

Sneaky Big Studios

CASE STUDY



Harmonic MediaGrid 4000 Shared Storage System Provides World-Class Studio with Performance Essential to Online, 4K Post Workflow

The Challenge

When Sneaky Big Studios (www.sneakybig.com) opened its doors in North Scottsdale, AZ recently, the 15,000-square-foot facility became one of the largest and most technologically advanced production/post-production studios in the Southwestern US. The brainchild of Bob Parsons, American entrepreneur and philanthropist with credits that include GoDaddy and the YAM Worldwide, Inc. family of companies, Sneaky Big Studios has filled a need in the market and been instrumental in keeping projects in Arizona that might have otherwise left the state.

From the beginning, the studio was envisioned as a fully integrated facility, capable of supporting a vast range of applications, including television and video production, commercials, movies, corporate projects, music videos and recording sessions. In order to address the scale and technical requirements for this new facility, Sneaky Big needed to incorporate best-of-breed equipment, custom software, IP connectivity and sophisticated, flexible 4K-ready systems for a future-proof infrastructure.

As a next-generation shared storage system optimized for demanding media workflows, the Harmonic MediaGrid 4000 system has proved to be a perfect fit for Sneaky Big Studios and the facility's 4K online post workflow.

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

CHALLENGE:

Sneaky Big Studios, one of the most technologically advanced production/post-production studios in the Southwestern US, was envisioned as a fully integrated facility, capable of supporting a vast range of applications, including television and video production, commercials, movies, corporate projects, music videos and recording sessions. To do this, it needed to incorporate best-of-breed equipment, custom software, IP connectivity and sophisticated, flexible 4K-ready systems for a future-proof infrastructure.

SOLUTION:

Systems integrator and software developer DigitalGlue deployed a Harmonic MediaGrid 4000 high-performance, scale-out shared storage system providing 540 TB of useable storage capacity that delivers the performance comparable to a Fibre Channel storage area network (SAN) but with the simplicity and scalability of Ethernet-based network-attached storage (NAS).

APPLICATIONS:

- Active storage for editorial
- Color correction and grading
- VFX stages of the 4K production workflow



The Solution

Sneaky Big brought on systems integrator and software developer DigitalGlue to design and plan the facility, from the ground up, and complete it with state-of-the-art technology and systems to ensure the smooth functioning of a demanding workflow. As a Harmonic Platinum reseller, DigitalGlue deployed a Harmonic MediaGrid 4000 shared storage solution to serve as active storage for editorial, color correction and grading, and VFX stages of the 4K production workflow to meet the needs of a demanding end-to-end ACES pipeline.

“With exceptional creative and technical staff paired with state-of-the-art systems, including Harmonic’s MediaGrid 4000 solution, Sneaky Big Studios is equipped to take on the most challenging projects,” said Tom Carlisle, Studio Engineer, at Sneaky Big Studios. “Working with DigitalGlue and Harmonic, we’ve established a robust yet agile storage infrastructure that will enable us to offer world-class services without the associated high costs typical of high-end studios.”

Within this facility, the MediaGrid 4000 highly scalable, Ethernet-based shared storage system provides 540 TB of useable storage capacity and delivers the performance comparable to a fibre channel storage area network (SAN) but with the simplicity and scalability of Ethernet-based network-attached storage (NAS).



Harmonic MediaGrid 4000 system

The Workflow

The on-the-fly scaling of capacity and bandwidth made possible by the MediaGrid 4000 solution ensures superior workflow efficiency and productivity. The robust Harmonic MediaGrid system is connected to Sneaky Big’s Silverdraft workstations where editors, visual effects (VFX) artists, and colorists work in Adobe Premiere, Adobe After Effects, DaVinci Resolve, Blackmagic Fusion, Autodesk Maya, Foundry NukeX, and more. Editors in all five Sneaky Big edit suites, plus editors in the bullpen, are able to work in 4K simultaneously; a critical feature as the Studios add bandwidth and capacity-intensive projects. The MediaGrid system also facilitates full online work with RAW files from RED and Sony cameras. The system’s active expansion architecture enables smooth extension of storage without the need to take the system offline.

Sneaky Big Studios also incorporated Harmonic’s ProMedia® Carbon file-based transcoder to facilitate conversion of content to an array of acquisition, editing, broadcast, web and mobile formats.

The Result

As a next-generation shared storage system optimized for demanding media workflows, the Harmonic MediaGrid 4000 system has proved to be a perfect fit for Sneaky Big Studios and the facility’s 4K online post workflow. With MediaGrid 4000 shared storage supporting the real-time work with 4K source formats, without the need for proxies, Sneaky Big Studios is able to turn around projects at a quality and speed that rival that of major facilities in New York or Los Angeles.