



PROJECT:

University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism with The Julie Chen/Leslie Moonves and CBS Media Center

LOCATION:

Los Angeles, California

GOAL:

An open, cloud-compatible media ecosystem capable of distributing content to a myriad of platforms within a converged newsroom environment.



A NEW ERA OF JOURNALISM

“The Master of Science program here at the University of Southern California’s Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism used to be a two-year program. 2014 marks the first year of a new nine-month program in a new building,” says Vince Gonzales, Coordinator, Master’s Programs, School of Journalism, USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism, who oversees the new Masters of Science and Arts program.

Communication and journalism students now share a new common workspace in the Julie Chen/Leslie Moonves and CBS Media Center at USC’s Wallis Annenberg Hall. Rising from the center of the USC campus in Los Angeles, the building’s collegiate Gothic exterior gives way to a Greek assembly-style forum, and a 30 foot digital media wall that greets visitors with a real-time feed of student-created programming.

Collaborative spaces drive the 88,000 square-foot building’s design: project areas can be reconfigured with movable walls, hallways are lined with whiteboards to encourage impromptu conversations and meet-ups, and anywhere that glass can replace drywall, it does, owing to the school’s philosophies of sharing and transparency.





CONVERGENCE

“When I explain FORK to the faculty, I describe it as the glue that holds together everything happening within our media creation environment. We have a broadcast news program, a radio show, podcasts, a news-oriented website, and a news magazine program. FORK helps us organize all of that in a single converged newsroom.”

Charles Peyton,
Director of Operations, Facilities and Technology

Behind the scenes, a private 500-terabyte Isilon storage system supports a custom integrated media ecosystem running along side Primestream’s FORK and the Xchange cloud asset management platform, facilitating unprecedented levels of collaboration between faculty, students, and scholars.

“The Media Center is the focal point for the school’s broadcast component,” says Annenberg Associate Dean James Vasquez. “We’ve got 2,500 students producing many different types of content in the newsroom and in the classroom. How do you manage all of that? Our success in answering that question determines our success in everything else.”

“It has to be a converged newsroom in order for us to teach modern journalism,” Gonzales reiterates. “We need a system where everyone can access the material at any point in or out of the newsroom, and then repurpose it across any platform.”



LIKE NO OTHER

“Previously, Annenberg’s curriculum utilized closed-system software in separate news environments. The main goal of the Media Center was to get them all playing together in one sandbox.”

Chuck Boyles,
Director of Multimedia Production

The Media Center now relies on cloud-capable system software to drive its content management, pushing FORK and Xchange to integrate in ways like never before and like no other. On the content creation side, FORK Craft Editor Integration and File Ingest HD software allow students to import and finish their assignments with Adobe Creative Cloud software products such as Premiere, Photoshop, InDesign, After Effects, and Acrobat, as well as open-source software such as Audacity.

Faculty members utilize Xchange to assign projects and deliver media to their courses, Students can then browse and download media for remote news package creation and approval. Once completed, final edits are uploaded to the newsroom via Xchange or sent from the Premiere edit bays using the embedded FORK panel. Media ready for air is registered to the newsroom and is played back directly from central storage. Assets are archived for long term storage and future repurposing using the FORK Archive Gateway

“Via Xchange, this is how 80 percent of the Annenberg students will interact with the newsroom workflows,” says Xchange Product Manager, Alan Dabul.

Approved projects are delivered to the school’s student run media outlets: Annenberg TV News, a nightly news broadcast and weekly sports magazine show, Annenberg Radio News, a 30-minute NPR parallel, Neon Tommy, an online news website, Impact, a polished 60-minute news magazine production, and Ampersand, an arts & culture podcast part of the MSJ (Media School of Journalism) program. Some content is even syndicated into the national market.



The Media Center's ingest environment pulls content from satellite, local studio, and VTR sources through an HD Miranda router onto video servers running FORK Ingest HD. From there it's transcoded into a universally recognized file format (XDCAM) and then distributed across a GigE local area network to the central storage and tape archive.

"We also added NewTek TriCaster compatibility to Xchange, and now everything that's recorded live in studio A gets sent to the server as well," Dabul remarks.

Students work from a central assignment desk in the Media Center's main broadcast control area, but the cloud-capable nature of its converged newsroom means that work can be done remotely from almost anywhere with an Internet connection.

