

# Online Video Publishing



It's easy to get excited about online video publishing, every media company is doing it in some fashion – it's a must-have. Many companies see it as a technical exercise, transcoding and delivering files to locations over network delivery systems. While these are important parts of any OVP system, this document points the way to a broader, more business oriented view, with greater opportunities to be had, approaches that lead to increased revenue and lower costs - compelling for any content owner.





## GOOD BUSINESS IN ANY ECONOMY?

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It's easy to get optimistic about the growth of video. The audience for long-form content is growing, online ads are paying off, and many media companies are getting better at reading what audiences want and delivering it.

But have web video businesses been so focused on growing the top-line revenues that they are missing opportunities to optimize their business and reduce costs? Maybe it's time to turn the focus inward, and investigate ways to reduce the total cost of ownership for your broadband video business.

A difficult market makes it even more important to pause and review what works best for your business. Restricted budgets make it hard for online media companies to plan ahead for new business models and new user experiences. Some media businesses have really been hit by the economy, and want to know how to cut costs now. There's never been a better time to find new ways to improve efficiency and save money.

# A PROVEN SOLUTION FOR REDUCING COSTS

Front Porch Digital offers a set of solutions that can help you reduce the total cost of ownership of your online video management and publishing. Our solution starts with a video management system that all your video producers and editors share. It's a one-stop web service where they can upload and manage media, set business rules and advertising policies, syndicate, and publish.

In addition, we have new, affordable content delivery network (CDN) and storage services combined with a discount program offered by some of our premier technology partners. We've been able to arrange these discounts for our customers because of the volume of traffic we handle (millions of views per month), and our long-standing relationships with ad campaign management, ad sales, and presentation design vendors.



This paper details the benefits of our broadband video “solution stack”—the cost-saving services you need to run your online video business, all resting on a centralized video management system. It's a solution that gives you the flexibility you need to add new technologies as you need them, as well as helping you reduce your costs now.

## The video management foundation

When you're looking for ways to economize on services, you don't want to make choices that limit your business options. The strength of Front Porch Digital's system lies in its tight integration with DIVArchive and also its combination of a centralized video management system with adaptable technology that gives you control over your content while freeing you up to take your business down any path you decide:

- Because it's centralized, it encourages the sharing of resources you've already invested in and gives you the oversight and options for controlling the quality of your assets.
- Because it's open, you can choose additional software and tools that let you try new business models, change your workflow, and select the options that make the most sense for your business.

The system is the base for all the services you need to manage and publish your video, including administrative access controls, metadata management, syndication, transcoding, delivery, and reporting. With this foundation and our discounted partner services, you can reduce the costs of the services essential to running your business. Whether delivery costs are killing you, or it's not the right time for you to invest in developers to design players for your site, Front Porch Digital has come up with solutions to help you out.

# FRONT PORCH DIGITAL'S PARTNERS

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Using our system helps you reduce your costs throughout the solution stack. To save you the time and resources it takes to evaluate specialized vendors and services, we've done the legwork to select industry leaders specializing in ad networks and ad delivery systems, analytics and reporting tools, and solutions for enabling user-generated content.

Our partners' pre-integrated solutions speed up your time-to-market with scalable technologies. Combining our services with complementary products, industry expertise, and market knowledge, we can provide a wide range of flexible solutions that offer you the customized services you require.



# FRONT PORCH DIGITAL'S COST-REDUCING SOLUTIONS

## Ingest

If you have large volumes or constantly changing media, our Ingest Service is directly integrated to DIVArchive, the world's leading content storage management system, to get your content into our system directly and easily through a dedicated gateway. This is a "push" ingest method.

The Feed Reader monitors your MRSS feed and automatically uploads content additions and changes to your account. The Feed Reader is a "pull" ingest method: the upload is drawn into our system as we read your feed.

The Ingest Service helps you get your video online much quicker and easier:

- Fast startup. Migrate your content to DIVApublish *mpx* easily and efficiently, including policy based automated feeds. Online and VoD is now just another DIVArchive restore destination.
- One-time, easy setup. We work with you to set up your ingest profile, which specifies all your metadata formats and content requirements. Once setup is complete, you never have to change anything. Your content is programmatically ingested into our system.
- Multiple formats. Supported formats include add. Content, MRSS, CSV and XML. Additional format adapters can be built to meet your needs.
- Workflow support. Use your existing feeds to ingest content or set up a Watch Folder and see content ingested automatically from your workflows.

- Bulk upload. You don't have to upload media objects one-by-one or adapt your systems to match a rigid uploading process. We provide tools for uploading massive amounts of content by adjusting our systems to adapt to your technology needs.
- Error Checking. Detailed error logging gives you tools to ensure that your content is ingested properly every time.





