storageDNA®

Case Study
UCLA Athletics

> Prior to integrating DNAevolution, we experienced a catastrophic failure. Now we take comfort in knowing that our content is protected, and we can easily access and restore our assets whenever we need to. DNAevolution has extended the life of our existing SAN, and we now have an efficient, automated archive workflow without having to rely on staff to remember to backup footage. This technology helps us solve our challenges with file-based content acquisition, and has integrated seamlessly with our XOS Digital video platform.
>
> - Ken Norris, Director of Video Operations, UCLA Athletics

The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Athletics program is the most decorated in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) history, with 109 NCAA team championships. An NCAA Division I university, UCLA offers ten varsity sports programs for men and thirteen for women.

Ken Norris and his video operations staff are responsible for recording all of the practices and games for the UCLA football team, and instructional highlight footage for almost every UCLA Athletic program. Norris has served as the director of video operations for UCLA Athletics for more than 20 years and is considered one of the most innovative and respected minds in his profession. He was recently honored with the inaugural College Sports Video Summit Pioneer Award.

THE CHALLENGE

Norris and his team were eager to make the transition to a file-based workflow and become a "videotape-less" environment to support the high demand for their video services. When they began acquiring in digital formats, the team used external USB and FireWire hard drives as their media backup solution. After backing up to the drives, they would delete the content from camera media, leaving them without a reliable master copy.

When they experienced a hard drive failure, they lost irreplaceable game, interview, and ceremony footage. Following this event, the team needed to find a solution to securely and efficiently manage their critical file-based assets for both their coaching analysis and post production needs.

Norris' team's primary obligation is to support coaching analysis and to ensure that the football coaches have the video they need to train players and coach effectively. The department runs a sports video network (XOS Digital Network Platform), allowing coaches to efficiently use and analyze training video.

Photo courtesy of UCLA Athletics

"Coaches' jobs are on the line every day so it's important that the video coordinator can deliver what they need," said Norris. "Being able to easily backup and restore content is vital in the event of a catastrophic failure, and without a solution like DNAevolution you are flirting with danger."

The video operations department now records footage exclusively in digital formats to P2 cards and SD cards for AVCHD. Furthermore, it is essential that they can rapidly archive the camera master content and wipe the cards clean for re-use so that they can cover more sporting events.

To support its post production environment, the department needed a solution that would easily integrate with its EditShare® shared storage area network (SAN), which is connected to its editorial clients, including Avid®, Final Cut Pro®, and Adobe® Premiere®.

THE SOLUTION

Photo courtesy of UCLA Athletics

UCLA Athletics evaluated StorageDNA's LTO with LTFS archive, retrieval, and direct access workflow solution, DNAevolution, and was impressed by its ease of use and high performance. They found that file-based content is quickly and easily archived and restored using DNAevolution with both the XOS sports video network and the EditShare, enabling them to free-up a tremendous amount of space on their SAN. Ultimately, they chose DNAevolution model X200-24 (24-slot HP autoloader) because it:

- Supports their migration to a file-based workflow and helps them reduce camera media and SAN storage costs
- Offers a cost-effective, reliable LTO with LTFS archive and retrieval solution that protects their critical media assets long-term
- Allows them to easily find and retrieve their content when they need it for projects
- Enables fast archives and restores and provides timesaving features like automated processes

"Having high value content stored on hard drives made us nervous, so the long-term shelf stability of archiving to LTO made sense to us," stated Norris. Therefore, DNAevolution was implemented for the coaching analysis and post production networks.

"The user interface is very simple, and after a small learning curve, it's easy to use. I can't say enough about the support and overall experience working with the staff at StorageDNA from installation to training, they're first-rate," continued Norris. "We like how DNAevolution uses LTFS technology and provides more robust tools to access our media than Windows® Explorer® or Finder®. In addition, our overall cost to archive on an LTO-5 tape, with a 30-year shelf-life, is now less than USD $.05/GB."

The workflow for coaching analysis delivers backup and long-term archiving for disaster recovery. The department backs-up the content of its XOS servers to LTO tape so that media is easily restored in case of a failure. For post production, the workflow securely and efficiently stores digital camera master files to LTO via automated archiving. With DNAevolution, they now catalogue specific footage details, such as game information and shooter, which helps them to easily search and retrieve the content when needed. In the near future, the department plans to conform directly from LTO to take advantage of this unique, timesaving automated process.

THE RESULT

DNAevolution provides outstanding archiving performance for every UCLA Athletics video project, streamlines the way they work, and helps them save on storage and camera media costs. Having a reliable LTO LTFS archive and retrieval solution in their workflow provides them with the security of knowing that their camera master content is backed up and stored long-term, and can be easily retrieved when needed.

Cost savings

- Overall cost to archive on an LTO-5 tape, with a 30-year shelf-life, has dropped to less than USD $.05/GB
- No need to purchase additional P2 cards or SD cards because content is backed up to LTO and camera media is repurposed

Time and labor savings

- Automated processes offer significant time savings and make the team more efficient

"Prior to integrating DNAevolution, we experienced a catastrophic failure. Now we take comfort in knowing that our content is protected, and we can easily access and restore our assets whenever we need to. DNAevolution has extended the life of our existing SAN, and we now have an efficient, automated archive workflow without having to rely on staff to remember to backup footage. This technology helps us solve our challenges with file-based content acquisition, and has integrated seamlessly with our XOS Digital video platform," concluded Norris.