

CRISP VIDEO GROUP

Creative Agency Retains Law Firm Clients with Scalable Archiving

All images provided by Crisp Video Group.

500

TB Stored



Michael McMullan, Director of Production, Crisp Video Group

“We’re actually able to retain clients longer because we preserve *all* their content, including every clip from every day that we were in production.”

10X

Data Archive
Growth

1,158%

Business Growth

Situation

Crisp Video Group, a creative agency serving law firms, was maxing out its 50 TB production server. Michael McMullan, Director of Production, needed to deploy a new server that would integrate with cloud storage for “set it and forget it” backup automation and make it easy to find and deliver archived footage fast upon client request.

Solution

McMullan selected Studio Network Solutions for their production server. He planned to stick with legacy Amazon S3 cloud storage until discovering that his backups hadn’t run successfully for 109 days. He scrambled to recover what he could, then explored new options before choosing qBackup and Backblaze B2 Cloud Storage for efficacy and affordability that could scale.

Result

The business grew 1,158% in the next three years. Client video content under management expanded 10x to 500 TB. Throughout this growth, Backblaze B2 helped keep the costs low and the client footage not only secure but easily accessible whenever needed. This enabled McMullan to focus on creating content and serving clients, not sweating storage.



Crisp Video Group is a national video marketing and video production company that helps companies get noticed, enhance their brand, and grow their business. It has been identified as one of the nation's fastest-growing providers of video services. The agency has worked with a variety of industry-leading brands and businesses, tailoring their concept and execution to the needs of each project. Simply put, Crisp produces slick videos that clients love and customers share.

Creative Agency Retains Law Firm Clients with Scalable Archiving



It's not unusual at Crisp Video Group for a client to request all the raw footage after a shoot. But what happens when their client requests it years afterward? This was exactly the situation Crisp found itself in when a client asked for all of their raw footage three years after video production was completed and before Crisp had upgraded to a new production server. Remembering that their old server's backup solution had failed for several months before the transition, Michael McMullan, Director of Production, crossed his fingers, took a deep breath, and began to search...

"We've become a big enough player in our market that clients come back to shoot more, and want all their old content back, even if it's been years."

Michael McMullan, Director of Production,
Crisp Video Group



Softening ‘Tough Guy Lawyer’ Personas

Much has changed since McMullan joined Crisp Video Group in 2015. The agency started out as a general video production house, earning awards for work with clients including Coca-Cola, Red Bull, and Verizon. However, the team saw that creative agencies in a cutthroat market were increasingly finding their greatest success by specializing in distinct markets or verticals, and decided to follow suit with the strategic decision to focus on a niche with an aching need. And much to their surprise, they found the greatest need in the market was that of lawyers. Through video marketing, Crisp could elevate a law firm’s practice well above their competition.

“We wanted to be sure our cloud storage would be a good long-term fit, not just jump over to a new provider and see how it goes.”

Michael McMullan, Director of Production, Crisp Video Group

After working with attorneys in the Atlanta area, telling their stories like they had for other Crisp clients, the agency quickly learned that they got much better results when they broke away from the stereotypical tough guy lawyer persona. Rather, they humanized their clients by showing their kindness and their connection to the community. They also, of course, focused on each client firm’s unique value proposition and developed complete video marketing campaigns accordingly.

Today, Crisp points out that attorneys who produce videos with them see an average ROI of 300% and a two to 10 times increase in their average case values—sometimes within a matter of months—as the video campaigns help them consistently attract and retain high-value cases.

Planning for Unreasonable Growth

Crisp had the same goal for themselves as for their clients: pushing for rapid *and* consistent growth at what some might consider an unreasonable pace. Since their founding, they have expanded virtually every facet of their business. Their own unreasonable growth has translated directly to a huge increase in the volume of client content they manage, requiring infrastructure that could scale quickly and effortlessly.

Crisp had only three editors when McMullan came aboard. But their production server was already maxing out with 50 TB of client content. McMullan was quickly tasked with finding a new server that was better tuned for video production and integrated with cloud storage for backup and archive. And it couldn’t be too expensive. They didn’t want to limit what they archived, nor to impose capacity quotas on their clients. Finally, McMullan wanted “set it and forget it” backup automation so he could focus on creating content and supporting clients, not managing storage.

McMullan and his team chose Studio Network Solutions (SNS) for their production server, and planned to continue backing up to Amazon S3 cloud storage like they had with their long-time server. But when McMullan was preparing for the server transition, he checked in on the S3 backup data and discovered that backups hadn’t run for 109 days.

