



Case

Study

March 2009

FABELAKTIV

Tapeless multi-camera ingest and seamless integration with Avid post-production

Fabelaktiv, a large production company in Norway, was searching for a more efficient workflow for its studio productions. With a linear tape-based workflow previously in operation, the benefits of going tapeless with EVS technology were evident: valuable time and cost savings, while improving the overall quality of the productions. EVS' extended interoperability with third-party professional products also secured a seamless integration with Fabelaktiv's existing Avid infrastructure for a complete file-based workflow, from ingest to playout.

Customer

Fabelaktiv is one of Norway's largest independent TV production companies. It is part of Norsk Tipping, which is running the Norwegian National Lottery. Fabelaktiv produces the national lottery drawings in its studio for Norsk Tipping. The lottery drawings are broadcasted each week on the national TV network of NRK, the largest broadcasting corporation in Norway.

Since 1996 Fabelaktiv has produced programs for children, broadcast live from its studio every Saturday morning on NRK1. Fabelaktiv is also a substantial producer of TV series, drama and documentaries, as well as commercials and music videos.



Challenge

The challenge was a classic one when it comes to tape versus tapeless production. Fabelaktiv was operating a modern studio facility, but the camera feeds were recorded on Digibeta-tapes. The recorded material was batched in real-time onto an Avid Unity media server for post-production with Avid Media Composer. The finished programs were then mastered to Digibeta-tape for the playout.

This workflow was not the most efficient for studio productions where time is critical. The collaboration between EVS and Avid in terms of interoperability and native codec support meant that Fabelaktiv could take full advantage of their file-based infrastructure if they invested in EVS technology for studio productions and transfer of material to Avid post-production.

"Fabelaktiv's main challenge was to modernize our linear ingest system based on Digibeta VTRs, so that we could implement a complete file-based workflow from ingest via Avid post-production to playout. EVS technology saves valuable time in the production, time we can use to make better programs."

Kjetil Aalerud

Technical Manager at Fabelaktiv

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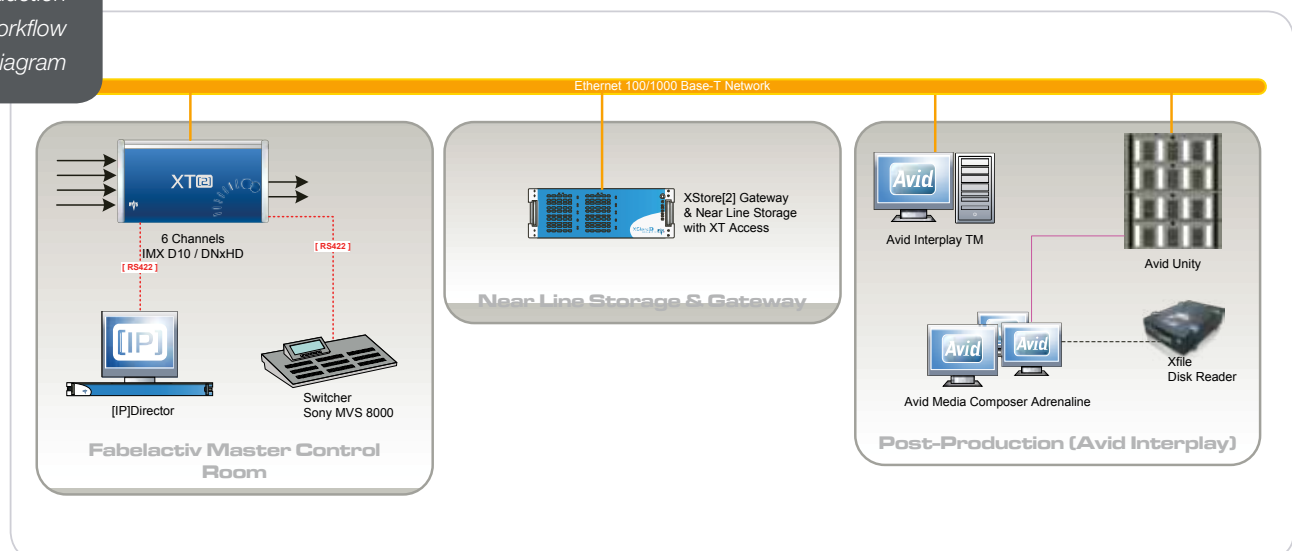
Fabelaktiv searched the market for a solution that:

- Provides a genuine replacement to VTR
- Is completely file-based and includes full integration with Avid post-production
- Integrates ingest, production, and post-production, so that a quicker and more efficient production process can be implemented
- Provides faster than real-time means of transferring recorded material to/from post-production, reducing content-to-airtime and giving the production team the opportunity to create better clips
- Meets the highest standards of reliability
- Can easily be upgraded for future production in HD