## Storage

Front Porch Digital has built cloud-based, mezzanine storage for referencing, testing, and distributing your media files. The service gives you the reliability and flexibility you need for your business:

- You can start with the storage you need now, and add more as your business scales.
- Enterprise-class reliability means that files are stored in a fully-managed, low-latency, file-based storage server farm, geographically dispersed to be local to your main DIVArchive installation
- As your needs change, you can instantly access more storage with fully scalable capacity that dynamically grows with your requirements, including abnormal peaks in volume that can be handled automatically with no implementation delays – allowing for immediate storage capacity provisioning on demand.
- Because of seamless integration with our video management solution, there is low integration cost, no separate contracts to negotiate, and no minimum commitments.
- It gives you the flexibility to quickly integrate and work with other services. For example, you can new syndication outlets, transcode for another site or device, or use the storage for backup or testing.
- It lets you bypass the usual expenses associated with using your own storage:
  - Server maintenance staff costs
  - Operating system and server monitoring software licensing
  - Physical storage environment cost and maintenance

For dispersed businesses, it lifts the restrictions caused by geography:

- You don't have to use up bandwidth uploading to multiple locations.
- Administrative users can ingest their data from anywhere.

## Content delivery

Delivery makes up the vast majority of costs for an online video business. If you've already contracted with CDN vendors for delivery, there are still a number of ways you can reduce your costs with our platform:

- Through our system, you can dynamically route traffic between internal servers and multiple CDNs to keep your content fresh during peak hours and your costs low during slow times.
- Monitor flows and manage traffic so that, if traffic hits a certain threshold, it switches over to another CDN so that you can avoid surpassing your contractual cap.
- Negotiate shorter-term contracts to capitalize on lower bandwidth costs and the latest delivery technologies.



## Transcoding

Transcoding can be notoriously complicated. There are many options, from shared services to hosted servers, and local solutions. How do you know which is the best option for your needs?

DIVApublish *mpx*'s integrated Transcoding Service offers both a shared hosted option and dedicated hosted servers, depending on your needs. You can access both services directly from the management console, where you select your target formats. File conversion happens automatically behind the scenes. The following may help you decide which option works best for your business:

- Video transcoding is a specialized area. Transcoding server administrators have to understand the compression process, and be able to monitor and back up the systems.
- Transcoding requires hardware. A server farm needs rack space, and the boxes need to be maintained and cooled, increasing energy costs.
- The software is an investment. Transcoding software needs to be licensed and maintained. In addition, you'll also have to license and periodically upgrade your operating systems.

Setting up a transcoding farm can cost thousands in hardware and software alone, not even counting operational costs. So if committing to these resource, hardware, and software requirements isn't feasible, DIVApublish *mpx* hosted Transcoding Service is a good fit. The hosted shared service operates on a transcoding farm designed for high availability, and the cost is provided free of charge with your DIVApublish *mpx* subscription, for all the transcoding you want.

Our servers can transcode from a wide variety of source file formats, including MPEG-1, MPEG-2, MPEG-4, H.263, H.264, 3G2, RealVideo, QuickTime, AVI, 3GPP, and Windows Media. Output media files include MPEG-1, MPEG-2, MPEG-4, H.263, H.264, 3G2, RealVideo, QuickTime, AVI, 3GPP, Windows Media, and Flash.

## Advertising

The open architecture of our system has helped companies quickly adapt to the campaign management system of their choice. Now, in addition to offering you a variety of advertising integrations, we have worked with some of these advertising partners to offer you at least 10% off their list price.

A reduction in cost of 10% makes a good thing even better. When you use these partners' technologies with our system, you get a level of flexibility not readily available in other video management systems. Our ad policy services let you use the advertising tools that serve you best.

Advantages of using our integrated ad networks include:

- You're not locked in to one ad network, and you can use multiple ad networks at the same time.
- Use an integrated ad network to monetize unused inventory.
- If your network doesn't have ads to run against your inventory, you can easily change to another network.

Using our campaign management integrations also gives you more flexibility:

- Dynamically incorporate ads into your media.
- Maximise revenue by using failover ad policies between your campaign management system and ad networks.
- Use ad logic to run the branding instead of attaching branding to your video. This allows you to easily repurpose content.
- Obtain reports to audit campaign effectiveness.

## Managing multiple advertising partners

With so many ad formats, networks, servers, pattern options, and playback options to integrate and manage, many video providers find it difficult to conceptualize and optimize the entire ad policy process. Through our platform's partnership with Tremor Media, we offer Acudeo ad policy management tools. The Acudeo ad policies service helps you increase your revenue from advertising while decreasing the headache of setting up and managing a vast ecosystem of advertising partners.

With Acudeo ad policies you can:

- Set failover, backup, and switching policies for multiple pre-integrated ad networks and servers to tap your content's full monetization potential.
- Set IAB-compliant in-stream and overlay formats using pre-roll, mid-roll, post-roll, companion, and display banner ads.
- Manage ad playback based on predefined queue points that can be set at minutes watched, percent complete, or position in the lineup.

