

FACILIS TECHNOLOGY: CASE STUDY CRAWFORD COMMUNICATIONS: AWARD-WINNING PROJECTS CALL FOR RISK-FREE STORAGE

Based in Atlanta, Crawford Communications has been providing independent filmmakers, documentary makers, and TV series producers with creative, high-end editorial, graphics, effects, color correction, sound design and audio mixing services since 1981. The company has completed hundreds of long-form award winning projects including Academy Award winners, finalists, semi-finalists and nominees; Sundance Film Festival winners, Peabody Award winners and national Emmy award winners, among others. Crawford has posted over a dozen independent features and documentaries since 2004, and has many more in the pipeline.

Company profile:

- Largest post production operation in the southeast
- More than 24 years of post-production services
- Specializes in commercials, independent projects, high definition, audio and design
- Recipient of numerous prestigious industry awards



Crawford currently utilizes five HD edit suites, an HD color correction suite and three 5.1 surround sound rooms to manage a range of the most demanding client services including HD transfer, HD tape-to-tape color enhancement, motion graphics, animation, effects, compositing, DVD authoring, HD format conversions, duplication, standards conversions and compression services. Crawford is one of the most experienced shops in HD workflow and HD & 5.1 deliverables for theatrical or broadcast projects.

Narrowly avoiding a nightmare

Crawford Communications has staked their claim in a communications industry that requires reliable storage to support the thriving long-form, short-form and commercial projects. Dave Warner, director of engineering for post production, runs a diversified post-production studio using both attached and shared storage across Apple Final Cut Pro HD, Avid Adrenaline and Avid DS systems.

In early 2005 while working on a campaign with a long-time client, Carfax®, the editing staff began experiencing increased drive failures on the Avid DS system. These failures risked the entire project. “The prospect of losing our client’s valuable data was unacceptable,” said Warner. “We knew we needed to make a move to rectify the situation, but also needed to explore our options, and that could take time.”



The cost of upgrading Crawford's Unity system was hefty, and since their projects did not require an Avid-centric suite, Warner was able to look into other solutions. His staff began their search for the most effective shared storage solution, and at every corner, realized that most high performance SAN infrastructures came with sizeable price tags. It was then that Atlanta CAD, a highly trusted reseller introduced Crawford to the TerraBlock system, by Facilis Technology.

"We were fortunate enough to test the TerraBlock solution first-hand by linking it to three of our editing rooms," explained Warner. "Immediately, the TerraBlock solution complimented the editing suites and added necessary flexibility to their system. Within just weeks, we decided to purchase the system because it gave us the confidence that we wouldn't lose client data."

Implementing TerraBlock: investments that pay off

"In addition to the unbeatable price point, the scalability of the 4Gbit Fibre network helped seal the deal for us," further explained Warner. "We added multiple ports to the existing network, vastly increasing the throughput at such a minimal cost."

"As we draw our plans for future purchases, we will continue to build on our existing TerraBlock units. If we had known then what we know now, our purchasing decision would have gone with TerraBlock from the start – we are completely sold on its virtues."