



From great ideas to producing breakthrough results at WTFN Entertainment

Charged with the production of Channel 9's high rating Paramedics show, WTFN had to quickly transform its storage and backup capabilities to control vast quantities of footage. A new scalable platform was to support WTFN's future content development, evolving post-production techniques and increasing automation.



From its Hawthorn, Victoria studio, WTFN Entertainment creates quality content for global audiences across television, film and multi-media platforms. It runs an extensive development slate using in-house and independent talent.

THE CHALLENGE

WTFN had built an enviable reputation producing high rating television shows such as Bondi Vet. Though these were single camera, relatively simple exercises.

With its business expanding rapidly, WTFN's existing storage and backup could not easily meet the requirements of several new productions, particularly Channel 9's Paramedics show, that were in the process of kicking off.

Mark Irwin, WTFN's Chief Technology Officer, says: "Securing Paramedics for a second season was the trigger for us to move to a flexible, scalable infrastructure that could support our growth. We had to step up to handling the production of 18,000 hours of output from multi-camera scenarios – 15 cameras in an ambulance, helicopter-mounted shots, and drones above."

WTFN's Melbourne facility has 30 AVID Media Composer seats, used by Offline Editors, Edit Assists and Producers in conjunction with Interplay Production and Media Central. Onlining is completed in AVID Symphony.

A range of supporting staff bring the productions together including an inhouse Technical Support Engineer. The new system was to support varying staffing numbers and areas of expertise, and provide access for both in-house people and freelancers. It needed to deliver lower administrative overheads to ensure the tight production schedules could be met. "Everyone would

"We had to take our production capabilities to another level. To secure the volume of data being generated by our productions, we needed a new way to store, backup, edit and off the footage being accumulated – now and into the future."

Mark Irwin

Chief Technology Officer,
WTFN Entertainment

AT A GLANCE

THE CHALLENGE

WTFN sought a reliable, powerful, scalable backup infrastructure to support its growth.

THE SOLUTION

The end-to-end solution proposed by CompNow integrated all components for capturing, creating, editing and distributing digital media in post-production.

THE BENEFITS

- Extra, cost effective backup/ storage capability simply added as business grows
- Lower administrative overheads
- Access for in-house and freelance roles
- Managed Service Agreement providing expert, personalised support

THE PRODUCTS

- Avid NEXIS media storage system
- Marquis Project Parking archiving
- Spectra Logic 120 tape backup
- CompNow Managed Service Agreement



be accessing this one system - pulling media and concurrent multicam angles at the same time," he says.

THE SOLUTION

Mark compiled an overview of WTFN's business requirements - catering for its editing suites, media streams, and needs of multiple producers working on Paramedics and other shows: "How do we store and provide the 18,000 hours of footage as it's needed to be worked on? How do we manage to backup and archive all of our material now and into the future? What will give us faster throughput?"

The end-to-end solution supplied by CompNow integrated the required components: An AVID NEXIS storage system for capturing, creating, editing and distributing digital media in post-production. Project Parking, an automated piece for archiving content and moving it as required. The latest, super fast, high-density Spectra Logic LTO8 drive technology for the backup tape library. And for the core backup and server running the library, a higher speed fibre optic connection was installed - all without interrupting current production.

CompNow's MSA supports WTFN with general help desk through to specific engineering requests and the ability to leverage teams for projects such as this major infrastructure transformation.

Mark says: "CompNow has been supporting us for three years. In that time they've dramatically increased the depth of their offering. The discrete teams - project, pre-sales, product experts, engineering support, staff training - were

combined under a great Managed Service Agreement. That gave us the confidence to rollout this solution".

THE BENEFITS

Mark explains the smooth completion of the three month exercise: "CompNow's project team worked closely with our inhouse team to bring everything together. The pre-sales guys did the detailed statement of works and defined the risks, capturing all the elements. It was reassuring to have their AVID engineers on hand, with their broad knowledge and experience. And their account management was excellent; wrangling all the resources for us and getting the best priced components. They did a terrific job."

"WTFN takes great ideas to production and distributes via all platforms. We can now say 'yes' to new opportunities knowing it's simple to expand our production/backup/archive infrastructure. We won't have to replace, we just add capability," Mark says.

And he says the Marquis Project Parking "is a big time saver for us. We don't have to have as many staff just to move content around, because it's now automated."

Mark confirms WTFN's satisfaction with the new infrastructure: "It's faultless. We're in the thick of the 20 episode second season of Paramedics right now. Without this system it wouldn't be possible to make it".

CompNow is very much part of WTFN's team. "Their MSA has a very personal and expert difference. Our Account Manager visits every two weeks to make sure everything is ticking over as it should," Mark says.



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