



FIN FILMS

Saving a Decade of Priceless Content

10

Years of Content Protected



Chris Aguilar, Producer / Director Fin Films

100's

Hours per Year Saved Searching for Content

“Knowing that my content was finally safely copied over from hard drives gave me incredible peace of mind—it’s scary not having that safety net.”

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Dollars Spent on Local Servers and Storage

Situation

Chris Aguilar, award-winning event videographer and storyteller, was saving all of his work in a growing collection of external hard drives. As time passed, it became increasingly difficult to find older content when it was needed. And, as the drives aged, Chris knew the chances of them failing and losing content were becoming unacceptably high.

Solution

Chris selected Backblaze B2 as the most cost-effective storage to keep all of his content online, available, and highly protected. He began by copying everything on his hard drive collection to a Backblaze Fireball 70 TB NAS system, which then uploaded the content directly into his B2 account. Next, he chose iconik to organize his content in B2 to make it searchable and shareable.

Result

With Backblaze B2 and iconik, Chris has realized a dream 10 years in the making. His entire catalog of work is freed from aging hard drives and safely stored in a single, organized catalog that he can access from anywhere. He is finishing projects faster, finding and sharing content quickly, and has more time to take on new projects and stories.

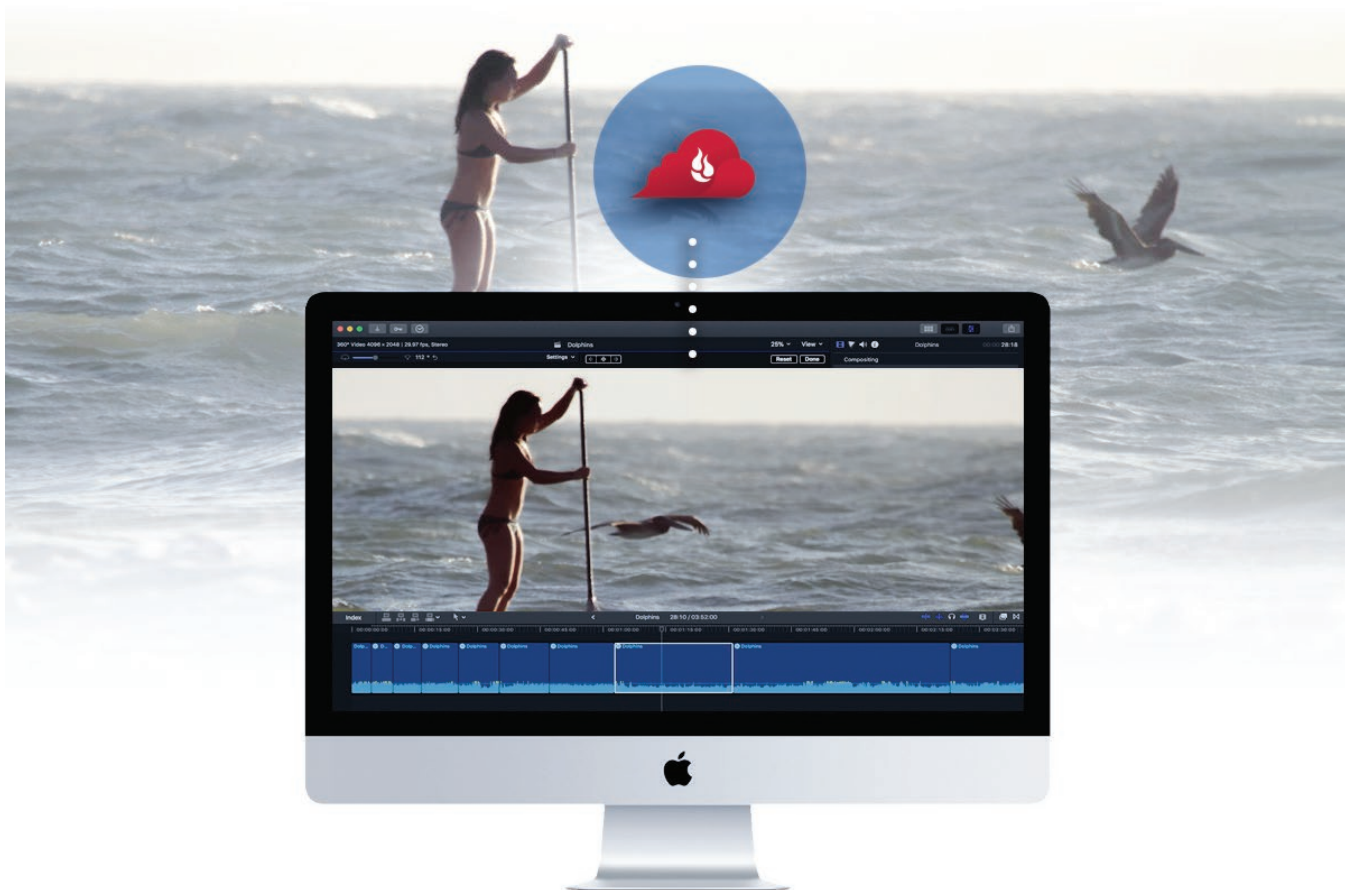


Chris Aguilar of Fin Films delivers cinematic video for brands and events, and is well known for his documentary work and paddle-board racing events coverage such as the Molokai 2 Oahu Paddle-board World Championships.

A Storyteller's Perfect Storm

As Chris Aguilar gathered his gear after covering another successful Molokai 2 Oahu Paddleboard World Championships—a grueling, 32 mile race across open ocean between Oahu and Moloka'i—a media representative approached him to ask for clips from a previous race year.

Chris leapt at the chance to help promote the sport of paddleboard racing, and knew he had the perfect footage for the media outlet's story, but it could be on one of any number of hard drives back in his production office in LA. Over the years, Chris has emerged as the premier documentary filmmaker and event coverage specialist for the tight-knit paddleboard racing community. His hard work in tough conditions has earned him several awards, but it's also generated thousands of hours of content.





A Sea of Hard Drives

Paddleboard races are grueling events—and filming them is as well. Chris begins his day by putting all the equipment he'll need for the day in a waterproof Pelican case, loading it onto a boat (or swimming it out when there's no dock available). This means that he has to hand carry all of his camera gear and batteries to cover an entire day's shooting.