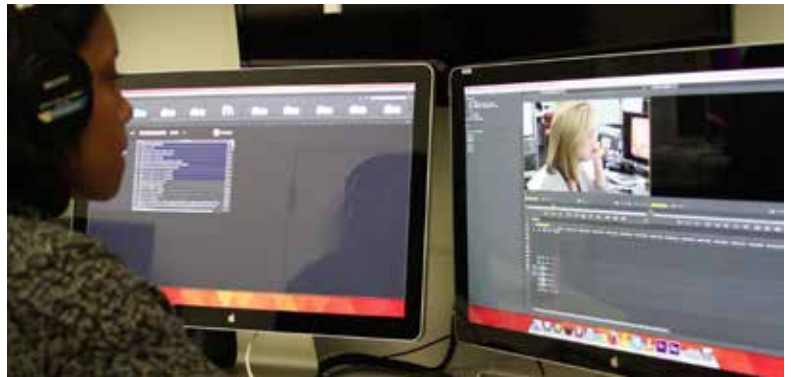
On site, a Ross Overdrive panel and FORK Live Assist control content playout with automated action scripts, triggering the iNews rundown events working with FORK Production Proxy Server, Transcode Manager, and the Mobile2Air Gateway.





LOOKING AHEAD

“Whatever they’re doing, we’re giving students a location to store content, to access it within our environment, outside of our environment, share it with others, collaborate with others and then publish it,” says Peyton. “The curriculum will continue to push us, especially while the field of journalism is always changing, always growing, always adapting to stay relevant.”



“It’s fun for us, because that means we get to explore new technologies and new opportunities.”

Charles Peyton,
Director of operations, Wallis Annenberg Media Center





STATS AT THE JULIE CHEN/LESLIE MOONVES AND CBS MEDIA CENTER

XCHANGE WORKFLOW:

1. Faculty uploads and distributes media to students for use in news package projects.
2. Student downloads and edits media remotely.
3. Student uploads news package for review.
4. Faculty reviews and adds annotation for any changes.
5. Student receives annotations and re-edits package for final approval.
6. Package is approved, archived, and sent to news outlets for live playback in the news room or for over-the-top distribution.

SOFTWARE:

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 8 | FORK Live Ingest HD | 2 | FORK Edit2Payout Server |
| 50 | FORK File Ingest HD | 1 | FORK News Gateway |
| 50 | FORK Content Navigator | 1 | FORK Active-X Site License |
| 25 | FORK Craft Editor Integration | 2 | FORK Packager |
| 8 | FORK Live Assist | 1 | FORK Social |
| 8 | FORK Omneon Control | 1 | FORK Production Server Engine |
| 2 | FORK VDCP Control | 3 | FORK Production and Proxy |
| 1 | FORK Ross Overdrive Interface | 1 | FORK Graphic Server |
| 10 | FORK Render Farm Server | 1 | FORK Xchange Suite |
| 1 | FORK Archive Gateway | 1 | FORK Logger |
| 1 | FORK Archive Bridge | 1 | FORK Mobile2Air Gateway |

HARDWARE:

- | | | | |
|----|-------------|---|--------------------|
| 20 | CISCO-C220 | 1 | Machine Controller |
| 4 | AJA Kona 3G | 2 | Time Code Reader |



PRIMESTREAM SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS ENABLE BROADCASTERS AND MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS TO CREATE, MANAGE, AND DISTRIBUTE CONTENT OVER THE AIR, VIA SATELLITE, AND TO “SECOND” SCREENS SUCH AS PCS, MOBILE PHONES, AND TABLETS.

Primestream's FORK line of products combines multiple modules in a single, integrated software suite. The range of functions that FORK provides includes advanced metadata search and scripting that empowers media companies to implement advanced automated workflows that free humans to do what they do best – create.

Based on an open and hardware-agnostic architecture, FORK integrates with most standard broadcast software and hardware from a wide range of manufacturers. This high level of integration provides total control for end-to-end management of the production process of live news, sports, video production, publishing and archiving, with significantly improved efficiencies that maximize the use and value of a client's media assets.

Primestream's FORK software suite is a proven solution for complete facility management. Primestream customers include some of the world's leading broadcasters, such as CBS News, CNN, NYSE, NASCAR, NFL Networks & Films, Reuters, SunTV, Disney, Cisco TV, Yahoo Studios, The Wall Street Journal, USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism and many more.

For more information about Primestream's solutions:

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