He scrambled to recover content deleted from the server, pulling what he could out of its recycle bin.

Rather than simply fixing what caused the backups to fail, McMullan decided to first investigate the range of cloud storage alternatives. In comparing likely costs of storing Crisp’s then 50 TB of data with Amazon S3, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud, and Backblaze B2 Cloud Storage, he estimated Backblaze B2 would cost four figures per year, while every other solution would cost well over five figures per year. Doing the math for 100 TB and beyond—Crisp was planning for unreasonable growth, after all—McMullan found the cost for storing data not only dramatically lower with Backblaze B2, but the retrieval costs were dramatically lower too.

Working directly with the Backblaze team, McMullan felt confident that Backblaze B2 offered everything they needed in a cloud provider at a price that would allow them to continue to save all content from their clients, indefinitely.

Rolling Out the New Server with Backblaze B2

Crisp's transition to Backblaze B2 was timed with the rollout of their new production server and the move to a new office space. They wrapped up the workday on Friday and put everything in a moving truck with the nail-biting goal of having everything in place come Monday, including all backups.

The team unpacked in their new office on Saturday. An immediate priority was to start moving data from their old server to their new SNS server, with the new one configured for cloud backup. For backup software, they had chosen qBackup, setting it up so that each file share on the server would back up to a designated Backblaze B2 bucket.

Backing up project files was straightforward; backing up raw footage required a little more planning because it was 40 TB of the total 50 TB. McMullan considered ordering a Backblaze Fireball rapid data ingest tool to speed the transfer, but in the end decided their 300 Mbps fiber internet connection was fast enough.

By Monday morning, their editors were in the new office, successfully working off the new SNS production server. And Monday night, they confirmed that all of the work done on Monday had successfully backed up to Backblaze B2.

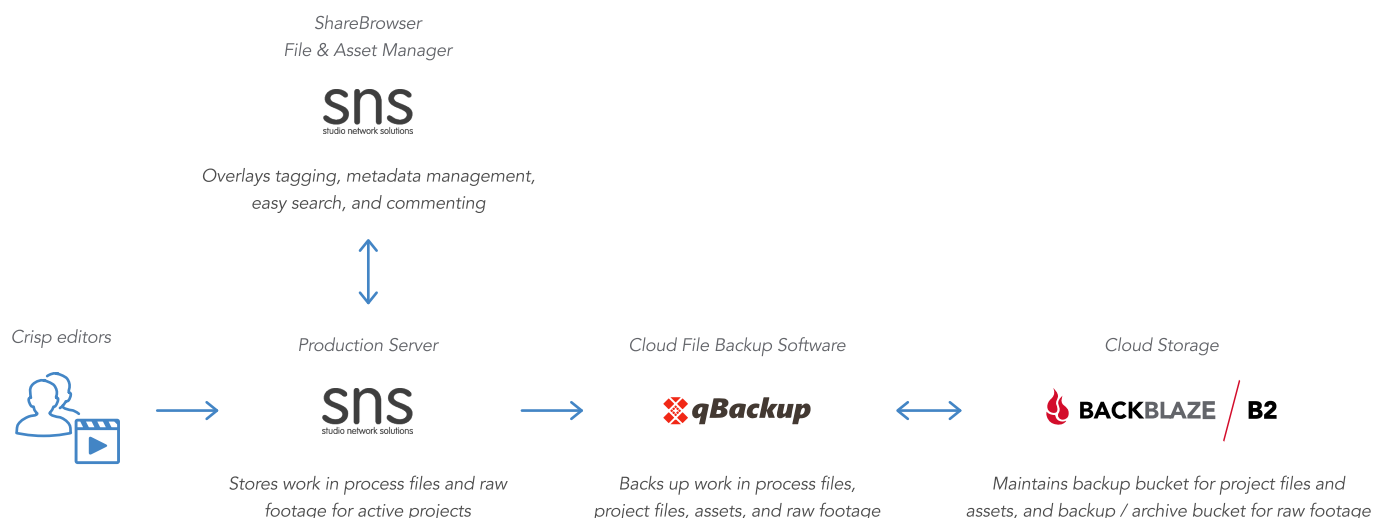
Organizing Content for Bigger Operations

Fast forward three years and Crisp had grown to more than 50 employees, with 14 editors amassing 500 TB of client content. The solution set McMullan had deployed continued to serve them well.

At the same time, the team saw a new opportunity to get more organized. In the early days, they had assumed the editor who worked on a project would be the only one working on it. They didn't have a naming convention, much less asset management. To address this, the Crisp team added SNS ShareBrowser File & Asset Manager to enable tagging and managing metadata, and easy searches of archived content.