When the event is over, it's common to quickly save the raw and finished files to an external drive for immediate editing, deliver the finished files, then put that hard drive on the shelf before dashing off to the next shoot. And so, over the years, Chris estimates that he gathered about 20 terabytes of footage documenting the rise of the paddleboard community.

In more than a decade covering the sport of paddleboarding, Chris has collected priceless footage documenting the sport, such as the moment Jamie Mitchell won his tenth consecutive championship, and Kai Lenny's winning performances in both stand up paddling and foil races. Chris knew that if something happened to his physical drives, a significant portion of this sport's history could be lost.

And while his collection of the sport's history was vulnerable, he also couldn't help to promote its future as fully as he wanted to. With all his content locked on hard drives, having to manually search for content for each media request or collaborative opportunity was incredibly limiting.



“I was one of the few guys on the beach covering Battle of the Paddle in 2008. That footage is worth so much to me — not monetarily but for historical value to the sport. That one single hard drive contains footage that is irreplaceable. If that drive were lost it would be a heartbreaker.”

Chris Aguilar, Fin Films

Taming the Tides

As someone with a professional background in technology, Chris was intensely aware of how vulnerable all that priceless content was on aging hard drives. His oldest drives stretched back ten years, far past the typical consumer warranties of 36 months. Chris had already paid a drive reconstruction team to salvage one-of-a-kind footage once, and didn't want to think about having to do it for more.

As he began to study how to get that content safely onto other storage where it could be secured and organized, he quickly ruled out hardware-based solutions like NAS or RAID systems due to the high initial cost and maintenance required. Chris needed access to his entire content library but couldn't be tied to his production office.

He realized that cloud storage was ideal not only for inexpensive storage, but also because it offered extremely high levels of access. His files would be available and retrievable wherever and whenever he needed them. Of all the solutions he looked at, Backblaze's B2 service was the most straightforward and the simplest. Chris signed up, and began uploading his most irreplaceable content first.

“My heart sank a bit then — I knew I was in for days at a time back in the office trying to find that footage for them.”

Chris Aguilar, Fin Films



Chasing the Perfect Solution

With storage decided, Chris then began exhaustively researching his content organization options. As a documentary filmmaker and event coverage specialist, his workflow was closer to that of a remote team building story packages in the field, while also accumulating valuable B-roll footage that could be used in future stories or films of intense interest to the paddleboard community. When combined with the archive of an entire career of branded content, personal projects, photography, and more, the organizational needs were demanding.