## Built-in advertising tools

Integrate your advertising system with our Player Development Kit (PDK) for a low cost ad solution. The PDK offers a flexible plug-in environment that supports a variety of ad formats and campaign management systems.

Using the PDK, you can insert any type of ad:

- Pre-, mid-, and post-roll video ads
- Bugs, overlays, and lower-third ads
- Telescoping ads that lead to other videos or microsites
- Companion banners
- Hyperlinks for the video region

In addition, our PDK supports the following features:

- Google AdSense for Video. This plug-in supports any of Google's ad formats including videos, overlays, and end-caps displaying ad text, images, or videos.
- VAST. We support the VAST (Video Ad Serving Template) metafile standard, which is an International Advertising Bureau (IAB) standard format for ad servers that covers video, banner, and overlay ads.
- Google In-Stream Flash. Access both DoubleClick In-Stream ads and Google AdSense for Video ads. Using this plug-in allows allocation of the best ad from either system, or to use one as a failover for the other. A PDK player offers design and advertising options that allow you to continually adapt and improve your broadband video ad campaigns far into the future.



## Presenting your content

The Player Development Kit (PDK) gives you everything you need to build your own unique Flash or HTML5-based broadband video player. Completely documented and fully customizable, it's an advanced player environment for your content that will create a compelling experience for your audience without the extra cost of outsourcing development.

The kit can help you save on your video presentation costs because it gives you choices. Use our out-of-the-box controls, edit them, or create your own. The development can be as simple or as sophisticated as your skills, time, and resources allow. We've given you a head start on the core Flash development, and we provide the source code and templates. So your designer can turn out players much more quickly than doing it all from scratch.

Because we're always adding new components to the PDK, you can take advantage of new features, technologies, and integrations as they emerge. The PDK player is a plug-in friendly product that you can extend at any time to meet your needs.

## Community Toolkit

Integrated with the PDK for a compelling, unique playback experience, the Community Toolkit adds player features for building a vibrant and active community around your content. Comments, ratings, tags, favorites, play lists, and polls engage your fans and allow audience members to discover new content. And the toolkit is absolutely free to all of our customers.

Community features can lead to more ad dollars by increasing traffic with ratings and can raise visibility by providing the ability to sort by most-viewed. And the community features aren't tied to a player—you can also use the toolkit for social networking and non-video content on your site, bypassing the costs of special ratings tools.

## Player Designer

If your business cases don't justify investing in internal player development or hiring a custom player design firm, the Player Designer is a great option for you. A WYSIWYG control panel gives anyone the ability to quickly and easily build and publish their own video player. The designer is a great way to reduce development costs when you're under a deadline, if don't have Flash developers and designers readily available, or if you want to affordably test new markets, content, or outlets. You can select from a wide variety of layouts and color schemes, add your own custom elements, and then connect the player to the broadband video feed of your choice.

## Reporting

The analytics you extract from your video usage supply the data that gives you a competitive edge. Use the built-in reporting to get the data you need:

- Usage and QoS reporting for all services
- Server-side request tracking by media and playlist, including reports for metadata, end-user, and geographic information
- Detailed client side-information for streaming content, including buffer time, frames dropped, and time watched

In addition, Front Porch Digital has developed a discount program with select reporting technology vendors. In addition to receiving 10% or better off of reporting partners' services, you'll avoid development and integration costs, as we've done that work for you.

## Free and low-cost analytics

Google Analytics is completely free, and a great way to get the data you need to improve your advertising and track your online campaigns. If you have more complex needs, Google also offers paid professional services for help with installation, training, and other consultant support.

Use Google's service with DIVApublish *mpx* media and playlist reporting tools to get a more complete picture. The PDK includes a plug-in *.swf* control that can report media views to Google Analytics. Multiple plug-ins can be added to a canvas, and each can track different settings and report to different accounts.



## SUMMARY

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Front Porch Digital's media publishing system is built from the ground up with maximum technical flexibility in mind. But we also know that our customers need flexibility in the way they budget their broadband video business, particularly in a tight market. So we've introduced low-cost solutions for storage, delivery, and transcoding to support your broadband video business, and worked with multiple transcoding engines, CDNs, advertising, and reporting technology vendors to bring you customized solutions that save you time and money. In addition, our built-in administrative console UI, player development solutions and community tools, and reporting services all help you stay on top on things with no additional cost.

We estimate that you can reduce delivery costs by 36%, storage by 75%, and advertising and technology costs by at least 10%.\* The overall reduction in costs can be up to 50%, which is quite a chunk of a video management budget.

There's no better time to focus on reducing the total cost of ownership of your online video business. Give our sales team a call today at +1 303 440 7930 if you are in the Americas, or +33 4 50 88 37 67 if you are internationally based, and we'll talk about your saving your budget with the right set of services.

\*Data is based on proprietary customer cost analysis exercise



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**FRONT PORCH DIGITAL**

Solutions for the past, present, and future of media

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