EVS Solutions

EVS came up with a solution that would fulfill all the requirements of Fabelaktiv. A 6-channel XT[2] production server controlled by IPDirector software is used for ingest from the studio and recording of the camera feeds. The recorded material is transferred through an XStore[2] media storage system working as a physical gateway to the Avid system. Fabelaktiv operates an Avid Unity MediaNetwork with 24 TB storage capacity and Avid Interplay Media Asset Management tool. The finished programs are transferred with Avid Unity TransferManager to the XT[2] production server for playout. The XStore[2] media storage system is also used for backup and archiving.

Fabelaktiv
Production
Workflow
Diagram



Multi-Camera Ingest & Seamless Integration with Avid Post-Production

Ingest Management with XT[2] & IPDirector

Fabelaktiv is using the XT[2] production server for the ingest of multiple cameras. The studio can use up to 8 cameras where feeds can be ingested and recorded on the XT[2] server. During the production rough edits on the recorded material can be made with IPDirector software, so that clips can rapidly be transferred to the Avid facility.

XStore[2] Gateway & Near-Line Storage

The XStore[2] is used both as a physical gateway to the Avid infrastructure and as a backup for live productions. The finished programs are subsequently transferred with Avid Unity TransferManager to the XT[2] server for playout.

Kjetil Aalerud, Technical Manager at Fabelaktiv, explained why they chose EVS technology: "We wanted to modernize our linear tape-based production with a complete file-based workflow. The post-production at Fabelaktiv was already file-based and we wanted a solution that would get the recorded material from the studio onto our Avid infrastructure as quickly as possible. Looking at different ingest solutions it became clear to us that EVS would provide the best workflow with the most flexibility."



"Our new workflow has become modern and very efficient." The XT[2] production server is used as an ingest system in OB-trucks in Norway. When we hire OB-trucks for multi-camera productions outside our studio

facility, we can bring a disk with the recorded material back to our headquarters and transfer the content onto our Avid Unity MediaNetwork to do the entire post-production in-house. This also means that other production companies wanting the advantages of this workflow can do the post-production at Fabelaktiv."

Kjetil Aalerud

Technical Manager at Fabelaktiv

Avid Infrastructure Integration

With EVS technology, Fabelaktiv has seamless integration between studio production and Avid post-production, without any transcoding of media format. The media is transferred faster than real-time to and from the Avid Unity central storage, making the program-making process very efficient.

"We are saving valuable time with the tapeless ingest system," said Aalerud. "The fact that we no longer need to batch material from tapes has considerably reduced content-to-airtime. Consequently the production team has more time to work on the content, thereby improving the quality of our programs. We have also managed to save costs by getting rid of our aging Digibeta VTR's. And with the seamless integration to the Avid infrastructure, we are well prepared for future production in HD."

Modern & Reliable Solution

Broadcasting live productions and producing the lottery drawings on national TV in Norway meant Fabelaktiv had to take reliability into account. Of course, this is not a challenge that is unique to Fabelaktiv, but was still a very important factor.

"At Fabelaktiv we are bound to strict contracts, with high standards of delivery," said Aalerud. "Our customers do not accept any downtime. We had to invest in technology that we could trust at all times. And since EVS has proven its reliability over time and in the most demanding conditions, we were easily convinced".

Fabelaktiv's main objective was to modernize the workflow and secure the production of existing products and services. However, EVS technology also opens new business opportunities.

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Benefits

- Fully tapeless workflow that increases the efficiency of program-making
- Seamless integration between EVS production systems and Avid post-production
- Reduced content-to-airtime due to effective clip transfer management between EVS and Avid
- Improved efficiency of media access to the Avid suites which gives the production team more time to create clips
- Ability to easily upgrade to production in HD due to HD-ready hardware and native support of HD codecs
- Reliable backup and archiving of critical content with XStore[2]
- The XT[2] production server provides the highest level of reliability
- Having the most modern workflow in Norway opens new business opportunities

"Fabelaktiv is bound to strict long-term contracts and our customers do not accept downtime. We had to invest in technology that we could trust at all times."

"The ease of using the EVS system is demonstrated by the fact that we started operating it shortly after installation. EVS has also done an excellent job training our staff to enable us to utilize the full potential of the system."

"The main benefits of the EVS system are more efficient and better productions, and improved quality of the programs. The EVS system integrates flawlessly with our Avid Interplay and Media Composers, forming a complete file-based workflow we are really satisfied with."

Kjetil Aalerud

Technical Manager at Fabelaktiv

