Company 3 Deploys Streambox Solutions during COVID Shutdown

There was a time in the post-production industry when your competitive advantage was defined by owning the latest marquee-brand technology. This reflected that era's thinking around brand marketing, which was all about promoting the unique aspects of your product.

Contemporary brand marketing is based on promoting how your products and services benefit the customer. Sure, you still need the tech, but your value proposition is truly defined by your ability to deliver solutions that address real world needs.

Dealing with Remote Reviews

Enter Company 3, a global post-production services organization that clearly understands how to deliver value in our challenging times.

Company 3 provides dailies, picture and sound post-production, and VFX for feature films, commercials, music videos and television, with facilities in Atlanta, Hollywood, London, Los Angeles, New York, Vancouver, and Toronto.

Their Toronto facility has been providing post-production services for the film and television industry since the 1980s.

Company 3 has lots of experience with developing remote workflow solutions for their clients, streaming video and audio to facilities around the world so that clients at their facilities in Los Angeles or London or New York can review work being conducted in Toronto, in real-time. Providing clients access to services and support wherever they are located is a key aspect of the Company 3 value proposition.

As James Fraser, Vice President and General Manager who manages day-to-day operations for the Toronto facility puts it, "Finding customized solutions for clients to collaborate with us remotely during the post process is a big part of what we do, and this was true even prior to having to post shows during the COVID health crisis, which presented some unique challenges of its own."

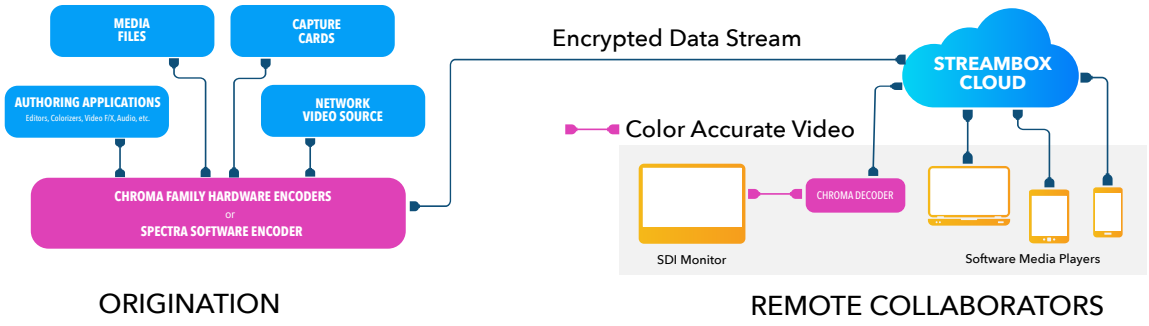
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3-Way Collaboration

Company 3 started working with Streambox more than 10 years ago, with clients who were on shoot somewhere else in the world but still working on projects being finished in Toronto. They gained a new level of ability to support remote review sessions with a client able to see exactly the same things, the same colors, and hear the same audio mix without having to be in the same physical location as the colorist or mixer.

This experience grew into what Company 3 realized was something special for them. As Greg Hull, the Vice President of Engineering & Technology notes, “The collective sigh of relief coming from clients when they realized we were still functional in a secure manner and able to support the projects that they already had underway was immense. They were thrilled at the results, as was our whole facility, all the staff, the colorists, mixers, engineers, everybody, it’s been fantastic. At the end of the day, it all comes down to the clients being happy."

According to Fraser, “What we’ve realized is that no two shows are alike. Each one really has its own demands, its own special requirements and specifications that need to be met. By partnering with Streambox and developing these solutions, it gave us a lot of tools in our toolbox to choose from, whether it was their Chroma 4K encoder/decoder systems or their new Chroma+ boxes, we could offer a solution to meet our clients’ budget. Further, using Streambox Cloud Services, which allows us to push a signal to multiple locations at the same time, we are able to utilize all of those toolsets in various ways and for various people. It’s really given us a big arsenal of workflow solutions to propose depending on the complexity and needs of the job."



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To maintain flexibility in remote reviews they offer clients a variety of easy-to-deploy viewing choices, including connecting to a live session with an iPad Pro, iPhone or Mac laptop to view a real-time stream of what the colorists are doing. They can also use Streambox Cloud Services and streaming for feedback. In some cases, Company 3 has employed Streambox to do audio reviews in stereo, on headphones or even in ATMOS to a compatible facility on the receiving end. These simple-to-deploy setups support multiple locations around the world, even when contending with some of the higher requirements like 4K HDR.

Streambox has been one of the few suppliers that could meet the technical and workflow requirements of Company 3 in these challenging times. Fraser takes it further: “Streambox has been very proactive in working with us in terms of taking suggestions and having their development teamwork with our engineers to make their solutions even better and more robust, whether it’s improvements to the Cloud infrastructure that will allow us to really have super low latency or changes to system capabilities. For a small, growing company they have been attentive and responsive in implementing our recommendations. Ultimately, the result is providing an even better solution for our clients."

For Company 3, Streambox is a sophisticated tool that engineering can add their technical expertise to. Hull relates, “The game changer for us is the fact that we have so much control during sessions. That control allows us to push the boundaries of what network bandwidth is available to get the best quality image, even on the fly during sessions. We can even add a second Streambox system to gain redundancy on a different path in case one of the internet routes happens to have an issue and switch seamlessly. In a real-world situation, you need the flexibility to deal with any situation. We’ve gotten pretty sophisticated with these over the years and they’ve worked out well for us, and with some of the latest updates, latency is lower than ever and image quality is better than ever.”

Although they sometimes deploy other “plug and play” solutions, Company 3 engineers are most comfortable when they are able to get in and adjust settings to deliver the best possible experience for their clients. Hey, that’s what makes them engineers!

Company 3 has collaborated extensively with Streambox. They share information about what capabilities are needed and provide input on industry trends. Company 3 is able to put systems into real-world scenarios for Streambox to apply fast updates, and have

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been impressed with how quickly they’re able to turn around new solutions that meet their needs. With such close contact over the years, Streambox has a good sense of what the needs are of Company 3 and their clients.

In the past Company 3 had turned down requests for solutions for clients who were working from home. They were concerned that not everybody had the same bandwidth that a post facility might have. The Streambox components have been a great tool for Company 3 to be able to deploy systems and solutions and have them work over standard public Internet networks with residential-level service

Keeping Things Secure

One of the important responsibilities that Company 3 faces working with content producers is ensuring that all of their workforce solutions comply with strict security requirements. The fact that Streambox devices natively support full AES encryption really simplified the overall implementation process for remote workflows. Security Control access for the engineering team allows them to monitor and control who is logged on to sessions, note what part of the world they are in based on the IP address and ensure that everybody connected is actually supposed to be there. Engineering controls the data flow, the log-ins, and the links to connect and content to manage their own security.

Company 3 services ongoing productions all over the world, from New Zealand to Budapest, to Ireland and locally within Toronto, and they have been able to deploy Streambox solutions globally. Leveraging the tools that Streambox provides allows Company 3 to offer a range of reliable solutions that were not possible even four or five years ago.

James Fraser concludes, “Beyond just the scope of the products that Streambox has developed, the relationship between them and us as two organizations trying to solve problems has been very valuable for everybody."

Greg Hull adds, “We like being part of the solution. It’s all about process and it’s great being one of the voices to get valuable information to a partner like Streambox to continue down the path of improved production experiences. And we think it’s the right path."

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