains at least three VICE stories. The topics range from political to science to environmental protection. Parts of the VICE Reports originally aired on HBO and the second season will be airing 12 episodes, starting November 11th, every Monday night."*

Meeting the production needs wasn't the only reason Andreas went with EditShare. The growing resource pool meant that there had to be several



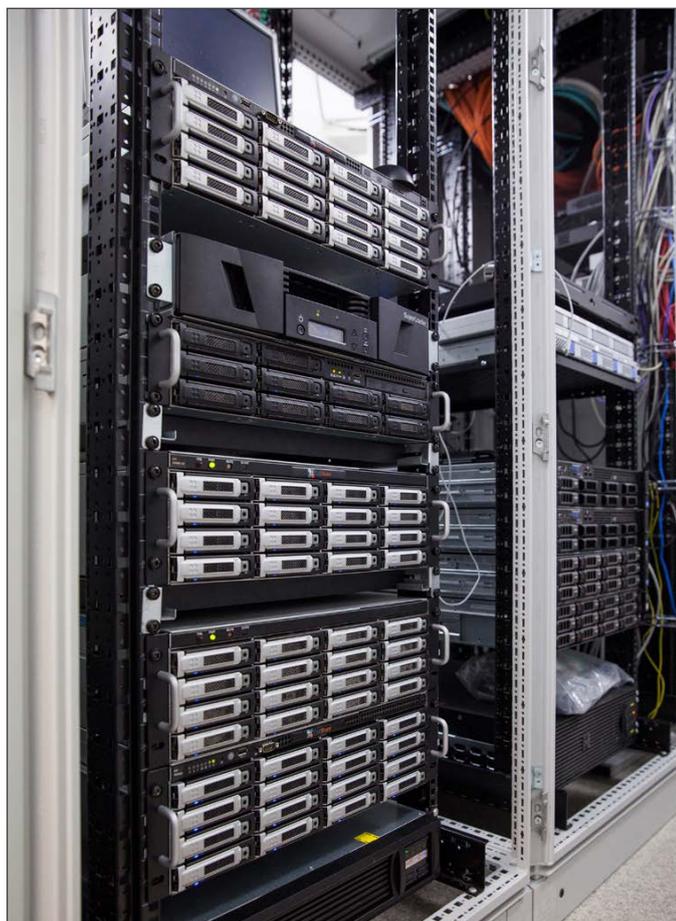
office changes to accommodate physical space requirements. A plug-and-play shared storage system meant that Andreas could pack it up one day, move and plug it in to the next without missing a beat.

"We packed on a Friday afternoon, turned off the EditShare servers and moved them to the new offices over the weekend," he says. "Because it operates on Ethernet, the new network was already in place. All we did was put the server into the new chassis bay and connect them. The following Monday, the editors came in and began working as if nothing had changed. There was no elaborate cabling system to contend with. The administration and setup is simple, yet so important for our business needs. There aren't many systems providing this type of flexibility and performance."

A Good Workflow Habit

Projects vary greatly in production length and requirements at VICE, leaving content producers to select the gear that best serves the task at hand, amplifying the number of formats that arrive at VICE Germany post. Due to the fast turn of the project, Andreas does not transcode incoming files to single codec – he doesn't have to. He points out, *"At the end of the day, we will turn over a master file, so why lose time transcoding up front?"*

The EditShare and Adobe Premiere solutions allow Andreas' team to work with whatever file format that comes in, whether it's from an Arri, Blackmagic, Canon or Sony camera. *"Projects drive the gear we use,"* Andreas says, elaborating on the setup. *"If you are shooting a documentary and want a film look, you use one of the digital film cameras, or maybe you have a covert assignment that requires one of the stealth cameras without which would be impossible to get the shot. We're able to be flexible with what can be used, and our post production infrastructure with EditShare and Adobe Premiere Pro CC is designed to support just about anything that comes our way."*



Andreas keeps content in order with EditShare. For each new project ingested into EditShare storage, the post team creates an EditShare Media Space, making it easily identifiable and searchable across the vast database. No assets are deleted until the project is complete and securely backed up. When the project is complete, the post team then creates a new EditShare Media Space, which holds the project's master file with separate audio. Master files are distributed via the online player platform Ooyala and saved to a centralized database, which is shared company wide. Projects are automatically backed up to the EditShare Ark tape for long-term storage with the ability to bring it back online when required.

"With the projects growing at such an extreme rate, it was important that we could scale the storage infrastructure at will," comments Andreas. *"EditShare's ESA makes it very easy and very affordable to expand as you need. There is no complicated administration. It's really designed for a facility that is very media centric with the flexibility of an IT developed product."* Originally installing a 16TB XStream shared storage solution, Andreas traded up to a 64TB XStream HT shared storage system and then expanded that to include another 32TB, giving VICE a total of 96TB of EditShare XStream shared storage.

Because EditShare is format agnostic, Andreas can easily collaborate with other offices. *"There is a lot of collaboration between Vice offices,"* he says. *"Because of our infrastructure, it doesn't matter if we are sent RAW or 4K files. We can easily manage it."*

Content in the Clouds

While what's in front of Andreas is enough to keep him busy 24/7, he is looking to the future – and up – specifically at how cloud-based solutions like EditShare Flow can help his production.

"We have a very open and flexible workflow that allows us to adapt to changing production requirements and opportunities fairly easily, so I am continually evaluating emerging technology and talking with companies like EditShare about how their systems can potentially leverage the new capabilities to advance our production capabilities," Andreas says. *"At the end of the day, we are able to stick to the standards without being dragged down by the shortcomings of an old, inflexible system. What we have is super scalable and is designed to support our continued growth, with options like Flow ready to accommodate our needs in the near future."*

For more information on VICE, please visit www.vice.com.

