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Employees at Renaissance Television and Film know a house can be more than a home—it can be a busy post facility too.

► Post ‘House’

In most houses, the workshop is kept out of view — in the basement or the garage. For Chris Magid, principal at Renaissance Television and Film (gortvf.com), the converted Dallas house that plays host to his video postproduction business is all workshop. (Besides, of course, the mandatory comfortable living room and stocked kitchen.)

Supporting five editing and graphics suites, a Facilis TerraBlock serves as the storage backbone of the facility. Since migrating more to corporate work over the last few years, Renaissance has seen its volume of work expand, and that's put demands on the storage infrastructure. Housing and protecting a library of source material, the TerraBlock affords Renaissance volume-level sharing of up to 6TB. That means that no baseband video has to be routed through the house — it's all data.

The turn toward computer-based video editing has allowed nontraditional spaces to be used as postproduction facilities, and data-based video has made it possible for Renaissance's smaller house (1,800 square feet) to serve as a workshop. “Now with the TerraBlock we can maximize our space because at each seat we do not need to duplicate a lot of bulkier gear,” says Magid. “There doesn't have to be a VTR at every seat.”

Renaissance has five full suites, four of them Avid stations and one a graphics system with Combustion and After Effects. The two Avid Media Composers have I/O capabilities; the two Xpress Pros do not.

The 6TB capacity of the TerraBlock allows the company to keep projects online for longer than it otherwise would be able to. Because all machines are cutting from the same material, there haven't been any bottlenecks — and therefore the facility's projects can be turned around more quickly.

Renaissance's TerraBlock is composed of 24 SATA drives connected by 2Gbps Fibre Channel. To each seat, TerraBlock looks like a SCSI device. The volumes are striped and mirrored for RAID-like parity. It cost the company about \$32,000 two years ago.

The storage infrastructure currently in place at Renaissance makes it cheaper for the facility to add a seat if that becomes necessary — Magid figures it would be about \$5,000 total for Renaissance to add another Xpress Pro suite to the facility. That would help the company keep up with a docket of work that, in a typical-to-heavy week, might demand 12 spots to be edited and finished.
