

Prime Focus Is Transforming Operations Through Jetstream Automated High Speed File Transfer

THE CHALLENGE

With over 5,550 artists working on Hollywood’s biggest blockbusters in geographically dispersed studios, Prime Focus is the world’s leading 3D conversion service provider.

Prime Focus uses award-winning technology to convert thousands of film shots to 3D, transferring terabytes of data between the studios and their clients daily. When setting up a new studio location in Montreal, Canada, Prime Focus decided to reevaluate their data transfer procedures with the goal of enhancing operational efficiencies and reducing costs. Previously, client-mandated security regulations required a series of approvals with multiple people at each step.

For Isaac Guenard, Head of Pipeline at Prime Focus, the key question was, “How do I satisfy the regulatory requirements of my clients while decreasing downtime between data transfers and reducing my studio’s manpower burden?”

THE SOLUTION

Workflow Automation

Automation was the answer. Prime Focus integrated the Jetstream high speed file transfer solution with their asset management system to automate the approval workflow. Now, instead of waiting for requests and approvals, the system triggers

When transferring data, the file payload is encrypted and sent to a Jetstream relay server living in a demilitarized zone (DMZ) connected to the internet. A receiver relay in the destination studio’s DMZ accepts incoming data and forwards it to the internal network for decryption



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data transfers as soon as a shot is ready to go. With Jetstream, data is only transferred when needed.

Security Infrastructure

At Prime Focus, Jetstream servers connect directly to primary storage within the internal corporate network. Servers at different facilities coordinate with each other over the VPN.

and writing to the target storage. Prime Focus uses Jetstream to not only accelerate file transfers, but also eliminate staging storage in the DMZ, where data used to be copied prior to delivery to another studio. Encrypted data now flows directly from network card to network card, offering more security while requiring less CPU, memory, and storage.

HIGH LEVEL STATS

- 4 locations
- 18 projects
- 11,835 shots
- 39,792 transfers
- 66 TB transferred

THE RESULTS

Lower Labour Costs

The previous workflow involved the Prime Focus data operations team arriving at the studio hours before anyone else in the morning to receive, unpack, and assign shots to artists. What was once a group of 6-7 people has been reduced by more than half since Prime Focus integrated Jetstream with the asset management system to automatically initiate data transfers.

Reduced Capital Spending

Prime Focus has seen the costs for future data transfer servers reduced by 75% because of Jetstream's relay and technology architecture, which allows transfers to bypass previously required intermediate storage steps. Data no longer has to sit on secure servers located in the DMZ, waiting for the next transfer phase. Jetstream instead moves files to the appropriate location only when needed, with data constantly in flight in an encrypted state. As a result, Prime Focus does not need

an array of expensive SSD drives for on-site storage.

High System Availability

Jetstream has proven to be very reliable. Soon after Jetstream was installed, the Prime Focus developer responsible for its implementation went on vacation, but not before voicing nervousness on how the system would operate in his absence. According to Mr. Guenard, "There was absolutely nothing to worry about because Jetstream operated flawlessly – no restarts, management, or log rotations. Jetstream was perhaps the only thing we didn't have an issue with during those three weeks. I could use a lot more things like Jetstream in my network infrastructure."

Increased Velocity

Implementing Jetstream and automating their workflow has enhanced efficiency for Prime Focus, nearly doubling their daily capacity to move shots. To reduce the costs associated with operating a studio 24/7, Prime Focus is trying to eliminate graveyard shifts, which may seem counterintuitive when increased velocity is an objective. However, by using Jetstream within a meshed network topology that is geographically distributed, Prime Focus can transfer shots automatically to the available stereographer no matter their location. Mr.

Guenard says, "Work does not have to stop because of the tyranny of time zones and Jetstream gives us built-in, centralized control."

More Openness to Change

Jetstream has been so effective in the small part of the pipeline in which it is currently implemented that it is motivating and influencing change throughout Prime Focus. In the past, teams were extremely conservative about modifying their processes because in Mr. Guenard's words, "It's like trying to fix a Formula One race car while it's running around the track." With Jetstream, everyone has been on board, actively working on ways to take advantage of its robust functionality. High speed file transfer is not just isolated at the edges of the Prime Focus network, but rather built into the deep core.



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ABOUT PRIME FOCUS

Prime Focus World is the largest 3D conversion service provider in the world with over 5,500 artists in studios located in Los Angeles, London, Vancouver, Montreal, India, and Singapore. For more information, visit www.primefocusworld.com.