Their backup and archive strategy is straightforward: everything, including raw footage, is backed up to Backblaze B2. When a video marketing program is completed, its project files are archived through the SNS Asset Manager and backed up to B2 Cloud Storage. Associated raw footage is simply deleted from the production server and the backup copies in B2 Cloud Storage become the archive. McMullan could rest a bit easy knowing everything was in place to support more rapid content growth ahead.

DIAGRAM OF CRISP'S INTEGRATED SOLUTION WORKFLOW





Fast Growth Leads to Game Changing Success

Just as importantly, the agency's storage costs had not skyrocketed, even though it was in the enviable position of managing 10 times more client content.

There's seemingly no end in sight to Crisp's business growth. In 2018, founder CEO Michael Mogill published *The Game Changing Attorney*, a book on best practices for marketing law firms and legal services. They launched an annual Crisp Game Changers Summit, where they unveiled how the agency grew their business 1,158% in three years, and offered practical learning and best practices to help the law firm attendees pursue such growth for their firms.

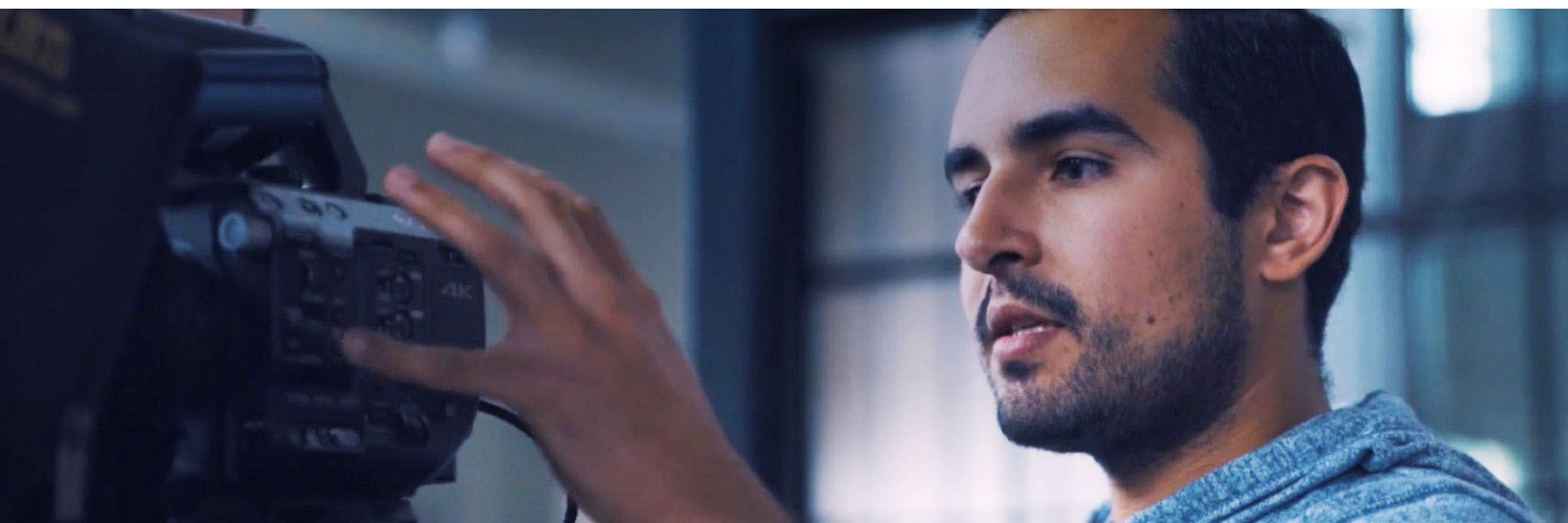
And as for that client who requested his raw footage from years before? McMullan is pleased to report they're still a client. Although their video had been shot when Crisp was still in their previous office and originally stored to the old 50 TB server, the files had been migrated properly and safely stored ever since.