Most content management solutions demanded a dedicated server with storage, and as Chris was rarely in his production office this didn't fit his needs. Almost every solution was loaded with features he couldn't use and didn't want. He felt like he could never find the sweet spot of features that fit his agile, mobile shooting style while also helping him collaborate and share content without forcing him to commit to thousands of dollars a month in licensing fees.

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Chris Aguilar, Fin Films



A Digital Native Fit

At last, Chris came upon iconik. iconik's pay-as-you-use-it solution allowed him to add collaborators on the fly and share his content quickly by adding view-only licenses at no charge. With no up-front license fee and support and maintenance built-in to the service, Chris knew that he had found a solution that fit the way he wanted to work.

Best of all, iconik could ingest the content that Chris had already uploaded to Backblaze without having to pull down, re-upload, and re-ingest the content.

Chris liked that iconik and Backblaze worked well together and that they were both digital-native services with clear and transparent pricing and administration. At last, Chris could get all of his content freed from his hard drives and into a single library where he could find and work with any content quickly.



Jumping In

To get his content uploaded faster, Chris used Backblaze's Fireball Rapid Ingest Service. Backblaze sent a 70TB NAS system to his office, and Chris began copying over content from his loose hard drives. As Chris went through the hard drives, he was doubly surprised: First, because he found many forgotten gems of content that could fuel new projects, but more so because he realized he had far more content than the 20 terabytes he originally estimated. By the time he finished filling the Fireball, he had loaded closer to 60 terabytes.

After shipping the Fireball system back to Backblaze, where its contents were uploaded to his storage buckets in the B2 Cloud servers, where iconik ingested the new material, created thumbnails and proxies as needed, and added the metadata he had already applied to files on disk.

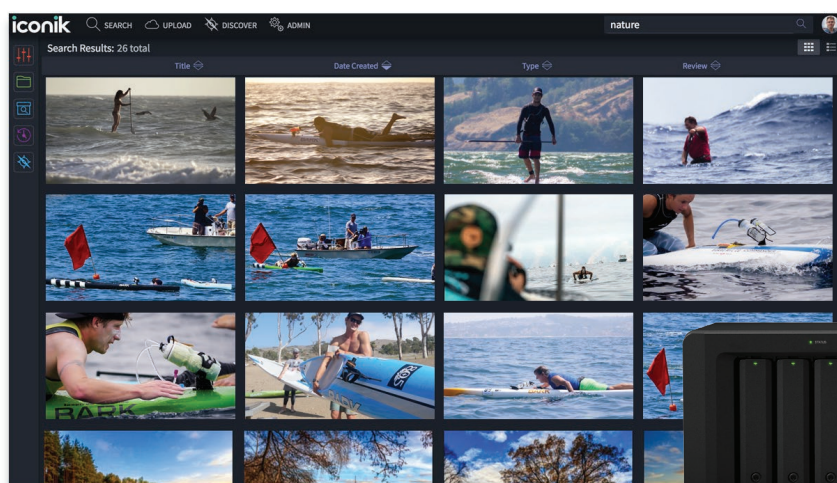


Photo by Troy Nebecker

A New World of Creative Possibilities

With all of his content in one place, a world of new creative possibilities opened up. A footage request now goes from 'several weekends in the office going through hard drives' to a few keyword searches, then sharing via iconik in a matter of minutes. With iconik and Backblaze integrated in his workflow, Chris can cut a main story together while another collaborator cuts short clips for social media from the same footage—speeding up his time to complete a story while tremendously boosting an event's coverage in real time.

Most intriguing, though, is the realization that he can re-cut, and re-imagine projects he'd done years earlier. With access to the original source files at his fingertips, he can pull together an entirely new package quickly, and cut everything in a way that matches his current style. Above all, Chris has peace of mind knowing that his content is, at last, safely archived, and all in one library where he can keep the spirit of sharing, collaboration, and community alive for the sport that he loves.



iconik



Backblaze Fireball

70 TB
STORAGE
CAPACITY

\$550
RENTAL FEE
FOR 30 DAYS

“With iconik and Backblaze I can actually go back and recreate some of the work I did earlier and re-tell those stories in the way I would today vs. when I started out. That to me is the most powerful part — and I can do that from anywhere now — I don't have to go to the office.”

Chris Aguilar, Fin Films

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