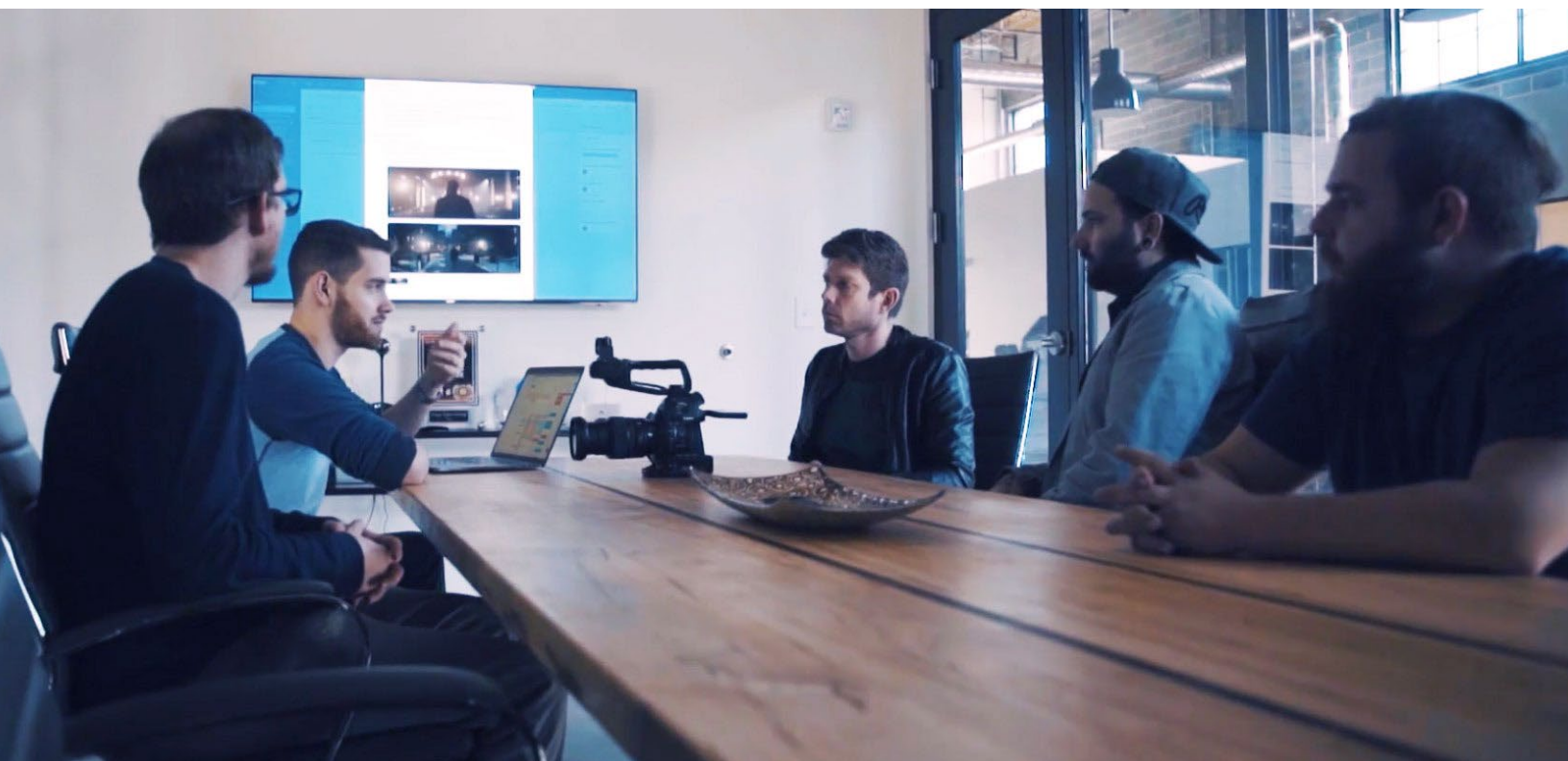
"I'm a huge advocate for the platforms that we can set up and forget about. With Backblaze, we're good to go. We don't ever worry about losing anything."

Michael McMullan, Director of Production, Crisp Video Group

So McMullan found the folder, restored the files from Backblaze B2, and shipped them over to the happy client.

After all, for successful creative agencies, there's no such thing as "former" clients. Crisp's business flourished in part because they remained dedicated to customer service for all: past, present, and future clients, not just those with active video marketing campaigns or near-term opportunities. McMullan is pleased that scalable, reliable storage could support this approach, and of the results that continue to follow.





About Backblaze

Backblaze B2 Cloud Storage is purpose-built for ease, instant access to files and data, and infinite scalability. It seamlessly supports workflows via hundreds of third-party software integrations, or through direct APIs and CLIs. At only \$5/TB of object storage per month (a fraction of the cost of the largest solutions), Backblaze B2 is priced so users don't have to choose between what matters and what doesn't when it comes to backup, archive, data organization, workflow streamlining, and more.

www.backblaze.com